

The Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) & its referencing to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

Dr Ioanna Dede
Head of Division for the Certification of Qualifications
EOPPEP



ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΠΛΑΙΣΙΟ ΠΡΟΣΟΝΤΩΝ
The Hellenic Qualifications Framework



European
Qualifications
Framework



Co-financed by Greece and the European Union

INTERMEDIATE MANAGING BODY:
MANAGING AUTHORITY OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME "EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING"
HELLENIC MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Contents

- I. The Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF). Synopsis. Brief Information on the nature, scope and structure of HQF**
- II. Information on the design, methodological tools, architecture and referencing of HQF to EQF**
- III. Route to the future: Benefits, plans and challenges**
- IV. Annex: A case of Qualification within EQF**



Part I

The Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF)

Synopsis
Brief information on the
nature, scope and structure of HQF

HQF Structure. Basic elements

HQF structure has been developed under the cooperation of:

- Educational Policy Authorities
- Representatives of the Educational and Academic Community
- Social Partners

HQF serves the principle of *quality assurance*, on the basis of learning outcomes, which are identified in terms of *knowledge, skills and competences*

What changes the HQF initiates

Two major changes to **the Educational System**:

- A. *The Learning Outcomes* approach is officially endorsed
- B. *Quality Assurance* of acquired qualifications is enhanced

Learning outcomes acquired via:

- formal
- non-formal and
- informal learning

are recognised and categorised, so that they can be certified and referenced to against the (8) levels of EQF

What is HQF?

HQF is:

- a framework for the classification of qualifications
- specifically designed to facilitate the future inclusion of qualifications awarded for non-formal and informal learning

Through EQF all Greek qualifications can be described and compared, determining at the same time the relationship between them.

Who are the main actors?

The **National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)** is the competent national authority for creating and developing the Hellenic Qualifications Framework and for referencing it to the **European Qualifications Framework**, under the supervision and coordination of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.



Who can benefit from HQF?

HQF benefits can be utilized by:

- Learners
- Employees
- Unemployed
- Employers
- Education and Training Providers
- Qualifications Certification Bodies
- Vocational Guidance Consultants
- Sectors
- Social Partners and
- Every citizen, holding an educational title

What is the aim of HQF?

The main aim of HQF is to create a coherent and easy-to-understand system for classifying qualifications acquired through all educational levels in the country and awarded for all forms of learning (formal, informal, non formal learning). This will be done gradually. The main objective is the classification of qualifications within the formal education system of the country. At a later stage, a classification system of qualifications acquired through non-formal education and informal learning will be developed.

In accordance to the common European strategy “Europe 2020”, HQF and its referencing to the EQF provides a tool for “translating” and comparing qualifications and aims at becoming an opportunity by promoting the mobility of learners and employees between Greece and other European countries.

The main development phases of HQF

1^η phase: (2009-2010)

Design
Public Consultation and
Institutional Establishment

2^η phase: (2010-2013)

