



GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

ARMENQA Conference

Yerevan

March 3-4 2016

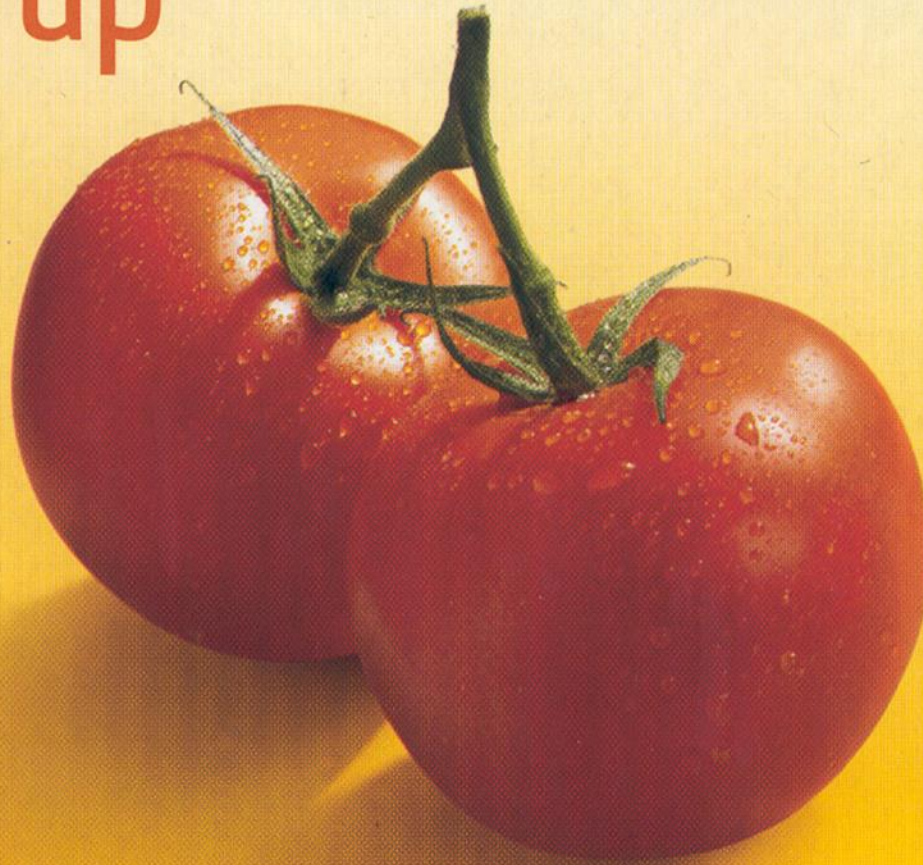
Sources

- Cedefop (2015). Analysis and overview of national qualifications framework developments in European countries: annual report 2014, working paper No 27 covering 38 countries and 42 NQFs: 28 EU Member States plus
Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.
- Own experience

Downloads

- Global inventory of regional and national qualifications frameworks_vol1 (follow-up publication in 2017)
- And vol2
- [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-andresources/
country-reports/european-inventory-on-nq](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-andresources/country-reports/european-inventory-on-nq)

catch up



www.austrian.com

Key message

The **EHEA Framework** is an instrument to identify

- **what we have in common**
- **what is particular to each system, i.e.**

to help to understand diversity

The European Qualifications Frameworks

Overarching Framework of Qualifications of the EHEA (QF-EHEA)

- Adopted by the **Ministers of Education** of the Bologna Process in Bergen, **May 2005**, through the Bergen Communiqué
- Developed by a working group chaired by Mogens Berg (DK) and backed up by a report

European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)

- Developed by the **European Commission**, signed on **April 23rd 2008** by the Presidents of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union and is therefore **formally adopted**

Scope of the frameworks

EHEA

- Comprises 48 countries:
EU
- **facilitates movement *between* systems**
- provides the broad structure within which “new style” national qualifications frameworks will be developed

National frameworks

- In 38 countries (EU, 6 cand., plus Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Iceland)
- **facilitates movement *within* system (learning paths)**
- ultimately determines what qualifications learners will earn
- describes the qualifications within a given education system and how they interlink

