



# Referencing of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework to EQF



34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of EQF AG, 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> of February 2016, Brussels

# Republic of Macedonia

- 2 million inhabitants
- Labor market indicators 2015/Q4
  - Activity rate: 56,9%
  - Employment rate: 42,4 %
  - Unemployment rate: 25.5 %
  - Unemployment rate of youth (aged 15-24): 48.2%
- 190 541 pupils in primary education
- 84 827 students in upper secondary education
- 59 359 first cycle HE students
- 2194 second cycle HE students
- 206 third cycle HE students



# National strategic goals

- increasing economic growth and employment rate, in particular youth employment rate, better standards of living and quality of life;
- integration of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union and NATO;
- uncompromising fight against corruption and crime and efficient law enforcement;
- investing in education, training, innovation and information technology, as key elements for creating a knowledge-based society;
- increasing the quality and level of qualifications, according to LM needs, individuals and society ;
- maintain good inter-ethnic relations on the principles of mutual tolerance and respect.

# Educational System

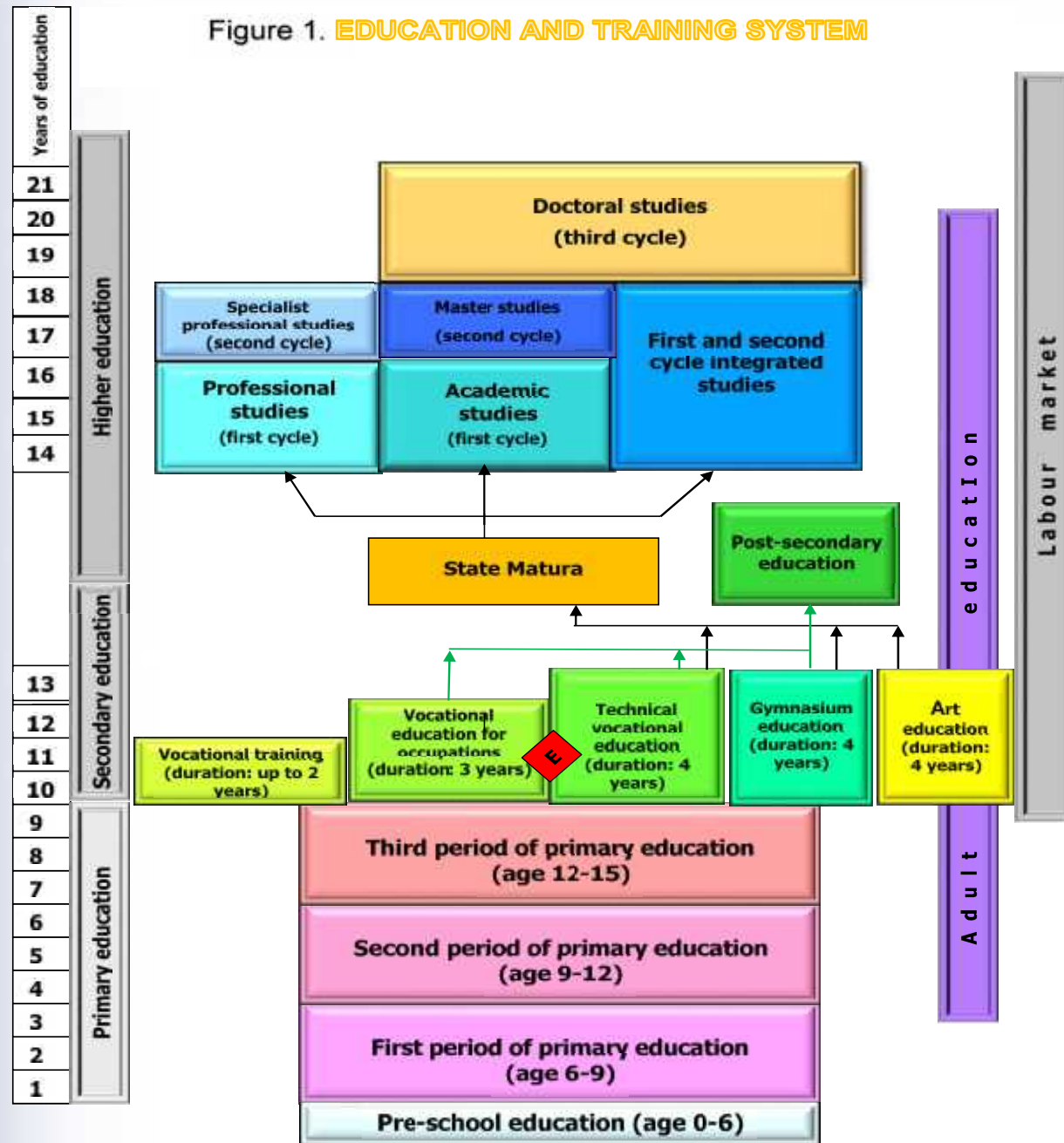
## Formal system

- 362 Primary schools
- 101 Secondary schools
  - 21 gymnasia
  - 40 VET schools
  - 30 mixed (gymnasia & VET)
  - 4 VET schools for students with special needs
  - 5 arts schools
  - 1 sport gymnasium
- 16 Universities
  - 5 public
  - 11 private
- 5 Higher professional schools
- Research Institutes
- Religious Higher Education institutions
  - Faculty of Orthodox Theology
  - Faculty of Islamic Theology
- Military Academy

## System for non-formal learning

- 47 Accredited providers
- 142 Verified programmes

Figure 1. EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM





# National Qualifications Framework

- national standard that regulates the acquisition and use of qualifications
- instrument for establishing a system of qualifications acquired in the Republic of Macedonia
- basis for the transparency, access, transfer, acquisition and quality of qualifications
  - presents national educational system
  - boosts reforms and modernization of the educational and training system in the context of LLL
- tool that supports the employers and other stakeholders in understanding the education and training system and the qualifications
- gives confidence to students and parents in the quality of the education system and of the qualifications



