



Establishment of the Israeli National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as a mechanism to fostering the development of Israeli Human Capital  
IL 15 ENI SO 01 17(IL/14)



# Referencing to the EQF and Comparability with EQF

November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021



מדינת ישראל  
משרד החינוך  
STATE OF ISRAEL  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION





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## **Recommendation 2008 on the establishment of the EQF for LLL**

The EQF is designed to make it possible to compare qualifications' levels in national qualifications systems in the EU.

In 2008 Member States of the EU were invited to relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010, in particular by referencing, in a transparent manner, their qualification levels to the EQF levels, and, where appropriate, by developing NQFs in accordance with national legislation and practice.



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# The role of the EQF Advisory Group

The EQF Advisory Group was set up in 2008 to ensure overall coherence and promote transparency and trust in the process of referencing. Its role was confirmed by the 2017 Recommendation.

The group is chaired by the **European Commission** and composed of **national representatives**, labour market actors, education and training and civil society representatives, as well as the **Council of Europe**.

It is supported by the expertise of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (**Cedefop**) and the European Training Foundation (**ETF**).

The group discusses each referencing report in detail and provides feedback to the presenting countries.

As the central forum for discussion between the Commission, Member States and stakeholders on EQF implementation, **the EQF Advisory Group plays an important role in building trust between the countries involved in the EQF. Trust is further developed through peer learning activities with a specific thematic focus.**



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# Recommendation 2008

## on the establishment of the EQF for LLL

### Background

- A voluntary Regional Qualifications Framework (by Recommendations rather than Directives)
- Education primarily competence of EU Member States
- EU countries have diverse qualification and education systems
- EQF is a tool for transparency, comparability and portability of people's qualifications in Europe
- The EQF is a reference framework linking different qualification systems based on learning outcomes



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## Influence of EQF in NQFs

- Basic principles and **8 level structure** inspired national frameworks
- **Bologna** 49 countries started to develop qualification frameworks for HE gradually integrated into NQFs covering all EQF levels and supporting LLL even in countries outside EU
- **Mutual trust** between countries and stakeholders increased



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## Referencing NQFs to the EQF

Referencing is a process that results in the establishment of a **relationship** between the levels of the European meta-framework (EQF) and the NQF or system.

The national referencing process is **an autonomous national process** where the relevant national stakeholders and authorities agree on the appropriate link between national qualifications levels and the EQF levels.

Following the approval of the national referencing reports by the national authorities and stakeholders, the report of each country is presented to the EQF Advisory Group.

The **referencing criteria** should ensure that NQFs are referenced to the EQF in a coherent and transparent way. The criteria also help with the structuring of referencing reports, which should include input and written statements from national quality assurance bodies and international experts.



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# Referencing NQFs to the EQF

The presentation to the EQF Advisory Group provides information in two main areas:

1. **The scope of the framework** (VET, general education, HE, qualifications outside the formal system), the **criteria and procedures** used for inclusion of qualifications in the framework and how **learning outcomes** are understood and used in the framework;
2. The **referencing** of NQF levels to the EQF levels, including the **methodologies** used to link NQF levels to the EQF levels, **stakeholders' involvement** in the referencing process (including quality assurance bodies), the selection and involvement of international **experts** and particular challenges and strengths in the referencing process.



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## How countries link NQFs to EQF

- Referencing reports are based on 10 criteria, with involvement of international experts.
- Referencing reports are discussed and peer reviewed by the EQF Advisory Group
- Referencing report are published on the EUROPASS website
- Countries mention EQF/NQF levels on certificates
- Link national databases through EUROPASS to other countries
- Countries update referencing report after 5-10 years





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# The referencing methodology

- Referencing involves linking national qualifications levels to the EQF levels
- Using the 10 referencing criteria
- Use of international experts
- Shifting towards use of learning outcomes
- The essential concept of 'best-fit'
- It will be necessary to review the referencing outcome from time to time



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## 10 Criteria for referencing EU countries

Criterion 1. **Responsibilities and/or legal competence** of all relevant national bodies involved in the referencing process are clearly determined and published by the competent public authorities.

Criterion 2. There is a **clear and demonstrable link** between the qualifications levels in the NQF or system and the level descriptors of the EQF.

Criterion 3. The NQF or qualifications system and its qualifications are based on **learning outcomes** and linked to validation of non-formal and informal learning and, where these exist, to credit systems.