Developing and
Referencing process of the
HQB to the EQF

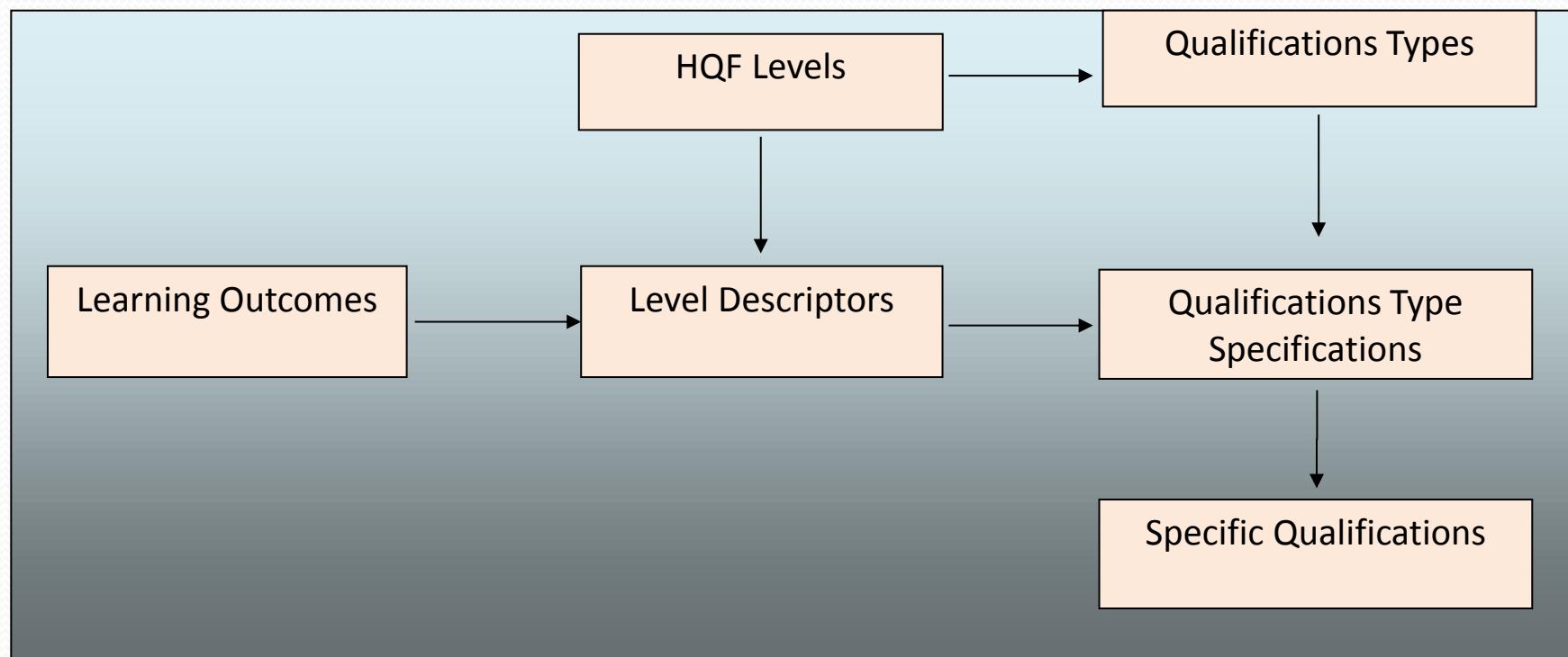
3^η phase: (2014-2015)

Classification of
qualifications awarded by the
Greek non formal educational
system **in the levels of the**
HQB (i.e. Reforms to the
vocational education system
deriving from recent
legislation (Law 4186/2013)

HQF Structure

HQF is based on a structure of **8 levels**, and for each level, **qualification types** are being developed

Each level is defined by the learning outcomes required for the award of a qualification at that particular level, which are expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competences



Basic structural elements of HQF

Levels	Learning outcomes
Cover the entire range of qualifications, from compulsory education to higher education.	<p>Everything a person knows, understands and is able to perform following the completion of a learning process.</p> <p>They are classified into knowledge, skills and competences.</p>
Descriptors	Qualification Types
<p>Learning outcomes corresponding to the qualifications of a specific level are defined by descriptors, determined by qualitative and quantitative ratings of knowledge, skills and competences</p> <p>Sectoral descriptors: specialized sectoral descriptors of the levels of the Hellenic Qualifications Framework, which identify sectoral learning outcomes corresponding to the qualifications per sector of economic activity.</p>	<p>“Tool” for classifying groups of titles sharing common characteristics and levels.</p> <p>The use of Qualification Types facilitates the differentiation of qualifications that are classified into the same level but are, at the same time, significantly different from one another.</p>

How Qualifications Types specifications are defined in HQF ?

The structural arrangement for the inclusion of qualifications in the HQF is that specific qualifications are related to defined Qualification Types and the Types are placed at framework levels as appropriate.

- HQF contains different Types of qualifications.
- They cover the whole range of the formal education system and the system of Initial Vocational Training.

Qualifications Types in HQF – Further clarifications

Every Qualification Type is defined by a **Specification**, setting out the learning outcomes related to such a qualification and providing more information, which includes :

- the 'size', or 'volume' of the learning achievement related to the qualification type,
- purpose of the qualification type ,
- sector of education related to the type,
- access and progression possibilities related to the type,
- interlink to employment.

HQF Development and Implementation milestones

A	January-July 2013 July 2013	Development of the structure of the HQF Presentation of the structure of the HQF by the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs
B	September 2013 October 2013	First meeting of the Referencing Committee . First draft of the Report of Referencing the HQF to the EQF.
C	November 2013	Second and third meeting of the Referencing Committee. Final draft of the Report of Referencing the HQF to the European Qualifications Framework submitted to the EQF Advisory Group
D	December 2013	Presentation of the draft Report of Referencing the Hellenic Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework to the EQF Advisory Group in Brussels
E	January 24 2014	Consultations Event at Cedefop with social partners and major stakeholders and presentation of the comments received on the Report Fourth meeting of the Referencing Committee
F	February 27 2014	Presentation of the revised Referencing Report to the EQF AG in Birmingham.