# NQF development and implementation

- Preparatory phase
  - 2002-2005 - initiatives, proposals, presentations, workshops, discussion or debates took place
- Development and implementation phase
  - 2008-2010, NQF-EHEA
  - 2012 – 2013, Macedonian Qualifications Framework - Baselines
  - October 2013, National Qualifications Framework Law
- EQF Referencing
  - 2014, May - Starting the Referencing process

# Main institutions and roles in the NQF

- Ministry of Education and Science:
  - role of NCP
  - coordinates NQF development and implementation
  - coordinates the referencing of NQF to EQF and the self-certification of NQF with QF EHEA
  - adopts standards of qualifications
  - communicates the NQF to the public
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy:
  - information system on the current and future labour market and the required competences
  - proposes development of standards of qualifications and standards of occupations according to the labour market
  - adopts standards of occupations
  - participates in the preparation of strategic documents and analyses relevant for NQF in order to increase the employment and strengthen the competitiveness
  - monitors the employment of persons with acquired qualifications.
- Competent institutions for development of qualifications
  - Centre for Vocational Education and Training, Centre for Adult Education and Bureau for Development Education for levels I to VB;
  - Higher education institutions for development of qualifications from level VA to VIII.



# NQF objectives

- to clearly define learning outcomes
- to establish a system of valuing different qualifications within the overall system of qualifications
- to encourage and promote lifelong learning
- to enable horizontal and vertical progression through formal, non-formal and informal learning
- to enable international comparability of qualifications
- to ensure mobility of participants in the process of education and training, and inclusion in the labour market at the national and international level
- to support a comprehensive system for quality assurance
- to ensure the cooperation of all stakeholders

# Structure of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework

- The Macedonian Qualifications Framework comprises of:
  - Levels/sub-levels of qualifications;
  - Level descriptors and learning outcomes;
  - Types of qualifications and documents serving as evidence for the acquired qualification and
  - Volume of the qualification.
- Descriptors of the learning outcomes for:

