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The Educational Research Institute (IBE)

conducts interdisciplinary studies on the functioning and effectiveness of the education system in Poland. The Institute participates in national and international research projects, prepares reports, expert opinions and serves in an advisory capacity. The Educational Research Institute is currently implementing six systemic projects co-financed by the European Union, among them "The development of terms of reference for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Register for lifelong learning".

Educational Research Institute (Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych)

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Involvement of social partners

The Polish qualifications system is being developed with the ongoing involvement of social partners. These include representatives of employers, trade unions, sector organisations, non-governmental organisations, educational and research institutions, and training firms, among others. Together with experts, social partners worked on developing the guidelines for assigning qualifications to PQF levels and the principles for ensuring the quality assurance of qualifications, as well as discussing the premises of the future system. Currently, social partners are participating in work on describing qualifications and developing sectoral qualifications frameworks.

The ongoing engagement of social partners is anticipated in the integrated qualifications system through, for example, the Stakeholders Council. This is essential to ensure that the qualifications system is flexible, practical and developed with the people who are going to be using it in mind.

A new way of thinking

– Lifelong learning

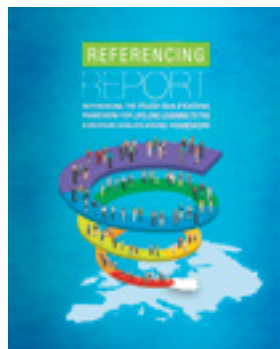
A new approach

– Learning outcomes are key

A new way of organizing qualifications and new opportunities to gain them

– The Polish Qualifications Framework





The Polish Referencing Report describes the Polish Qualifications Framework, available on the website of the European Commission since May 2014. Poland is working on legislation to integrate the qualifications system, which is to be implemented in 2016. The Educational Research Institute, which prepared the Polish Qualifications Framework, is developing the detailed mechanisms that will enable the new system to function.

The implementation of the Polish Qualifications Framework will conclude the cycle of reforms of the Polish formal general, vocational and higher education system, whose emphasis is on learning outcomes.

Work on the Polish Qualifications Framework

Poland has been working on the Polish Qualifications Framework since 2006. This work was conducted at the same time reforms were being introduced to the Polish education system.

- As of September 1, 2009, a new curriculum for general education is in force, which emphasises the skills of comprehension, analysis and reasoning.
- As of September 1, 2012, a new curriculum for vocational education is in force, according to which qualifications have been assigned to occupations. New opportunities for vocational schools to work with employers have also been developed.
- As of October 1, 2012, a National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education is in force. Before it came into force, higher education institutions verified their study programmes in the context of learning outcomes. The new regulations give higher education institutions the ability to develop their own study programmes, and thus new fields of study not found at other institutions, which respond, for example, to regional needs.

In 2013, the Polish Government presented the "Referencing Report: Referencing the Polish Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning to the European Qualifications Framework" to the European forum. This document is posted on the website of the European Commission. Poland has thus fulfilled the requirements enabling its qualifications to be compared with those in the European Union.

Together with the Referencing Report, Poland also presented the „Self-Certification Report of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education“. Poland is now working on legislation to implement the integrated qualifications system, and the Educational Research Institute is developing the detailed mechanisms which will enable the new system to function.

The Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF)

In Poland, one qualifications framework covers general, higher and vocational education, both in formal as well as non-formal education. It has eight levels, like the European Qualifications Framework.

The Polish Qualifications Framework

Currently, PQF levels are assigned to only some of the qualifications in formal education, such as, for example, the matura certificate at level 4.



A unique solution used in Poland is the use of varying degrees of detail of the descriptors describing the requirements of each level:

- First, there are universal level descriptors that apply to all types of education. They correspond to the requirements of the learning outcomes in the European Qualifications Framework.
- Second, there are more specific level descriptors typical of general, vocational or higher education.
- The third type are the most detailed - for example, descriptors for one of the eight broad areas of study in higher education; for a specific subject listed in the core curriculum for general education; or, for a specific economic sector (e.g. construction, health care) in vocational education.

The Integrated Qualifications Register

The Register will include all qualifications awarded and registered in Poland in electronic form that is accessible to everyone.

The Register will include:

- full qualifications – awarded only in the formal general, vocational and higher education systems after having completed a specific stage of education, such as a certificate of completion of lower secondary school, the matura certificate, licentiate degree.
- partial qualifications – the remaining qualifications, for example, certificate of completion of upper secondary school, certificates awarded upon completion of vocational courses.
- completion of vocational courses.