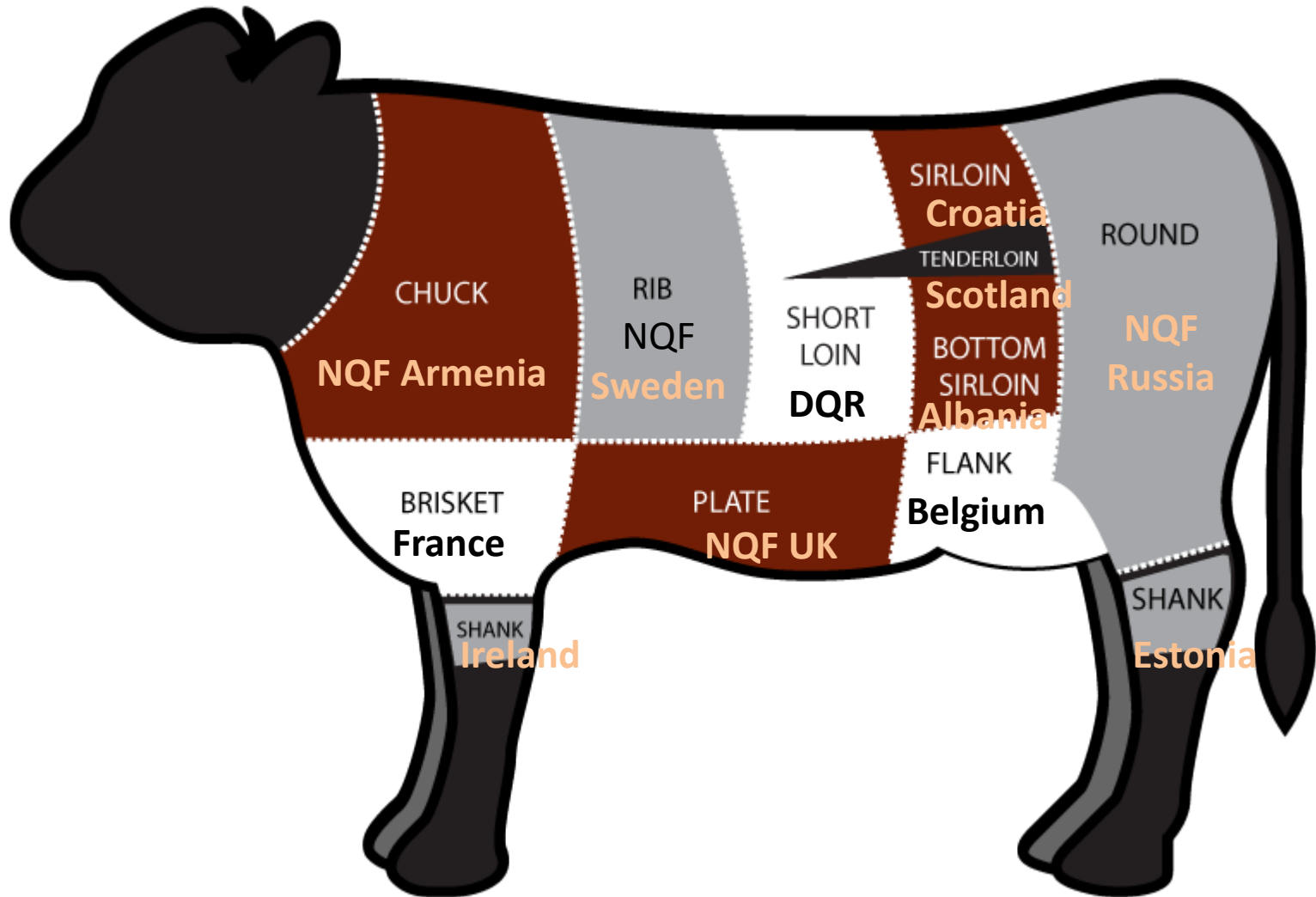
Role of the overarching frameworks

QF-EHEA

- Describe the „outer limits“ within which national frameworks should be situated
- Allows for diversity within those limits
- Ensures compatibility between national frameworks
- Presents a „common face“ for HE in Europe which is important in a global context

EQF

- Helps in comparing national qualification systems, frameworks and their levels to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems in Europe



Based on Anderson & Lemke, NY, advertisement for SAP, Canada

Presently

Intention of the EU to extend the EQF's scope:

 **From a transparency to a recognition tool**

Since end of 2014 responsibility moved from:
GD Education & Culture to
GD Employment, Social Affairs and Integration

Not everybody is happy

Europe?