## MQF LLL

## MQF EHEA

Knowledge and understanding	Knowledge and understanding
Skills	Application of knowledge and understanding
Competence	Ability for assessment
	Communication skills
	Learning skills

MKQF level		Description	EQF level
VIII		III cycle (doctoral) studies (≥3 years, 180 ECTS)	8
VII	VIIA	II cycle academic studies (60/120 ECTS)	7
	VII B	II cycle professional studies (60/120 ECTS)	
VI	VIA	I cycle studies (240 ECTS)	6
	VIB	I cycle studies (180 ECTS)	
V	VA	Professional studies (60/120 ECTS) Short cycle studies within I cycle of studies	5
	VB	Post-secondary education (60/120)	
IV		TVET and General secondary education, 4 years (240)	4
III		Vocational Education for Occupations, 3 years (180)	3
II		Vocational Training, 2 years (60-120)	2
I		Primary Education, 9 years	1

## Comparison of MKQF with QF-EHEA

MKQF level		Description	QF-EHEA level
VIII		III cycle (doctoral) studies (≥3 years, 180 ECTS)	8
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# Register of qualifications

- NQF Register according to the Law:
  - Sub-register of higher education qualifications
  - Sub-register of general education qualifications
  - Sub-register of qualifications acquired through VET and
  - Sub-register of qualifications acquired from non-formal education
  
- Current situation:
  - Inventory of Qualifications 2014-2015, ETF
  - Register of HE qualifications
  - Database of primary and secondary education qualifications
  - Database of non-formal education qualifications



Република Македонија  
Министерство за образование и наука  
РЕГИСТАР НА ВИСОКООБРАЗОВНИТЕ КВАЛИФИКАЦИИ

Слика на квалификацијата	Научно поле	Назив на квалификацијата	вид	Ниво во НРБОВК	EKTC	Високообразовна установа која ја издава квалификацијата	бр. и датум на решението за почеток со работа на студиската програма	ISCO	забелешка
102610100	Биологија	Дипломиран биолог (професор)	Диплома	VIA	240	УКИМ - Природно - математички факултет	Реш. бр. сп. 12 од 03.09.2009, бр. 07-2631/5 од 26.10.2009, за поч. со раб. 12-1415/5 од 26.10.2010	2131	
106710409	Геологија и геофизика	Магистер на технички науки-геологија	Диплома	VIA	60	УГД - Факултет за природни и технички науки	Решение за акредитација бр. 12-20/6-1 од 19.04.2011	2114	
106800401	Геологија и геофизика	Доктор на техничко-технолошки науки-геологија	Диплома	VIII	180	УГД - Факултет за природни и технички науки	Решение за акредитација бр. 12-130/9 од 04.03.2011, за почеток со работа од МОН бр.13-1837/4 од 24.03.2011	2114	
219610408	Рударство	Дипломиран рударски инженер по минерална технологија	Диплома	VIA	240	УГД - Факултет за природни и технички науки	Решение за акредитација бр. 12-21/1-1 од 19.04.2011	2146	
219710404	Рударство	Магистер по технички науки - геомеханика	Диплома	VIA	60 120	УГД - Факултет за природни и технички науки	Решение за акредитација бр. сп. 12 од 19.06.2009, за почеток со работа бр. 13-2155/2 од 29.03.2011	2146	
219800400	Рударство	Доктор на техничко-технолошки науки-рударство	Диплома	VIII	180	УГД - Факултет за природни и технички науки	Решение за акредитација бр. 12-130/9 од 04.03.2011, за почеток со работа од МОН бр.13-1837/4 од 24.03.2011	2146	

# Referencing Report

## **Preparatory phase - May-June 2014 – ETF, international expert**

- meetings with relevant institutions and different stakeholders
- workshops and
- ROADMAP

## **Development phase - July 2014 – January 2016**

- meetings with relevant institutions and different stakeholders
- national workshops and conferences
- presentations and thematic debates on parts of the draft Report (with relevant institutions and different stakeholders)
- presentations at regional and international events
- April 2015 - state of play
- presentation of the final draft Report