Part II

Further information on design, methodological tools, architecture and governance of HQF

Qualification Types Specifications elements

- **Title:** Refers to a specific nomenclature to be adopted for each type
- **Level:** Refers to the level of the Qualification Type in the HQF
- **Brief description:** Is intended to facilitate its understanding and use
- **Volume:** the following metric system is proposed:



Qualification Types Specifications elements

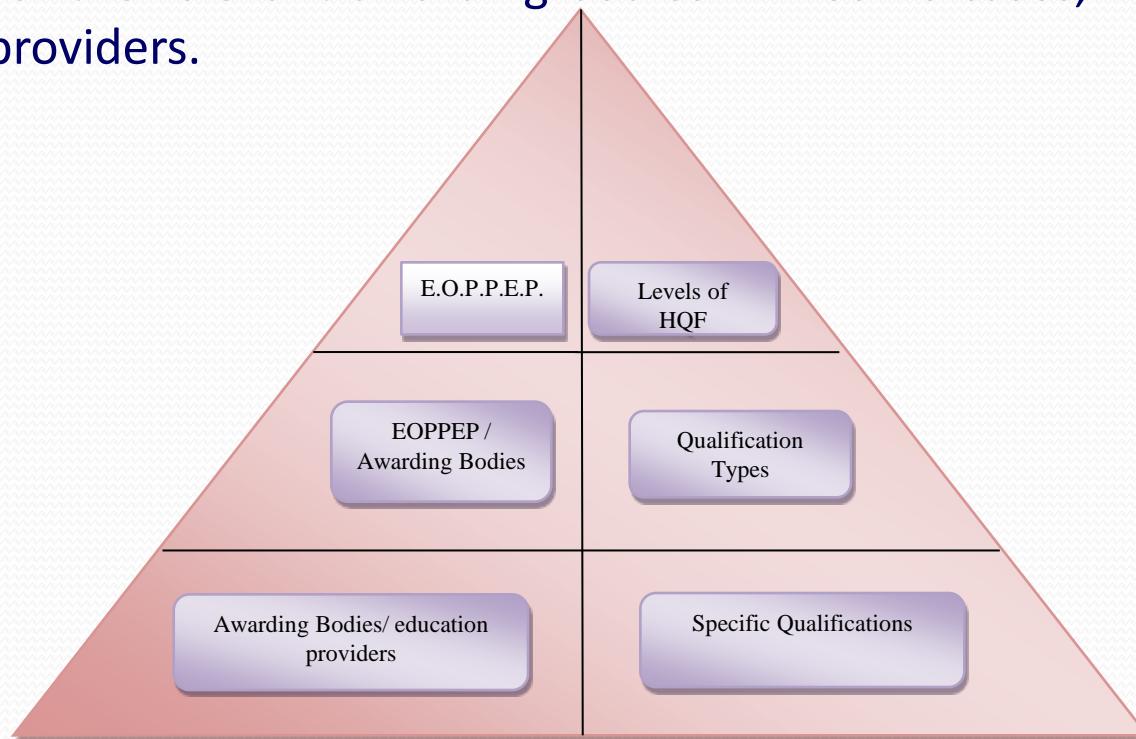
- **Purpose:** Specifications of Qualifications types in HQF, also include classification according to the “purpose” or sector to which the specific type refers, as follows:
 - «**Basic**» Qualifications reflect a coherent set of learning outcomes, usually of rather large volume / range.
 - «**Supplementary**» Qualifications are awarded for a learning achievement that is added to a previous qualification.
 - «**Sectoral Qualifications**»: qualifications awarded as an outcome of an assessment and validation process, upon verification by a competent sectoral body that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to set standards. If the competent sectoral body has international acknowledgment, the qualification is named "international sectoral qualification".
 - Special purpose**" qualifications are granted for a set of learning outcomes, which are formatting a distinct achievement that can only be associated with one of the components of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, competencies) that define a level.