Criterion 4. The **procedures for inclusion of qualifications** in the NQF or for the place of **qualifications** in the national qualification system are transparent.

Criterion 5. The **national QA system(s)** for education and training **refer(s) to the NQF** or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines.



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## 10 Criteria for referencing EU countries

Criterion 6. The stated **agreement of** the relevant **quality assurance bodies**.

Criterion 7. The referencing process shall involve **international experts**.

Criterion 8. The competent **national body** all certify the referencing of the NQF or system with the EQF by one comprehensive published report

Criterion 9. The official **EQF platform** shall maintain a public listing of member states that have confirmed that they have completed the referencing process, including links to completed referencing reports.

Criterion 10. **All new qualification** certificates, diplomas and Europass documents issued by the competent authorities contain **a clear reference**, by way of national qualifications systems, **to the appropriate EQF level**.



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## Recommendation 2017: priorities

- Finalising initial referencing and update/review of referencing
- EQF levels on all qualifications/certificates
- Link NQF databases/registers via Europass
- Communicating the EQF wider
- Learning outcomes – strengthening trust and supporting reform
- NQF qualifications outside formal education and training
- International qualifications
- Opening to Third Countries' national and regional qualifications frameworks



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## State of play: spring 2021

38 countries in the EQF Advisory Group

35 countries referenced to the EQF

4 countries presented an update

31 countries include EQF levels on certificates

22 countries include EQF levels in databases of qualifications

15 countries connected national databases or registers with Europass

More than 150 NQFs are in existence or under development worldwide



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# Comparability and Referencing Differencies

- The term “comparability” is used to express a clear distinction from the formal process of “referencing” European NQFs to the EQF.
- The comparative analysis is aimed to determine the relationship between the Third Countries NQFs and the EQF, in terms of their purpose, structure, levels and underpinning QA mechanisms.
- The comparability does not establish formal links between the Third Countries NQFs and the EQF or European NQFs.
- There are different parameters within each framework that must be considered.



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# Comparability and Referencing Similarities

- Comparability is aimed generate trust, by an analysis of the Third Countries NQFs and the EQF principles.
- Comparability requires an equivalent level of transparency and documentation, particularly in relation to key features such as the use of learning outcomes and quality assurance.
- By broadening and deepening the functional knowledge and understanding of respective frameworks, transparency in the frameworks can be further elevated and can enhance opportunities for future cooperation between Third Countries NQFs and Europe.



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## Case study: New Zealand (2016)

A joint Technical Working Group (TWG) was established between NZQA and the EQF Advisory Group.

For the NZQF, the TWG comprised the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

For the EQF the TWG comprised the EQF Advisory Group members from the Czech Republic, Germany and Ireland, and Cedefop and the European Commission.

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/assets/About-us/Our-role/international-ed/EQF-NZQF-comparative-analysis/3254-NZQA-Comparability-EC-NZQA-Joint-Report-FINAL-R2-online-version.pdf>



Comparative Analysis of the  
European Qualifications  
Framework and the New Zealand  
Qualifications Framework:  
Joint Technical Report





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## Case study: New Zealand (2016)

The TWG agreed to the structure and content of the report according to the following principles adapted from the Criteria and procedures for referencing national qualifications levels to the EQF:

- Principle 1: The **roles and responsibilities** of NZQA and the corresponding authorities for the EQF are clear and transparent.
- Principle 2: **Comparability** of the NZQF and the EQF and their levels.
- Principle 3: The NZQF and the EQF are based on **learning outcomes**.
- Principle 4: There are **transparent processes** for the inclusion of qualifications on both frameworks.
- Principle 5: Both qualifications frameworks are underpinned by **quality assurance** and are consistent with international quality assurance principles.
- Principle 6: National or regional policies for the **validation of all learning and credit systems**, where these exist, **are a key feature** of the qualifications frameworks.