BRUNELLO CUCINELLI

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John Kotter
Our iceberg is melting
Europe?

"THE SECRET OF
CHANGE IS TO FOCUS
ALL OF YOUR ENERGY,
NOT ON FIGHTING THE
OLD, BUT ON BUILDING
THE NEW."

— *SOCRATES*

Qualificationsframeworks

-Referenceframeworks-

Min. of Education
Higher Education
QFW for EHEA
Bologna-Process

Levels of Qualifications-
1st cycle (Bachelor)
2nd cycle (Master)
3rd cycle (Doctorat)

Levels of Qualifications
1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5
6 – 7 – 8

EU-Commission
QFW for LLL
Brugges-
Copenhagen-
Maastricht-
Process

Described by bundling learning outcomes according to the „Dublin Descriptors“ with Credits

Described by bundling learning outcomes according to descriptors

Knowledge and understanding	Applying k&u	Making judgements
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Knowledge & Understanding	Skills	Competence
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Communication	Learn to learn
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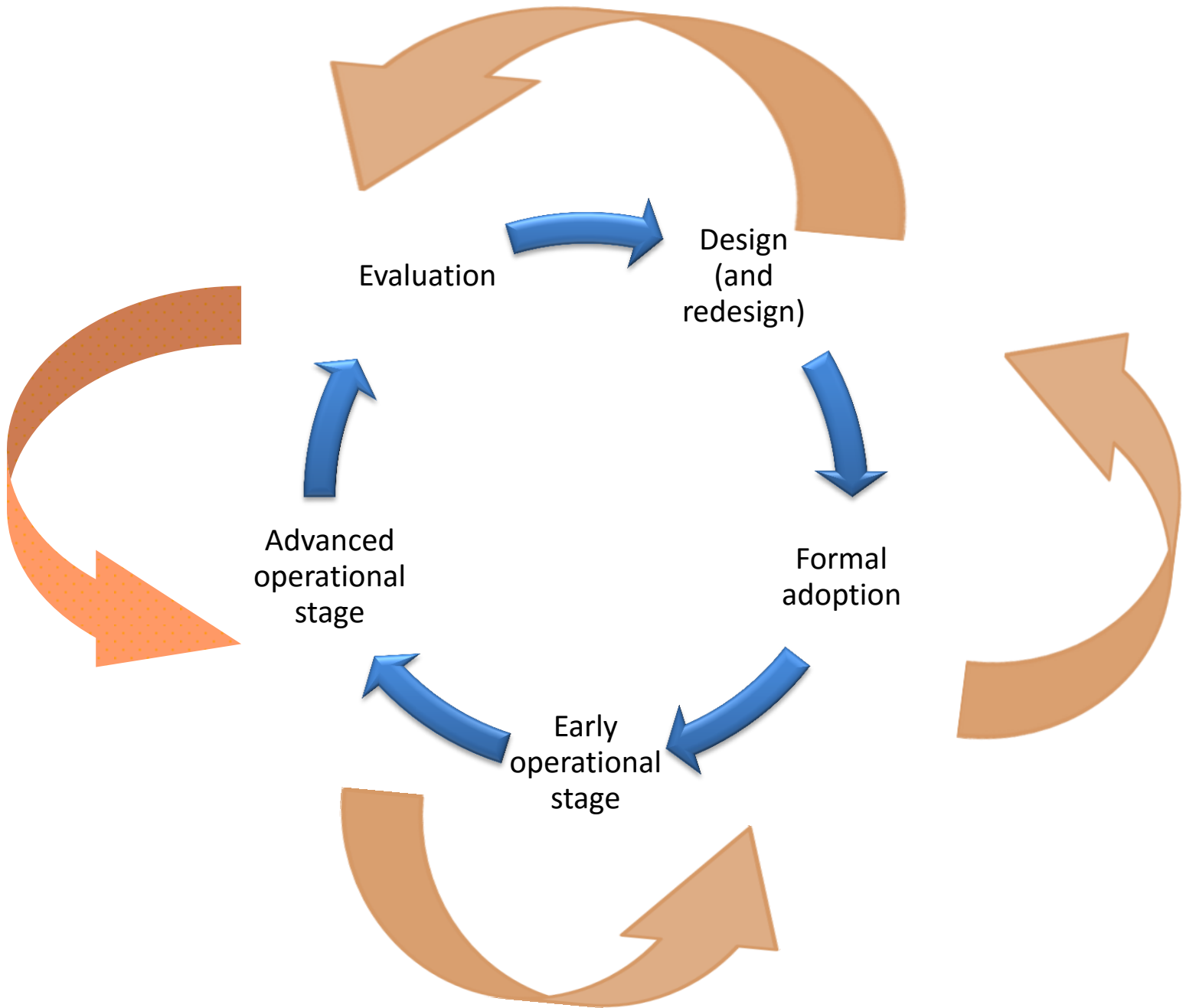
Qualifications Frameworks Backbones

- Descriptors
- Levels
- Level Descriptors
- Learning Outcomes

Sometimes: credits

Sometimes: qualifications (credentials) - which means:

Qualifications Frameworks are first of all generic descriptions of achievements of learning outcomes



Stages of NQF development

That means for NQFs

- **Stakeholder involvement** is critical throughout the process to ensure commitment and ownership
- **NQF developments** are **iterative**:
 - the existing education and training system and the framework must be gradually and progressively aligned to each other
- Implementation within subsystems **must be balanced** with overarching and cross-system developments
- The framework need to be **loose enough** to accommodate different types of learning
- Qualifications frameworks **are enablers rather than drivers** of change;
 - alignment with other supporting policies and institutional requirements is needed.

Country report (Ireland)

Be Aware

NQFs require **time**
to develop

understanding of concepts
and

to promote
cultural change

Overall progress in 2014 (Cedefop)

33 countries	comprehensive NQFs covering all types and levels of qualifications
29 NQFs	have been formally adopted
30 countries	proposed/adopted eight-level frameworks
18 countries 7 of these	reached operational stage Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, France, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands, the UK: NQFs are fully operational .
23 countries	have referenced their national qualifications frameworks to the EQF
22 NQFs 14 of these	linked to the Bologna framework jointly with EQF referencing
9 countries	indicate EQF levels on certificates, diplomas or Europass documents

Overall progress in 2014 (Cedefop)

Five countries: **Partial NQFs**

limited range of qualification types and levels or separate frameworks operating apart from each other:

Czech Republic, England/Northern Ireland and Switzerland:

separate frameworks for vocational/professional and higher education qualifications have been developed;

France: vocationally/professionally oriented qualifications are included in the framework;

Italy: framework is restricted to qualifications from higher education.

(Country by country details in the report)

Drivers for NQFs

- Seen as key instruments for improving European and international comparability of qualifications
- More and more linked to national priorities, in some cases directly supporting education and training system reform

Be Aware

- NQFs are **not well known** to ordinary citizens.
- The shift to learning outcomes is viewed with **scepticism** by some groups
 - arguing that the focus on learning outcomes draws attention and resources away from pedagogies and learning contexts.
- NQFs might not be seen within a sufficiently long time horizon at national level but as a **short-term and formal response** to European initiatives.

(Joachim James Calleja, CEDEFOP Director)

Overview

- Show respective table (pdf Cedefop Übersicht 2 25.02.2016)

OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Country	Scope of the framework	Number of levels	Level descriptors
Albania	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> theoretical and factual knowledge cognitive and practical skills autonomy and responsibility
Austria	Designed as comprehensive NQF; currently, includes qualifications awarded in higher education, selected 'reference qualifications' from VET and a pre-VET qualification.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge skills competence
Belgium (FI)	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training and from the professional qualifications system.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge/skills context/autonomy/responsibility
Belgium (FR)	Designed as comprehensive framework; will include all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training and from the professional qualifications system.	Eight proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge/skills context/autonomy/responsibility
Belgium (DG)	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> occupational competence (knowledge and skills) personal competence (social competence and autonomy)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Designed as comprehensive NQF for lifelong learning; will include all levels and types of qualifications.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge skills competence
Bulgaria	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training.	Eight plus a preparatory level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge skills competences (personal and professional)
Croatia	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training. It is a qualifications and credit framework.	Eight with sublevels at levels 4 and 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge skills responsibility and autonomy
Cyprus	Comprehensive NQF, including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training and from the system of vocational qualifications.	Eight proposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge skills competence
Czech Republic	Partial national frameworks for vocational and higher education qualifications.	Eight in the QF for VET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> competences (including knowledge and skills)
Denmark	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualifications from formal education and training.	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge skills competence
Estonia	Comprehensive NQF including all levels and types of qualifications from formal	Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge

Lessons learned:

Positive Impacts of NQFs

covering all levels and types of qualifications

Although still uneven across countries and sectors, NQFs

- strengthened the implementation of LO
- brought together stakeholders from different sectors of education, training and employment

NQFs are an important tool in supporting

- lifelong learning strategies by
 - by opening up to qualifications awarded in non-formal learning contexts
 - by promoting validation of non-formal and formal learning

Important: Regular meetings between EQF national coordination points and Bologna framework coordinators

European „push“ and national „pull“

All countries	Key instrument for increasing transparency and comparability
All countries	Using LO-based level descriptors reflecting the EQF´s (knowledge, skills, competence)
Most countries Austria, Belgium (fr), Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway and Turkey	Important for strengthening the LO approach throughout education and training: changing the way standards, curricula and assessment are defined and used
Most countries Germany, Romania, Turkey +	Relevant for strengthening lifelong and lifewide learning policies and practices +
Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal	LO-based levels provide a reference point for formal, non-formal and informal learning experience and allow for national approaches for validation

European „push“ and national „pull“

Most countries

Exceptions: Ireland (10), Scotland (12), Iceland (7), Norway (7), Slovenia (10)

Eight-level frameworks

Several countries

Belgium (fl), Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, and Romania

Provide a reference point for **quality assurance**

Several countries

instrument to **strengthen cooperation** between stakeholders and establish a closer link to the labour market

European „push“ and national „pull“

Germany, Greece, Switzerland	achieve parity of esteem between vocational education and training and higher education
Estonia	aid better monitoring of supply and demand within education and training
United Kingdom	increase the responsiveness of education and training systems to individual needs
Portugal	promote participation in secondary education

European „push“ and national „pull“

Most
countries

„loose frameworks“

UK

Regulatory framework:
Qualifications and Credit Framework (QFC)

France

Regulatory framework:
*Répertoire national des certifications
professionnelles* (national vocational certification
register)

European „push“ and national „pull“

Group of countries

Estonia, Portugal, Romania

Use EQF level descriptors directly or closely aligned

Group of countries

Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Sweden

Broadened and partly adjusted the descriptors to reflect better national complexities and/or emphasise national priorities

Group of countries

Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Hungary, the Netherlands

Emphasis on competence as an overarching and holistic concept

Note:

Focus in the above analysis: horizontal dimension of LO descriptors

Future focus: vertical dimension – progression of learning

To be improved:

Information on how concrete qualifications and types of qualifications are assigned to and placed at the NQF levels is often vague

Several reports **lack a transparent** presentation of which qualifications have actually been included in the framework

Many countries refer **exclusively to the legal basis**; difficult for outsiders; methodology not clear

Two main approaches:

1. To include qualifications as **blocks** (types) on the basis of testing (Germany, Austria); however many provide limited evidence on how this is done
2. Increasingly **individual qualifications** are assigned to NQF levels

Combination of technical (linguistic/conceptual) and social/political principles

And the final aim?

Do you remember?

and

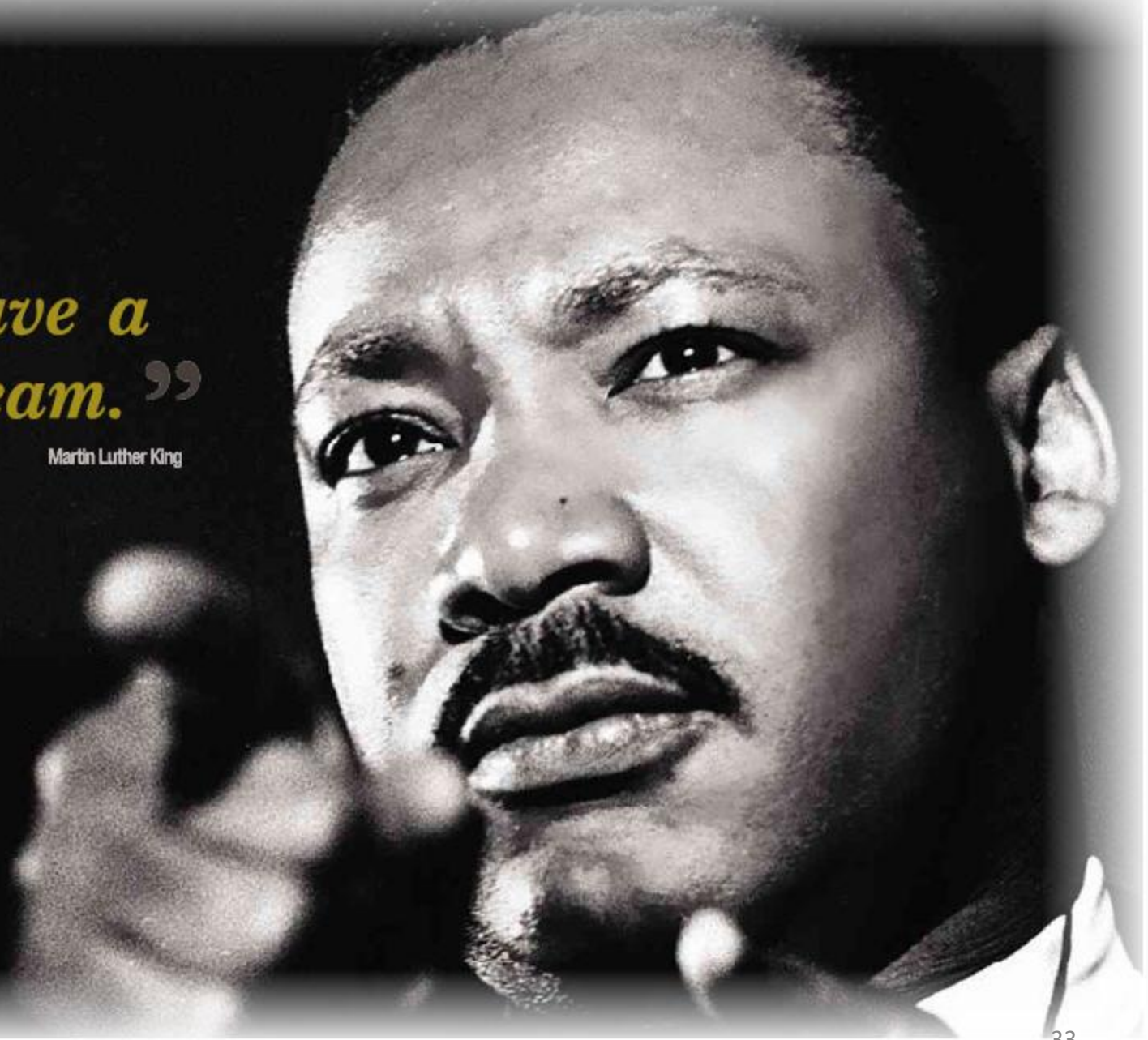
Do you know why?

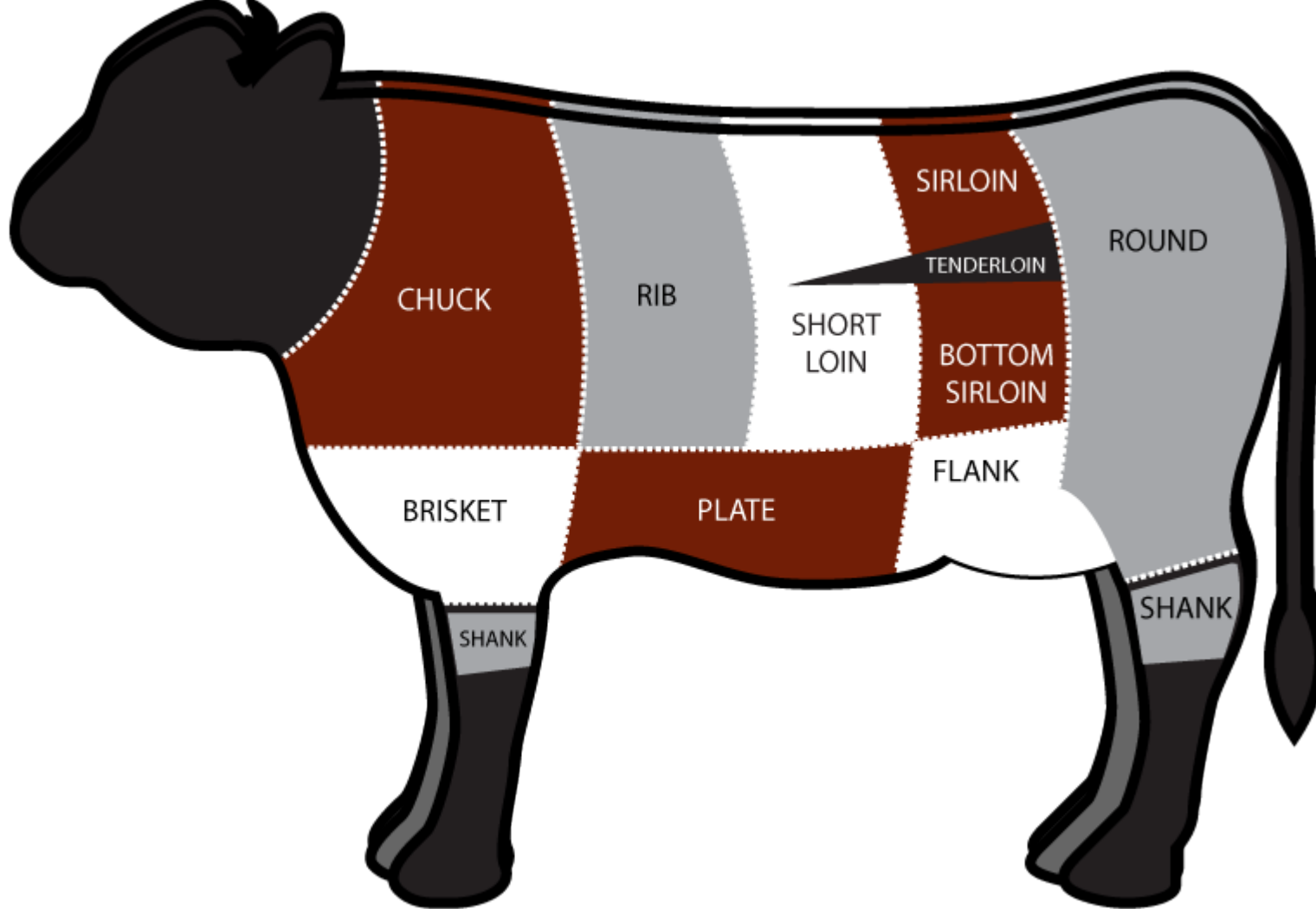
To be discussed at home!

WE

“*I have a
dream.*”

Martin Luther King





This is an organisational chart that shows the different parts of a cow.

In a real cow the parts are not aware that they are parts.

They do not have trouble sharing information. They smoothly and naturally work together, as one unit. As a cow. And you have only one question to answer.

Do you want your organisation to work like a chart? Or a cow?

(Anderson & Lemke, NY, advertisement for SAP, Canada)