Qualification Types Specifications elements

- **Educational Sector:** Specification of the type will also indicate which sector of the educational system is connected to the type of qualification.
- **Relation to Employment :** Provides a brief outline of the nature and range of employment opportunities, which relate to the qualifications of the type.
- **Access / development potential:** Each type of qualifications will provide the necessary information on access to programs leading to the acquisition of qualifications of this type (including prior monitoring, where required) and the development potential of the holders of qualifications through learning opportunities which lead to qualifications, either at the same level or at a higher one.

HQF Governance

The design of the architecture of the HQF and the development of the framework levels were led by EOPPEP, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. The development of specifications for Qualification Types is the joint responsibility of EOPPEP and the relevant awarding bodies. The task of identifying and describing the learning outcomes for specific qualifications of each type will be the responsibility of the relevant awarding bodies – in some cases, with the support of education providers.



Awarding Bodies in terms of HQF

The awarding bodies in the context of HQF are the following:

- Ministry of Education & Religious Affairs
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of National Defence
- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of the Marine & Aegean Sea
- EOPPEP
- Universities and Technological Educational Institutions



Part III

Referencing of HQF to EQF

LEVEL OF THE HQF & EQF	GENERAL EDUCATION	QUALIFICATION / TITLE AWARDED	VET	QUALIFICATION / TITLE AWARDED
1	PRIMARY EDUCATION 6-12 years old: From the age of 6 years till the age of 12 years children attend primary school	PRIMARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE (compulsory) (APOLYTIRIO DIMOTIKOU)		
2	LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION 13-15 years old: From the age of 13 years till the age of 15 years children attend lower secondary school	LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE (compulsory) (APOLYTIRIO GYMNASIOU)		
3			INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING (post lower secondary level)	VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL (SEK) CERTIFICATE (PTYCHIO EPAGGELMATIKIS EIDIKOTITAS EPIPEDOU 3- SEK) <i>*(VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE (IEK) CERTIFICATE) (Initial Vocational Training) (PISTOPOIITIKO EPAGELMATIKIS KATARTISIS EPIPEDOU 1)</i>
4	UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION 16-18 years old: From the age of 16 years till the age of 18 years teenagers attend upper secondary school	GENERAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL CERTIFICATE (non compulsory) (APOLYTIRIO LYKEIOU)	VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (post lower secondary level) 16-18 years old: From the age of 16 years till the age of 18 years teenagers attend EPAS	VOCATIONAL SCHOOL (EPAS) CERTIFICATE (PTYCHIO EPAS)

LEVEL OF THE HQF & EQF	GENERAL EDUCATION	QUALIFICATION / TITLE AWARDED	VET	QUALIFICATION / TITLE AWARDED
4			VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION 16-18 years old: From the age of 16 years till the age of 18 years teenagers attend EPAL	VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL (EPAL) 'DEGREE'** (PTYCHIO EPAGGELMATIKIS EIDIKOTITAS EPIPEDOU 3-EPAL) VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL (EPAL) CERTIFICATE (APOLITIRIO EPAGGELMATIKOU LYKEIOU-EPAL)
5	POST SECONDARY AND NOT HIGHER EDUCATION	DIPLOMA OR "DEGREE" ** (DIPLOMA /PTYCHIO ANOTERAS SCHOLIS)	INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING (post upper secondary and non-tertiary level) VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (post upper secondary and non-tertiary level)	VOCATIONAL TRAINING DIPLOMA (DIPLOMA EPAGGELMATIKIS EIDIKOTITAS EPIPEDOU 4 - IEK) *(VOCATIONAL TRAINING DIPLOMA) (DIPLOMA EPAGGELMATIKIS KATARTISIS EPIPEDOU METADEFTEROVATHMIAS EPAGGELMATIKIS KATARTISIS – I.E.K.) VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL 'DEGREE'** (VOCATIONAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL 'DEGREE'**/ CERTIFICATE + APPRENTICESHIP CLASS) (PTYCHIO EPAGGELMATIKIS EIDIKOTITAS EPIPEDOU 4-EPAL)

LEVEL OF THE HQF & EQF	HIGHER EDUCATION	QUALIFICATION / TITLE AWARDED
6	HIGHER EDUCATION	BACHELOR DEGREE (PTYCHIO) UNIVERSITIES/ TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (TEI)
7	HIGHER EDUCATION	MASTER'S DEGREE (METAPTYCHIAKO DIPLOMA EIDIKEFSIS) UNIVERSITIES/TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (TEI)
8	HIGHER EDUCATION	DOCTORATE (DIDAKTORIKO DIPLOMA) UNIVERSITIES

* *This qualification is no longer awarded since the enactment of the Law 4186/2013*

** It should be noted that the word “Degree” whenever used within quotation marks, it signifies that it is a direct translation from the terminology in Greek as it appears in the Greek legislation (ptychio). In Greek, the word ptychio is used for titles of study from different education levels (higher, secondary etc). It is by no means to be confused with its usage in the English language, whereby the word degree refers to higher education title of study, i.e. Bachelor's Degree.