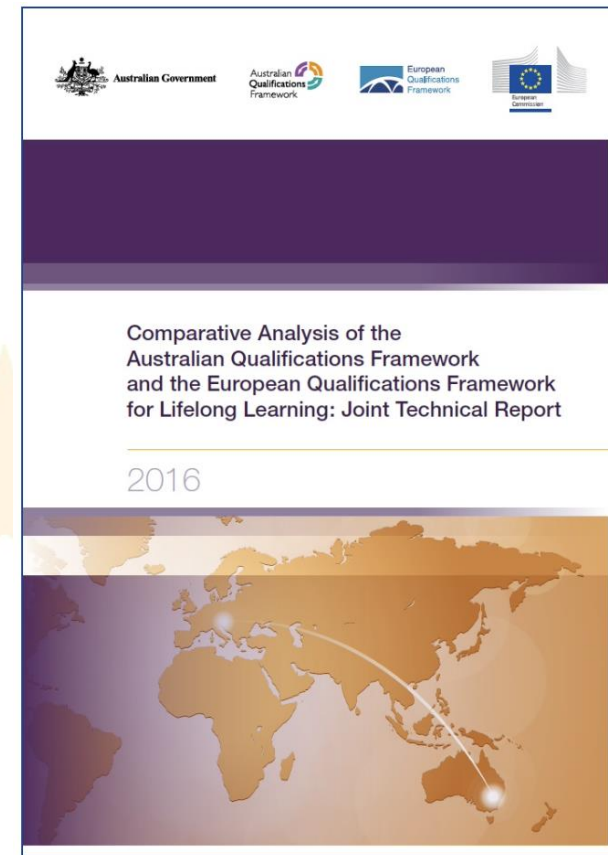


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## Case study: Australia (2016)

The joint AQF-EQF technical working group comprised representatives from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, members of the EQF Advisory Group and representatives from the European Commission and Cedefop.

<https://op.europa.eu/it/publication-detail/-/publication/ceb226e2-c35f-11e6-a6db-01aa75ed71a1>





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## Case study: Australia (2016)

The principles for comparison allow for in-depth comparative discussion of key elements with a focus on quality assurance and qualifications frameworks, and were agreed by the joint AQF-EQF technical working group during the visit to Australia in March 2015:

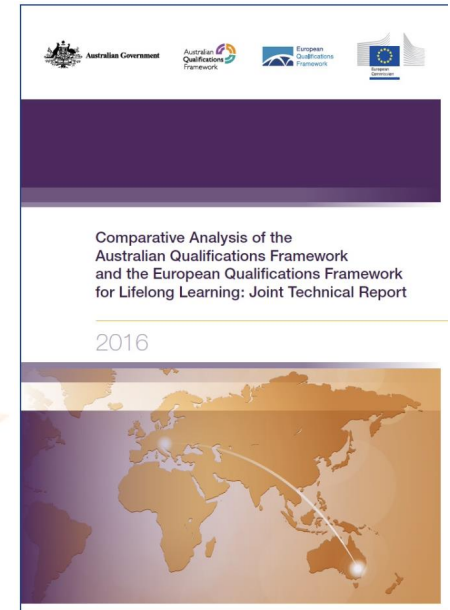
Principle 1: The **roles** of the responsible bodies for the AQF and the corresponding bodies for the EQF are clear and transparent.

Principle 2: **Comparability** of AQF and EQF and their levels.

Principle 3: The AQF and the EQF are based on **learning outcomes**.

Principle 4: **Policies** for qualifications and the **scope** of the framework, which qualifications are covered by framework, and non-formal and informal learning.

Principle 5: Both qualifications frameworks are underpinned by **quality assurance** principles.





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## Case study: Hong Kong (2017)

The Education Bureau (EDB) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the EQF AG have conducted a comparability study on the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) and the EQF. The Study is undertaken by a Joint Technical Group (JTG) consisting of representatives of the EDB and the EQF AG.

[https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2020-05/EQF-StudiesHongKong%26Europe-EN\\_1.pdf](https://europa.eu/europass/system/files/2020-05/EQF-StudiesHongKong%26Europe-EN_1.pdf)



### **Comparability Study of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF): Joint Technical Report**

January 2017



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Comparability Study of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF):  
Joint Technical Report

## Case study: Hong Kong (2017)

Principle 1: The **roles and responsibilities** in relation to the HKQF and the corresponding authorities for the EQF are clear and transparent

Principle 2: **Comparison** of the HKQF and the EQF demonstrates matching between the levels of the two frameworks

Principle 3: The HKQF and the EQF are based on **learning outcomes**

Principle 4: The **policies and processes** for the inclusion of qualifications on the HKQF referenced to the EQF are clear and transparent

Principle 5: Both qualifications frameworks are underpinned by **quality assurance** and are consistent with international quality assurance principles



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# Thank you for your attention!

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