## **Final phase - January 2016**

- opinions of international EQF experts
- adoption by the National NQF Board
- adoption by the Government (26 January 2016)

# Structure of the Referencing Report

- Introduction
- National Qualifications System
- Referencing and self-certification process
- National Qualifications Framework
- Response to the EQF referencing criteria and procedures
- Response to QF-EHEA self-certification criteria and procedures
- System for validation of non-formal and informal learning
- Challenges and next steps



# EQF Criterion 1

NCP: Ministry of Education and Science coordinator

Other responsible institutions and bodies

1. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
2. Centre for Adult Education (national institution)
3. VET Centre (national institution)
4. Bureau for Development of Education
5. Employment Service Agency
6. Chamber of Commerce
7. Organisation of Employers
8. Chamber of Crafts
9. Higher Educational institutions
10. Higher Education Accreditation and Evaluation Board
11. National Examination Centre
12. State Educational Inspectorate
13. National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility
14. VET schools
15. Student Unions

National Board for the Macedonian Qualifications Framework

## EQF Criterion 2

The clear link between qualification levels of MQF and EQF is demonstrated by comparing the structure, the key concepts and level descriptors

- Structural comparison:
  - Similarities: 8 levels
  - Differences: Sub-levels for levels V, VI and VII
- Conceptual comparison:
  - Learning outcomes
- Linguistic comparison of level descriptors

# Examples of level descriptors

	Level III MKQF	Level 3 EQF
knowledge	Possesses <b>theoretical and systematic acquired professional knowledge, facts, principles, processes and general concepts for a certain area of work or study</b> , while at the same time enabling further studying.	<b>Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study</b>
skills	Possesses <b>practical and creative skills</b> that enable the <b>solving</b> of known (predictable) and less known (unpredictable) <b>situations</b> ; Performs work and tasks of medium complexity, less standardized and relatively transparent; <b>Uses various devices, tools, equipment and materials</b> in the process of production and in the services; Communicates and cooperates with the group.	A range of cognitive and <b>practical skills</b> required to accomplish tasks and <b>solve problems</b> by selecting and <b>applying basic methods, tools, materials</b> and information
competence	<b>Plans, prepares, organizes and evaluates the own work</b> , based upon predetermined authorisation, within the scope of the own work; Performs tasks that are not always defined in advance, with a certain degree of independence and responsibility.	Takes <b>responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study</b> ; Adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems

# Examples of level descriptors

	Level VI MKQF	Level 6 EQF
knowledge	<p>Demonstrates <b>knowledge and understanding in the scientific field of study</b> that builds upon previous education and training, including <b>knowledge in the domain of theoretical, practical, conceptual, comparative and critical perspectives in the scientific field</b> according to the relevant methodology;</p> <p>Understanding of a certain area and knowledge of current issues in relation to scientific research and new sources of knowledge.</p> <p><b>Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of different theories and methodologies necessary for the wider area of research.</b></p>	<p><b>Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principle</b></p>
skills	<p>Is able to apply knowledge and understanding in a manner that shows a professional approach to the <b>work or the profession</b>;</p> <p>Demonstrates <b>ability to identify, analyse and solve problems</b>;</p> <p>Capability to <b>find and support arguments within the profession or the field of study</b>;</p> <p>Capability to collect, analyse, evaluate and present information, ideas and concepts from relevant data;</p> <p>Capability to <b>assess theoretical and practical issues, provide explanations for the reasons and to select an appropriate solution</b>;</p> <p>Takes initiative to identify the requirements for acquiring further knowledge and study with a high degree of independence;</p> <p>Capability to communicate and discuss information, ideas, problems and solutions, when the decision criteria and the scope of the task have been clearly defined, both with <b>professional and the non-expert public</b>.</p>	<p><b>Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study</b></p>
competence	<p><b>Takes responsibility for the own results and shared responsibility for the collective results</b>;</p> <p>Capability for independent participation, with a professional approach, in specific scientific and interdisciplinary discussions.</p> <p>Makes relevant judgement by taking into consideration the personal, social, scientific and ethical aspects.</p>	<p>Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; <b>Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups</b></p>