Referencing of HQF to EQF

HQF and EQF share common design criteria:

- HQF is a structure of eight levels, defined by level descriptors.
- HQF is a comprehensive and integrated framework, designed to relate to qualifications awarded.
- In the HQF, the statements that define the levels are completely neutral in terms of fields of learning.
- In the HQF the level descriptors are designed to be read across all strands of learning outcomes.
- In the HQF key words or phrases are introduced as 'threshold' or distinguishing factors in the description of learning outcomes at each level.
- There is a very strong correlation between the core concepts of the HQF and those that underpin the EQF: both frameworks define levels in terms of learning outcomes associated with qualifications at a level; both frameworks define learning outcomes in three domains - Knowledge, Skills and Competences. Moreover, the definitions of these terms - learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and competences - as developed for the EQF, have been adopted for the HQF, so that a direct comparison of the level descriptors of the two frameworks is greatly facilitated.
- In addition, definitions of other key terms developed for the EQF have also been adopted for use in the HQF; these are: 'qualification' and 'national qualifications framework'.
- The HQF adopts the concept of 'qualification types'. Qualification types are a feature of many national qualifications frameworks that have been successfully referenced to the EQF.

Stakeholders and QA bodies involvement in the referencing process

Stakeholders involvement.

A wide range of stakeholders collaborated in the context of an open dialogue.

In the Advisory Committee, that supported E.O.P.P.E.P. in the development and implementation of the NQF as well as in the referencing process participate:

- a) Representatives of the Conference of Rectors of Universities
- b) Representatives of the Conference of Presidents of Technological Educational Institutions
- c) Representatives of the Federation of Enterprises and Industry (S.E.V.)
- d) Representatives of the General Confederation of Professional Craftsmen and Tradesmen in Greece (G.S.E.V.E.E.)
- e) Representatives of the National Confederation of Greek Commerce (E.S.E.E.)
- f) Representatives of the General Confederation of Workers in Greece (G.S.E.E.)
- g) Representatives of the Public Administration Senior Management Associations of Civil Servants (A.D.E.D.Y.),
- h) Representatives of the National Accreditation System (E.SY.D. S.A.)
- i) Representatives of the National Centre for Public Administration and local Administration (E.K.D.D.A.)

Quality Assurance underpinning HQF

The national system for quality assurance in education and training refers to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and is in accordance with the relevant European recommendations and directives. As such, all titles awarded by the Greek formal education system have been included in the eight (8) levels of the NQF

QA bodies which are institutionally and operationally involved within the framework of HQF:

- ***The Authority for Quality Assurance in Primary and Secondary Education (ADIPPDE),***
- ***The Educational Policy Institute – IEP,***
- ***The Authority for the Certification and Quality Assurance in Higher Education (A DI P - HQAA),***
- ***The National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)***

The National Framework for Quality Assurance in lifelong learning π³

EOPPEP is the national reference point for QA and represents Greece at the European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET).

Selection and involvement of international experts

- EOPPEP has established a Steering Committee to assist in overseeing the process of referencing the HQF to the EQF.
- The Committee includes two international experts, with knowledge and experience of the EQF and qualifications systems.
- Selection of international experts was based on two criteria: the first concerns their participation in the EQF Advisory Group and familiarity with the EQF, the second refers to their experience in the development of national qualifications frameworks.
- As a result of this selection, the Referencing Committee involved the following two international experts:
 - Mile Dzelalija, Professor, University of Split; and
 - Isabelle le Moullour, BIBB (Germany).



