Qualifications at EQF level 5:

Benefits for career and higher education

Main finding from the Cedefop study

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Aim of the study and research questions

- Which qualifications have been referenced to level 5 of the EQF?
- Which are the key purposes/functions of qualifications assigned to the EQF level 5? Progression to further learning and to employment?
- How have the learning outcomes approaches been applied for designing qualifications and for assigning them to the EQF level 5? The main challenges and opportunities faced by countries?
Scope of the study

- Comparative overview and analysis in 15 countries – referenced national qualifications levels to the EQF by June 2012: Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom

- In-depth analysis of 6 case studies: Austria, Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands
EQF level 5: bridging VET, HE and GE

Q: number of qualifications types.
*: PT – the qualification is governed by the VET system, but programmes are provided by higher and non-higher education institutions.
31 qualification types linked via NQFs to the EQF level 5:

- LT does not have any qualifications linked to the EQF level 5
- CZ and EE: VET qualifications outside the formal education system
- Only one type:
  - LV, NL – short cycle HE qualifications
  - AT – vocational qualifications
- Two types: SCHE and VET qualifications in parallel: BE (FI), DK, HR, LU
- Diversified qualifications landscape: UK, FR, MT, IE
EQF level 5 qualifications are considered important

Examples of Austria and France

- AT: VET college qualification: more than 137,000 students (2011/12), 24,471 graduates (2011), good prospects on the labour market

- FR: Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS) / Higher Technician Certificate; number of students and number of awards is increasing, 245,750 students (2011/12), 114,914 awarded diplomas

- FR: Diplôme Universitaire de technologie (DUT)/University Diploma of technology: the number of students and awarded qualifications slightly decreasing (115,018 students in 2011/2012, awarded DUT qualifications (47,331 in 2010)
EQF level 5 qualifications .... gaining importance

Examples of the Netherlands, Portugal, Czech Republic, Lithuania:

NL: Associate Degree (SCHE): (pilot scheme since 2006), 149 programme accredited, number of students is increasing (1,026; 2010/2011)

PT: Diploma de Especialização Tecnológica (DET) /Technological Specialisation Diploma: the number of enrolled learners (7,177, 2010/2011) and graduates (2,648, 2009/10) is increasing

CZ: Profesní kvalifikace /Vocational Qualifications; six qualifications, small number of awarded qualifications

LT: currently no qualifications, labour market needs, legal framework discussed
Access and progression for education and employment

- 14 qualification types are primarily oriented towards the labour market
- 11 qualifications types: have double function: valued as labour market entry qualifications and entry to HE (in some cases also provide credit transfer possibilities)
- 8 qualification types have clearly articulated entry routes to BA programmes, some qualifications solely prepare for further studies
Distinct professional profile and labour market relevance

- Most EQF level 5 qualifications are clearly linked to occupations / professions

- Most SCHE qualifications with the own profile and labour market relevance – stand-alone qualifications

- Qualifications available for most economic sectors with strong focus on services in some countries

- More widely accepted by employers in countries with long tradition (AT, FR)
Progression to HE

EQF level 5 qualifications can help progress to or within HE:

- Half of the EQF level 5 qualifications are SCHE qualifications: generally provide access (including credit transfer) to BA: (e.g. NL, FR, IE, MT, UK)

- Progression opportunities are used differently across and within the countries

- VET college qualification in AT: 50% continue to HE

- Progression to HE in many CVET qualification (with strong labour market focus) is not an explicit goal (CZ, EE, HR)
A heterogynous group of learners

.... as regards their education, age and/or work experience: in many countries data unavailable

- Especially attractive for learners wit VET background and already in employment (NL)

- Also attractive to students with qualification higher or at the same level (DK)

- Non-traditional learners with low formal qualifications - access though validation of working experience
### Previous activity of level 5 learners in AD (NL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directly from HAVO (Dutch qualifications framework/ EQF level 4)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directly from MBO (Dutch qualifications framework/ EQF level 4 or level 3)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed in bachelor</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (less than three years)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (more than three years)</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Cedefop, adapted from de Graaf and van de Berg, 2011*
## Flexible mode of delivery

### HBO5 qualifications in Belgium (Flanders): type of teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of teaching</th>
<th># of classes</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evenings (during the week)</td>
<td>2,224</td>
<td>47.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day-time (during the week)</td>
<td>1,763</td>
<td>37.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined daytime and weekend</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>4.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined evenings and weekend</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined daytime and evenings</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined daytime, evenings, weekends</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2.82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cedefop, adapted from Vlaams Parlement, 2011.
Learning outcomes as work in progress

- EQF level 5 progressively described in terms of learning outcomes
- The way learning outcomes are used and structured differs across qualification types and countries
- Differences in scope: full qualifications, separate units/modules; full/partial qualifications
- Differences according to concepts/terminology: categories comparable to EQF descriptors (KSC), NQF descriptors, other concepts
- In many cases: developed with a close link to labour market, based on professional/occupational profiles (‘competences’)
Policy messages

- EQF level 5 qualifications respond to increased demand for advanced technical and/or management skills and competences

- Their double function – combining labour market orientation with progression opportunities – attractive for learners

- Contribution to lifelong learning: attractive and accessible to adults and non-traditional learners and learners with VET background
Policy messages

- EQF level 5 qualifications – are seen as valuable and relevant by employers - most qualifications include work-based learning

- Seem to be attractive to people with a qualification on the same level or higher, offering possible specialisation

- Accesses to programmes and EQF level 5 qualifications can be acquired through validation of non-formal learning
Full report is available at