## EQF Criterion 3

- **Learning outcomes are key concept for the MQF and its qualifications**
- **Primary education LO** gradual implemented. Curricula designed per period and per grade according to educational goals and expected learning outcomes for each subject.
- **General secondary education** curricula are designed according to educational goals and expected learning outcomes for each subject
- For part of **VET programmes** the qualification standards are described in LO and linked with occupational standards
- **Higher Education** - all accredited study programmes are LO based
- **Adult education** - the programmes are designed on the basis of learning outcomes.

## EQF Criterion 3

### ➤ **Validation of non-formal and informal learning (VNFIL)**

- Supported with the MQF and described in the MQF-Baselines.
- Policy and legal framework related with non-formal education and VET includes provisions on the development of VNFIL.
- Formulated in: legislation, strategies, the Concept Paper on Non-formal Adult Education and Informal Learning in the Republic of Macedonia and best practices.
- Further development and quality assurance is needed.

### ➤ **Credit system**

- ECTS - used in higher education system
- ECVET - planned
- Additional national credit system for general education - envisaged.

## Criterion 4

### ➤ **Transparent procedures according to the national legislation**

#### **1. Standards of qualifications - fundamental elements**

#### **2. Methodology for Allocation of Qualifications in the MQF**

- The process started with the Inventory and Analysis of Existing Qualifications and a Synthesis Report (2014)
- Workshops for defining key learning outcomes and leveling old VET-4 qualifications (August – December 2015)
- Currently the VET Centre is developing Guidelines for leveling of existing qualifications and new approach will be implemented for new qualifications
- HE qualifications - through accreditation

# Inventory and Analysis of Existing Qualifications and a Synthesis Report

- includes 241 qualifications from general education, formal VET and non-formal verified programmes
- includes 1,190 higher education qualifications
- analysis of a sample of qualifications
- findings
- conclusions for EQF Referencing (criteria 3 and 4)



## EQF Criterion 5

- **QA system for primary and secondary education**
  - accreditation, self-evaluation and external evaluation
  - final exam/state matura in Secondary Education
- **QA system for higher education**
  - Consists of accreditation, self-evaluation and external evaluation

## EQF Criterion 6

Active involvement of representatives of the external quality assurance bodies:

- National Examination Centre
- State Educational Inspectorate and
- Higher Education Accreditation and Evaluation Board

Annex 4 - written agreements of these bodies on the Report

## EQF Criterion 7

- Eduarda Castel Branco – ETF and EQF AG member
- Prof. Mile Dzelalija, PhD – University of Split, Croatia and EQF AG member
- John O'Connor – QQI, Ireland and EQF AG member.

## EQF Criterion 8

### The Referencing of the Macedonian Qualifications Framework with the EQF

- was presented and agreed with the National Board for the Macedonian Qualifications Framework.
- was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.
- is published on the official Macedonian Qualifications Framework website: [www.mrk.mk](http://www.mrk.mk)

## EQF Criterion 9

- Following the approval of the Referencing Report by the EQF AG, the Ministry of Education and Science will request the European Commission to include it on the official EQF platform

## EQF Criterion 10

-Following the referencing process, all new qualification certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by competent bodies will contain a clear reference to the NQF and the EQF level.

-For the higher education sector this requirement has been covered with the format of the Diploma Supplement which is in use.

## Next steps

- Harmonization of Legislation with the NQF Law
  - Establishment of Sector Councils
  - Reform of VET qualifications/system
  - Strengthened partnership with employers and other stakeholders
  - Strengthening of Quality Assurance System
  - Validation of Prior Non-formal and Informal Learning
  - Development of database of qualifications
- Project support from international partners:
    - EU-IPA
    - ETF
    - British Council
    - World Bank
    - USAID
    - EACEA:
      - EQF-NCP
      - NQ-Database



# Thank you for your attention

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