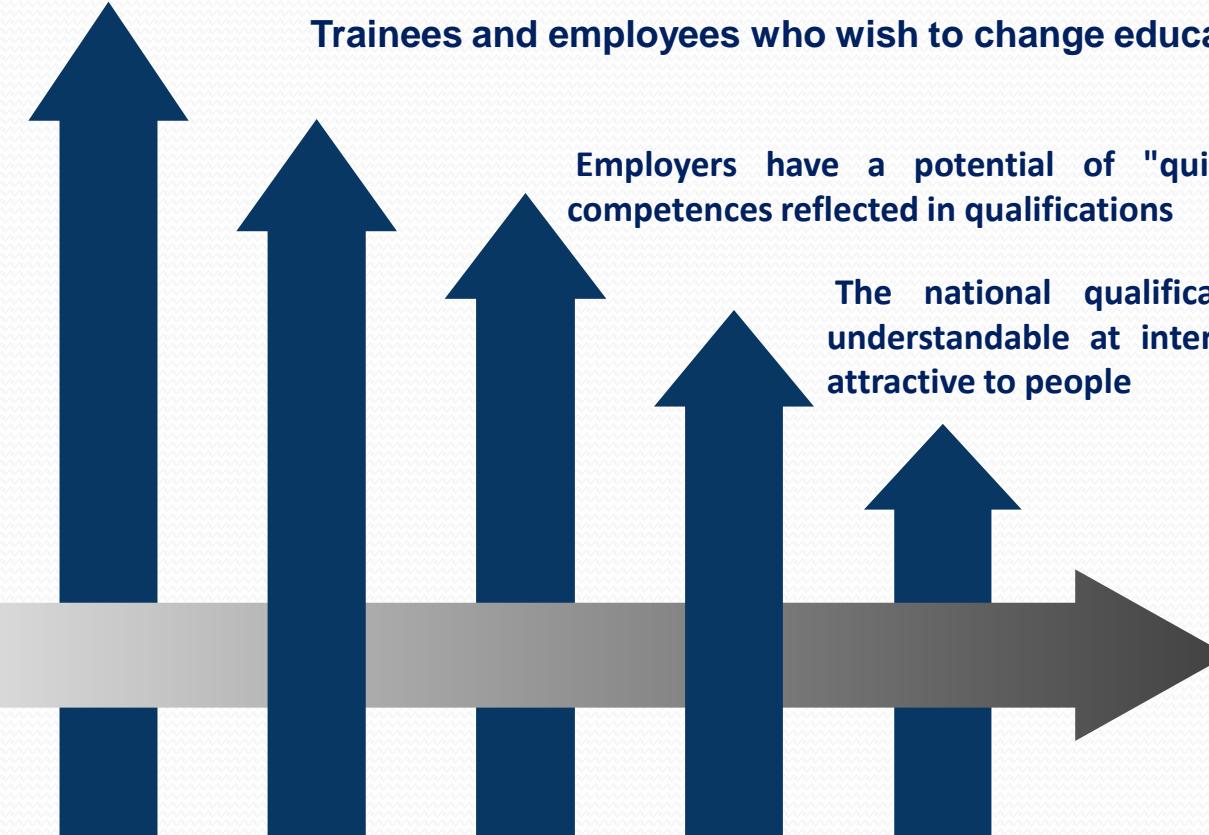
Part IV

Route to the future: Benefits, Plans and Challenges

Strengths – Benefits regarding HQF and its referencing to EQF

All citizens are empowered to systematic presentation of the content of their qualifications, with reference to the National and European Qualifications Frameworks

Trainees and employees who wish to change educational path or job or country,



Employers have a potential of "quick reading" the knowledge, skills and competences reflected in qualifications

The national qualification certification system is clear and understandable at international level. Lifelong learning becomes attractive to people

The analysis of the characteristics of qualifications in order to classify them within the levels of the HQF helps to clarify the relationship between education, training and labour market and provides a reference point for quality assurance.

Challenges, concerning HQF and its referencing to EQF

HQF is explicitly designed to accommodate qualifications of all kinds, is related to all forms of learning, and fully corresponds to the EQF in structural, operational and conceptual terms. The HQF apparatus contains elements that are specifically designed to facilitate the inclusion of qualifications awarded for non-formal and informal learning.

