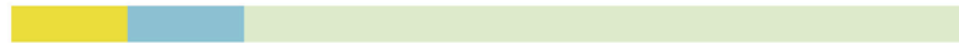


# NQF-in



Developing organisational and financial models for including non-formal sector qualifications in National Qualifications Frameworks

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Developing organisational and financial models for including non-formal sector qualifications in National Qualifications Frameworks

## Country case - Croatia

### Including of qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework

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5. Quality assurance of qualifications
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7. Organizational and financial procedures regarding inclusion of non-formal qualifications?

## National Qualifications Framework in Croatia - historical background

- Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF) officially commenced in March 2006
  - Ministry of Science, Education and Sports formed the Committee for the Introduction of the CROQF
- Baseline of the Croatian Qualifications Framework to the Government for adoption at the beginning of 2007.
  - in July 2007, the Government adopted the Baseline of the CROQF.
  - In September 2007. the National Committee for Development of the CROQF
- set of documents were developed within the process, including the all key stakeholders.

## National Qualifications Framework in Croatia - historical background

- National Committee for the Implementation of the CROQF, later promoted in National Council for Development of Human Potentials was established in May 2010 ([www.kvalifikacije.hr](http://www.kvalifikacije.hr)).
- The Croatian Qualifications Framework is a platform for coordination and integration of all key stakeholders in the qualifications system in Croatia:
  - paying attention to the needs of the labour market, and other needs of individuals and society. The CROQF introduces a set of criteria, creating the basis for acceptable transparency, access, progression, award (including validation/assessment and recognition) and reliability of qualifications.
- Validation of non-formal and informal learning is defined by the Law on the CROQF and specific by-law on Validation
  - this by-law has not been yet adopted by the Minister, but prepared by all key stakeholders (probably in 2018)

## National Qualifications Framework in Croatia - historical background

- According to legislations, all institutions at all levels can organise non-formal learning
- Educational institutions, including HEIs, can develop their programmes for validation, and only after the evaluation of the programme, only for validation, institution can implement it.
- There are some additional requirements to institutions in order to be registered, comparing to usual programmes (i.e. Professionals in validation)

## Rationale for implementation of the NQF

The CROQF has been developed for:

- efficient communication between stakeholders;
- reflection and classification of the present system, including a description of “old” qualifications and facilitation of recognition of foreign qualifications
- motivating authorities in the national qualifications systems, influencing reforms, improving effectiveness of education and training, promoting the full use of learning outcomes, application of comprehensive quality assurance systems, and development of the validation of non-formal and informal learning

## National Qualifications Framework in Croatia

- Basis for understanding the existing qualifications and their interrelations and for the development of new qualifications standards.
- The comprehensive systematization of qualifications is to include all the quality assured qualifications that an individual may have acquired, regardless of the way of learning.
- Stronger link is created between the labour market, the formal education system, and the validation of non-formal and informal learning.



## National Qualifications Framework in Croatia

- Based on the Croatian educational tradition, the current conditions and the level of development of society, the needs of the economy, individual and society as a whole.
- Incorporates the provisions of the EQF, EU guidelines, and international regulations, in keeping with the foreign policy of the Republic of Croatia.
- Unified system that allows for learning outcomes to be measured and compared.

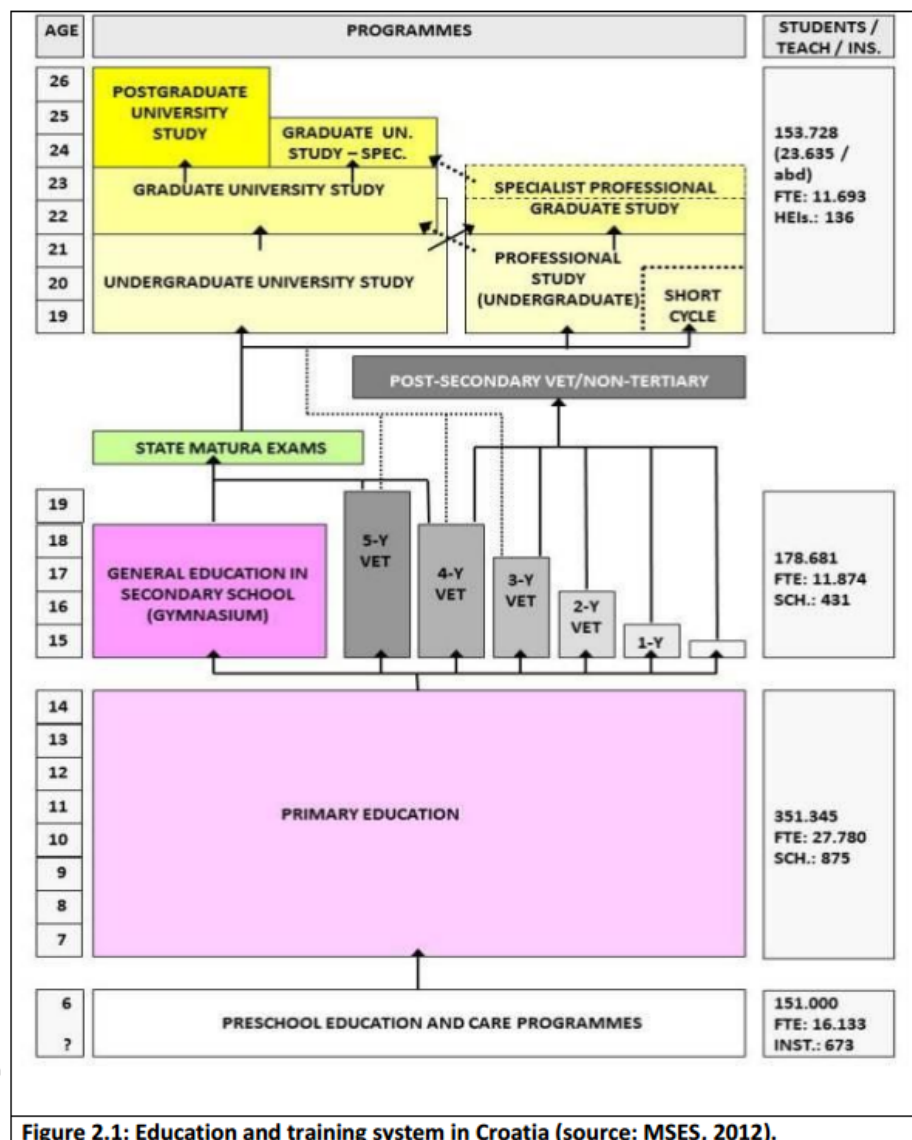


Figure 2.1: Education and training system in Croatia (source: MSES, 2012).

## Qualifications in the CROQF

### What qualifications might be included in the system?

- All types of qualifications:
  - Higher education (short, first, second and third cycles, and both strands)
  - Vocational education and training
  - General education (primary and gymnasium)
- Both classes of qualifications:
  - Full qualifications
  - Partial qualifications (special purpose, major, minor, additional, etc.)
- Independent to ways of learning (but all quality assured to have “equal value”):
  - Formal
  - Non-formal and informal learning (quality assured assessment and certification)
- There are no restrictions regarding the type of qualifications that might be included in the NQF – only – requirements for implementation of quality assurance process;
- Validation of non-formal and informal learning is based on equal value principle
  - There are no “non-formal” or “informal” qualifications – only “qualifications” !

## Qualifications in the CROQF

### How qualifications might be included in the system?

- Programmes are validated by QA bodies (QA agencies, separate for each sector – HE, VET and GE).
- There is prescribed form for the submission of qualifications standard to the Register – *HKO\_SK – Request for Entry of Qualification Standard*,
  - Submission to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports in electronic form + stamped and signed by the authorized person
  - Validation by Sector council, and registration by the Minister (if relevant, for some qualifications standards it is necessary to register occupational standards)
  - Qualifications standards – are further the base for design and validation of concrete programmes for achievements of qualifications – which is validated by QA agencies (by using those standards)

## Qualifications in the CROQF

### How qualifications might be included in the system?

#### HKO\_SK Form

- Procedures and form (HKO\_SK) for Qualifications Standards – defined in the CROQF Act, and Decree on the CROQF Register
  - Design and submission; Validation; Registration
- Based on the registered Qualification Standards – registered institutions can apply concrete programmes for achievements of qualifications
  - All elements in the Qualifications Standard must be fulfilled – which is validated by QA agencies

## Institutions responsible for the quality assurance of non-formal sector qualifications

- Three agencies for different educational sectors
  - higher education
  - vocational education
  - training and adult education, and general education
- Play a major role for external quality assurance of education and training, including curricula development, assessment and awarding of qualifications.
- Sectoral councils (25 sectors and one cross-sectoral or interdisciplinary) are advisory and professional bodies ensuring the development of human potential in line with labour market needs within respective sector.
- The National Council for Development of Human Potential is a central strategic body for the CROQF.

### Higher education sector

- Agency for Science and Higher Education - external quality assurance (EQAR and ENQA)
- Scientific and higher education institutions - internal quality assurance

## Quality assurance of qualifications in CROQF

- Validation of qualification standards (and occupational standards)
  - Responsibility:
    - Sector councils
    - National committee
    - Minister
  - Free of charge (the register – public ownership)
- Validation of proposed programmes including institutions, according to qualification standards
  - Responsibility:
    - Quality assurance bodies (agencies)
  - Fees for private institutions

## What are the organizational and financial procedures regarding inclusion of non-formal qualifications?

- awarding institutions and CROQF
- can apply to introduce qualifications (qualification standards and programmes according standards) in the CROQF:
  - Higher education institutions (universities, etc.)
  - Schools
  - Associations
  - Chambers
  - Etc.



## How “non-formal” qualifications are understood?

### Legal status of non-formal sector qualifications included in the NQF

- This chapter will be quite different for Croatia
- There are no “non-formal sector qualifications” in the CROQF
- There are JUST qualifications which learning outcomes can be achieved by different types of learning – formal, non-formal and informal learning, including relevant assessment. If it is by non-formal and informal learning, it is up to individual students (if there is a respective program for validation and registered institution for the specific qualification) to go through the process of validation.

## How “non-formal” qualifications are understood?

- Procedure is – one – the same for all types of qualifications.
- Levelling of qualifications by validation is very simple – according to learning outcomes specified in the programme for validation, which is related to that specific qualification (qualification standard)

## How “non-formal” qualifications are understood?

- Procedure is explained in the Law on the CROQF and 2 by-laws.
  - For the concrete qualification, there are 2 parts of the design, validation and registration:
    - **First** – standards for each qualification (QA standards – key learning outcomes, assessment criteria, min credits, etc.) + occupational standard, only if relevant
    - **Second** – programmes for achievement of qualifications (*e.g., study programmes. Programmes can integrate validation of NF and IF learning for all or some Units of learning outcomes*), which are designed, validated and registered according to the specific qualifications standard (**First**)
  - Qualification standards (and occupational, if relevant) are validated by Sector councils (25 councils)

## What are the organizational and financial procedures regarding inclusion of non-formal qualifications?

- As written, there are no “non-school qualifications”
- There is only non-formal and informal learning, and validation of non-formal and informal learning – to achieve – a **qualification** or a part.
- Financing:
  - Free of charge (public ownership of qualifications standards) for registration of qualifications standards
  - But, registration of programmes for achievements – also programmes which can integrate validation of non-formal and informal learning for all or only some units of learning outcomes – for private institutions can be charged by quality assurance agencies.

Thank you for your attention

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