**The need to identify
the learning outcomes
that are inherent in specific
subject-based
qualifications**

**the design of new
Types of qualifications
around specified learning
outcome requirements**

**The active linkage to
the validation of
non-formal
and informal learning,**

**the linkage to credit
Systems (already to ECTS
-planned to ECVET)**

SELF- CERTIFICATION (since HQF fulfills the Higher Education Criteria and also fulfills the basic validation criteria of conformity to the Bologna Framework

- There is evident link between HQF and the qualifications descriptors of the cycles of the European Framework. HQF corresponds to the three cycles of the Bologna Process. Part of Dublin terminology and descriptors are utilized in terms of HQF (namely, critical analysis / understanding). Both are embedded on learning outcomes.
- Moreover, qualifications in HQF are described utilizing ECTS terminology.
- Qualifications Assignment processes to HQF are transparent
- European Standards and Directives for Quality Assurance in the European Area of Higher Education (ESG) are fully implemented within the quality assurance system (ADIP – Crit 5)
- All Tertiary Education Institutions in Greece are obliged to issue a Diploma Supplement (Crit. 6).
- Learning Outcomes: Even though HQF has been developed on the notion of learning outcomes, still more adaptations are required, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of the total transition of the Educational System into an outcome- based system.

Important information: Validation of non- formal and informal learning (under the support of international experts) has already concluded the global best practice analysis. HQF will facilitate the above-mentioned transition.

Further HQF development plans

The development process of HQF follows relevant procedures of other EU Member States and can be divided into three major and distinctive stages:

- **Stage 1:** establishing legal and institutional consolidations.
- **Stage 2:** creating a solid and secure base for developing and corresponding the HQF to the EQF (Relational Framework).
- **Stage 3:** aiming at enhancing the presence and functionality of the HQF within the education system (including all forms of learning) and coping with the major existing challenges.

Main objective: to consolidate HQF as the main lever of all efforts for the restructuring of the Greek education system (“Reforming HQF”).

Schedule:

- a) development and piloting of methodologies for the identification and certification of learning outcomes,
- b) development of processes and procedures for the inclusion of sectoral qualifications in the HQF in order to ensure transparency and quality assurance and
- c) reconstruction of the Qualifications Registry (already operational in EOPPEP).



Annex

A Qualification case within HQF



TYPE SPECIFICATIONS	
TITLE	VOCATIONAL TRAINING DIPLOMA (Initial Vocational Training) (post secondary level) (DIPLOMA EPAGGELMATIKHS EIDIKOTHTAS EPIPEDOY 4-IEK)
LEVEL	5
AWARDING BODY	EOPPEP
SUMMARY DESCRIPTOR	The qualifications of this type corresponds to initial vocational training that is offered after the completion of upper secondary education (Lykeio). It covers a range of professional qualifications. The training includes theoretical, laboratory and mixed classes, in the field of initial vocational training. A prerequisite for the awarding of the title is the successful participation of IEK graduates in initial vocational training certification exams. The internship is optional, lasts for 6 months and it should be completed before the certification exam results. The internship period is counted for the obtaining of professional rights.
SIZE/ VOLUME	5 semesters
AIM/ CATEGORY	Basic
EDUCATIONAL SECTOR	Initial Vocational Training (post secondary level)



LEARNING OUTCOMES	KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the special principles and concepts, the content and scientific vocabulary of their specialty.• Analyze information that enable them to understand their work field.• Possess at an adequate level the methods and procedures of the new technologies.• Know the safety and hygiene requirements and the relevant actions for their specialty.
	SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold a wide range of cognitive and practical skills of their specialty.• Apply with fluency a range of specialized techniques in their field of expertise.• Solve in a creative manner specific problems that arise in their working environment.• Have communication skills at the level of theoretical and technical information in subjects of their expertise.• Handle with expertise the required technological equipment of their specialty.
	COMPETENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operate with autonomy in their field of work and have the ability to supervise others, depending on their specialty and in the context of their duties.• Engage effectively in group work.• Act within the scope of their specialty according to the principles of the professional ethics.• Develop initiatives in specific fields of their specialty.
RELEVANCE TO EMPLOYMENT		Holders of qualifications that belong to this type may work either as self-employed or as employees in their specialty, in accordance with the applicable legal framework.
ACCESS/TRANSITIONS		Access to this type of qualification have students that have completed upper secondary education (General Lykeio, level 4). Holders of Apolytirio EPAL (level 4) may enroll in the 3rd semester of a relevant specialty or in the 4th semester, if they are holders of Apolytirio Polykladikou Lykeiou (EPL) (former qualification type). Holders of this type of qualifications do not have access to programs at a higher level.

Thank you for your attention!

Dr Ioanna Dede
Head of Division for the Certification of Qualifications



Co-financed by Greece and the European Union

INTERMEDIATE MANAGING BODY:
MANAGING AUTHORITY OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME "EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING"
HELLENIC MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS