ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Turkish Qualifications Framework will be adopted and become operational in 2013. Primarily the Vocational Qualifications Authority, Ministry of National Education and the Council of Higher Education as well as all other relevant bodies should uninterruptedly take part in the cooperation and coordination for the successful implementation of Turkish Qualifications Framework.

INDEX

ABBREVIATIONS

CAT	: Credit Accumulation and Transfer
CEDEFOP	: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CoHE	: Council of Higher Education
DL	: Decree Law
EU	: European Union
ECTS	: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ECVET	: European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training
QF-EHEA	: Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area
EQF	: European Qualifications Framework
FF	: Feedback Forum
HAK-İŞ	: Hak Confederation of Workers' Unions
HVS	: Higher VET Schools
ISCED	: International Standard Classification of Education
ISO	: International Organization for Standardization
İMEİGEP	: Action Plan to Strengthen the Link between Vocational Education and Employment
İŞKUR	: Turkish Employment Agency
LLL	: Lifelong Learning
MoNE	: Ministry of National Education
NQF	: National Qualifications Framework
NQR	: National Qualifications Registry
OG	: Official Gazette
QA	: Quality Assurance
RoPL	: Recognition of Prior Learning
TESK	: Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen
TİSK	: Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations
TOBB	: Turkish Union of Chambers and Stock Exchanges
TQF	: Turkish Qualifications Framework
TQFHE	: Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
TÜRK-İŞ	: Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
UYEP	: Strengthening Vocational Qualifications Authority and National Qualifications System in Turkey Project
VET	: Vocational Education and Training
VQ	: Vocational Qualification
VQA	: Vocational Qualifications Authority

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to inform about the results of work undertaken to develop the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF), explain the details concerning the structural features, implementation and governance of the TQF while proposing a plan for its successful adoption and maintenance.

Turkey's policies on education and employment aim at equipping young and working individuals with qualifications in line with the needs of the labor market so that current and prospective requirements of economic development will be met. To this end, development of a national qualifications framework (NQF) has been on the agenda for some time as a part of efforts to restructure the existing education and training system in addition to improving its quality, to help individuals achieve qualifications required by the information society and the world of business and also to compare national qualifications with qualifications of other countries. International developments have been closely followed to guide the steps which were taken to develop the Turkish Qualifications Framework.

Various efforts undertaken in this respect include preparation of Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper, development of vocational and technical education qualifications to meet the needs of national and international labour market, establishment of Vocational Qualifications Authority, participation in the Bologna process, preparation of Turkish Framework of Qualifications in Higher Education and Action Plan to Strenghten the Link between Vocational Education and Employment.

TQF has been prepared as a result of all decisions taken and experience gained throughout these efforts. Once it is implemented, TQF will ensure the description and classification of quality assured qualifications while links among these qualifications are determined. Thus, transparency will be improved in education and training systems, which will enable national and international comparability and recognition. Furthermore, the TQF will facilitate learner and worker mobility and offer learning opportunities under the concept of lifelong learning.

This paper, which sets out all TQF-related issues, comprises of 5 main chapters and annexes.

Chapter 1 focuses on the NQF as a concept as well as aims and overall objectives of NQF's.

Chapter 2 presents the basis for TQF, current status of education-training and qualifications systems, the legislation, work in progress, TQF objectives, principles regarded during TQF preparation, expected benefits of TQF and areas of improvement during TQF implementation.

Chapter 3 focuses on TQF structure, scope and design.

Chapter 4 explains TQF governance and implementation; inclusion of qualifications in the TQF; use, updating, amendment and cancellation of qualifications within the TQF; quality assurance; learner mobility; recognition of prior learning and National Qualification Registry.

Chapter 5 sets out issues related to the updating of TQF and TQF implementation Timetable.

Chapter 6 comprises of the annexes, and glossary of terms used in this document is provided under annex 3.

1.   NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

The Concept

A National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a structure of levels that, with associated procedures and conventions, can be used to describe, classify according to given criteria and then compare qualifications. A National Qualifications Framework integrates and coordinates the qualifications systems of a country, thus making qualifications more transparent and describable in line with the quality standards and facilitating the horizontal and vertical mobility of learners among qualifications.

The NQF is generally used as

- a frame of reference for the classification of existing qualifications;
- a source for the design of new qualifications;
- a basis for the development of education and training programs based on learning outcomes
- an environment in which processes for the recognition of prior learning can be developed;
- an instrument in the mutual recognition of qualifications

Many countries around the world have already adopted national qualifications framework approach, and many have developed the NQF while others have already started with the implementation. Many countries in different parts of the world, including all of the UK countries, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, France, Malta and South Africa, have developed national qualifications frameworks and started with the implementation. Implementation of the NQF by various countries resulted in the need to make comparisons and referencing of these NQF's. To this end, "meta-frameworks" have been introduced to facilitate the comparison and referencing of NQFs. There are two meta-frameworks used for international referencing in Europe, namely the "European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)"[1] and "Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area".

- European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for Life-Long Learning was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 23 April 2008 based on the recommendation 2008/C 111/01. It provides a meta-framework to promote transparency, transfer and recognition of qualifications in Europe, and to compare various NQF's. The core element of the EQF is a set of eight reference levels describing at each level the knowledge, skills and competence. Each participating county has accepted to reference their national qualifications frameworks to the EQF and comply with the implementation timetable provided in the recommendation. These countries designated a national centre to coordinate the relationship between their national qualifications framework and the EQF. In Turkey, this role is carried out by the Vocational Qualifications Authority.

- The so-called Bologna Process seeks to develop continuously improved, dynamic processes based on common understanding with a view to create a comparable, competitive and transparent higher education area in 47 member states. A key initiative in the Bologna Process has been the development and introduction of the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA). Work

---

[1] Recommendation of the European Parliament and Commission dated 23 April 2008 on the development of European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning,
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF (24.02.2012)

undertaken in the field of Bologna Process are under the responsibility of CoHE in Turkey, and the Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF-HE) has already been developed and introduced, and is now in the process of being implemented. The TQF-HE is described at **Annex 2** to this document[2].

The common thread of the two abovementioned meta-frameworks is that they are both based on levels and "learning outcomes".

Aims of Use

National qualifications frameworks developed by various countries influence national education, training and qualifications systems in many ways. Many studies[3] divide NQF's into three main categories based on their purpose, design and implementation processes. The first category involves communication frameworks which improve the description of existing qualifications systems and, by providing options to learners, education and employment policy makers and implementing bodies, enable increased transparency and better use to be made of what is already there. The second category involves reforming frameworks which aim to substantially improve the existing system by strengthening it in terms of consistency, compliance and quality, and develop new pathways and programmes to provide an access to qualifications or change the division of roles and responsibilities undertaken by stakeholders. The last category involves transforming frameworks which aim to transform education and training systems and take the lead in the development of new systems.

Objectives

A report[4] recently published by European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) has analysed objectives that European governments have set for their national qualifications frameworks. The range of objectives set by each country tends to reflect the place of the National Qualification Framework developed by each country on a scale comprising of communication, reformation and transformation frameworks. The list of National Qualification Framework objectives, commonly accepted by the 31 countries at different stages of NQF development, set out in the CEDEFOP Report includes:

a) Increasing international transparency of education and training and aiding the comparison and transfer of qualifications;
b) Increasing the transparency of national qualifications systems;
c) Promoting lifelong learning;
d) Promoting and speeding a shift towards use of a learning outcomes based approach throughout education and training;
e) Improving the permeability of education and training systems to aid transfer and progression;
f) Aiding the validation of non-formal and informal learning;
g) Improving the consistency of national qualifications;
h) Providing a reference point for quality assurance.

i) Strengthening cooperation between stakeholders and establishing closer links to the labour market.

---

[2] http://tyyc.yok.gov.tr/

[3] Raffe David; "National Qualifications Frameworks in Ireland and Scotland: A Comparative Analysis"
http://www.ces.ed.ac.uk/PDF%20Files/NQF_ECER_2009.pdf, (21.01.2013)

[4] CEDEFOP, "The development of *national qualifications frameworks in Europe*",
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/6112_en.pdf, (29.01.2012)

2.   TURKISH QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

2.1   The Basis for Turkish Qualifications Framework

Qualifications awarded in vocational, general and academic education and training programmes including primary, secondary and higher education, as well as those achieved in other learning environments are described in the Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF), which is the National Qualifications Framework of Turkey, which is designed to be in harmony with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). TQF covers all quality assured qualifications achieved in all learning environments at all levels within Turkey's education and training system.

A qualification is defined in the European Qualifications Framework as;

> "Qualification means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards."

<div align="right">(Recommendation 2008/C 111/01, 2008)</div>

In Turkey the qualification is defined by the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) Law no 5544[5]. This definition provides that a "qualification" shall refer to;

> *"The individual's set of knowledge, skills and competence recognized by the competent authority".*

<div align="right">(VQA Law, article 2 - (1) h)</div>

The two definitions are not conflicting, which indicates that qualifications to be included in the TQF must be developed based on learning outcomes and TQF must be designed based on this structure.

2.2   Current Status of Education Training and Qualifications Systems

TQF design has considered the philosophy and structure of Turkish education and training system as well as its basic features directly associated with the TQF.

As per the Principal Law on National Education no 1739, the national education system has been designed to have an integrated structure to serve for the needs of individuals, and it comprises of pre-school education, "formal education and training" provided by providers of primary, secondary and higher education in addition to the "non-formal education and training" provided under the scope of lifelong learning. Both formal and non-formal education and training offer distant learning and open education options.

2.2.1   Formal Education and Training

Formal education encompasses providers of pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education. The twelve-year compulsory formal education and training[6], which follows pre-school education, has been divided into the following stages:

---

[6] Primary and Secondary Education Framework is based on laws amended by the Law no 6287 dated 30/3/2012 on the Amendment of Law on Primary Education and Training and of some other laws (of Law no 222 on Primary Education and Training, Principal Law on National Education no 1739, Law no 3308 on Vocational Education), whereas the framework of higher education is based on two articles of the Constitution (articles 130 and 131) and Higher Education Law no 2547.

Primary Education

- Primary school (4 years)
- Junior high school (4 years)

Secondary Education

- High school (4 years)

The following are provided by education and training providers under the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) and also by private and other providers supervised by MoNE,

- General secondary education
- Vocational and technical secondary education
- Secondary education programmes offering both general and vocational education.

Higher Education

Higher education in Turkey is a system coordinated by the CoHE and includes all formal post-secondary provision, academic and vocational, by higher education providers.

Higher education consists of the three main cycles (bachelor's degree, master's degree and PhD) and the short cycle (associate degree) defined in the context of the Bologna Process. There is a three-tier system of higher education programmes (bachelor's degree, master's degree and PhD) except in Dentistry, Pharmacology, Medicine and Veterinary programmes which have a one-tier system combining first and second levels (bachelor's degree and master's degree).

2.2.2 Non-Formal Education and Training

Non-formal education and training includes all activities of education, training, production, counseling and practice offered at various durations and levels on a lifelong basis by provider institutions, whether public, private or voluntary, and are coordinated by MoNE[7]. Short term courses and further training received to achieve qualifications, to be trained for a new job and for leisure hobbies or individual development are also covered by non-formal education and training.

Apprenticeship System

Apprenticeship programmes are for young people who have completed primary or compulsory education, providing a combination of theoretical education and practical training in enterprises, which take the learners to certificates of semi-skilled worker, skilled worker and skilled instructor.

Vocational Education and Training

This includes all kinds of work-related or career development trainings including those provided by, or in cooperation with, businesses.

---

[7] MoNE Regulation on Non-Formal Education and Training Providers, OG. 21.05.2010-27587.

2.2.3 Qualifications in the Turkish Education and Training System

Designated Institutions are responsible for the legislation, procedures and coordination required for the determination, description and provision of qualifications to be included in the education and training system. Designated institutions ensure that qualifications required by the business world and society are described based on "learning outcomes" approach according to some specific criteria and achieved by the individuals. Designated institutions include primarily the MoNE, CoHE and VQA. However, the legislation provides also for other designated institutions[8].

If the individual succeeds in achieving the learning outcomes of the qualification he/she desires to achieve as a result of assessment and evaluation, **training providers** and **certification bodies** authorized by the designated institutions take over responsibility for the certification of relevant qualification. Training providers primarily comprise of education and training providers and schools under the MoNE, providers of higher education (universities, higher vocational schools and institutes etc.), while certification bodies primarily comprise of VQA authorized certification bodies with TS EN ISO/IEC 17024[9] accreditation. However, there are some other certification bodies in Turkey and TQF implementation will include dedicated studies to determine such bodies.

Qualifications of Basic Education, Secondary Education and Non-Formal Education

The qualifications that are awarded at the end of formal and non-formal education by public and private providers of education are divided into three main groups: general, vocational and non-formal qualifications.

Currently the Basic Education reflects different types of provision including non-formal programmes and programmes adapted for different categories of special educational needs candidates. In Basic Education, diplomas were provided in 2011 and previously[10]. As of 2012, certificate of education replaces diploma upon completing primary school and junior high school; whereas at the end of twelve-year compulsory education pupils qualify for a diploma.

General secondary education diploma is offered to reflect programmes of specialization in various fields of learning[11].

Vocational and technical secondary education diploma is offered to reflect various programmes of education as well as programmes of vocational specialization[12].

Diplomas are also provided upon completing secondary education programmes offering both general and vocational education[13].

Depending on the programme completed, various types of certificates are provided at the

---

[8] Such as the Ministry of Health, TESK, Turkish Armed Forces, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Transport etc.

[9] TS EN ISO/IEC 17024 Conformity Assessment – General Requirements for Personnel Certification Bodies

[10] Primary School diploma, Junior High School diploma, Primary Education diploma.

[11] High school diploma, Anatolian High School diploma, Science High School diploma, Fine Arts and Sports High School diploma, Social Sciences High School diploma, Anatolian Teacher Training High School diploma.

[12] Vocational High School diploma, Anatolian Vocational High School diploma, Technical High School diploma, Anatolian Technical High School diploma, Vocational High School of Health diploma, Anatolian Vocational High School of Health diploma, Vocational and Technical Education Center diploma.

[13] Imam Hatip Religious High School Diploma, Anatolian Imam Hatip Religious High School Diploma, Technical High School diploma, Anatolian Technical High School diploma.

end of non-formal education and training[14].

Higher Education Qualifications

The qualifications associated with undergraduate programmes are:

a) vocational associate degree (short cycle degree) – 2 years (120 ECTS[15]);
b) associate degree (within the first cycle degree) – 2 years (120 ECTS);
c) bachelor degree (first cycle degree) – 4 years (240 ECTS);

The qualifications associated with postgraduate programmes are:

a) master degree (second cycle degree) without thesis – 1.5 years (min. 90 ECTS[16]);
b) master degree (second cycle degree) with thesis – 1.5- 2 years (min. 90-120 ECTS);
c) doctoral degree (third cycle degree) – minimum 3 years (180 ECTS).

2.2.4 Qualifications under the National Vocational Qualifications System

The VQA was established to set principles for both technical and vocational national qualifications based on national and international occupational standards; to build and operate national qualifications system required to run activities of supervision, assessment and evaluation, awarding and certification, and to ensure that necessary work is undertaken concerning the national qualifications framework.[17]

The law no 5544 defines national vocational qualifications system as:

> *"set of rules and activities concerning the development and implementation of technical and occupational standards based on which qualifications are developed, and the authorization, supervision, assessment and evaluation, awarding and certification related thereto."*

> (VQA Law, article 2 - (1) ç)

Bodies with TS EN ISO/IEC 17024 accreditation, which comply with the required criteria, are designated by the VQA as "Authorized Certification Bodies" to undertake assessment, evaluation and certification activities for the national qualifications.

All TQF levels include national qualifications covered by the national vocational qualifications system. Some vocational qualifications awarded by other bodies are included in the TQF through the national vocational qualifications system.

---

[14] Semi-skilled worker certificate, skilled worker certificate, skilled instructor certificate, License to start up business, course completion certificate.

[15] This refers to the credit value of the qualification according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) for higher education. Course descriptions contain 'learning outcomes' (i.e. what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do) and workload (i.e. the time students typically need to achieve these outcomes). Each learning outcome is expressed in terms of credits, with a student workload ranging from 1 500 to 1 800 hours for an academic year, and one credit generally corresponds to 25-30 hours of work.

[16] In limited number of fields, there are a few master's degree programmes without thesis with 60 ECTS.

[17] Vocational Qualifications Authority Law, OG 7/10/2006-26312

2.2.5 Qualifications Awarded by Other Bodies

The legislation, both primary and secondary, provide for awarding bodies other than MoNE, CoHE and VQA for the awarding of some vocational and technical qualifications[18]. All of them shall be included in the TQF provided that they meet quality assurance standards and other conditions to be required.

2.3 The Legal Background and Work Undertaken

In Turkey, the policy context for development of NQF may be found among priority objectives in a number of important policy documents including the Ninth Development Plan 2007-13, the National Youth Action Plan 2011, 2008 National Programme of Turkey and 2007- 2013 Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper.

The purpose of Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper is to set up a lifelong learning system which is able to meet the people's needs and expectations in Turkey and to render such a system operational and sustainable. Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper indicates that the principles pertaining to qualifications will be clarified once Turkish Qualifications Framework is collectively built by CoHE, MoNE, VQA and other stakeholders.[19] Priority areas related to the activation of vocational qualifications system indicated in the paper, building of quality assurance system and facilitation of progression among training programmes and from school to work and from work to school, are directly associated with TQF implementation.

Furthermore, as per the Action Plan to Strengthen the Link between Vocational Education and Employment (İMEİGEP)[20] that was adopted by the Cabinet Decree no 2010/660 dated 7/7/2010 and entered into force upon publication in the official gazette no 27642 dated 15/7/2010,

> *"The purpose is to strengthen collaboration and coordination among relevant ministries, public authorities and the private sector so as to align vocational and technical training provision with the labour market requirements, strengthen the link between education and employment, implement active labour market policies effectively under the lifelong learning approach, improve the employability of labour force through resolving the problem of joblessness."*

The first priority area of IMEIGEP, built under the coordination of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and implemented under VQA secretariat, "Building of National Qualifications Framework" indicates that this activity shall be undertaken under VQA responsibility and MoNE and CoHE shall cooperate. NQF development is a part of efforts to harmonise European Union (EU) acquis and standards on education, training and youth. It is thus an integral part of Turkey's efforts to align itself to the EU.

The law no 5544 provides the following in respect of VQA roles on TQF;

> • *"National Qualifications Framework shall refer to the framework designed to be in harmony with the European Qualifications Framework and to include all qualifications achieved through vocational, general and academic education and training programmes, including primary, secondary and higher education, as well as those achieved through other routes of learning."*

---

[18] Specialization in Medicine awarded by the Ministry of Health, skilled worker and semi-skilled worker certificates offered for occupations which are not under law no 3308, semi-skilled and skilled worker certificates provided by chambers affiliated to TESK, Military High School diploma awarded by the Turkish Armed Forces, Police College diploma awarded by the Ministry of Interior, yacht captain certificate given by the Ministry of Transport etc.

[19] http://mesbil.meb.gov.tr/genel/hayat%20boyu%20%C3%B6%C4%9Frenme%20dokuman.pdf

[20] Action Plan to Strenghten the Link between Vocational Education and Employment, RG 15.7.2010-27642

- *"Procedures concerning the building, development and updating of National Qualifications Framework shall be carried out by the Authority."*

(VQA Law, article 23/A - (1))

- *"All quality assured qualifications shall be included in the National Qualifications Framework. Quality of vocational and technical qualifications to be included in the National Qualifications Framework shall be assured by the Authority. The quality assurance criteria of qualifications to be included in the national qualifications framework, designation of bodies to assure the quality of qualifications other than vocational and technical qualifications, horizontal and vertical transfer among various qualifications and principles and procedures concerning National Qualifications Framework implementation shall be regulated by the secondary legislation put into force by the Cabinet Decree."*

(VQA Law, article 23/A - (2))

In line with this legislative mandate, in August 2010 the VQA established a NQF Preparation Commission consisting of representatives of the MoNE, CoHE and VQA, tasked with taking the necessary decisions for the establishment of the TQF. TQF planning and development activities were conducted by the NQF Preparation Commission. In 2010 October, the Commission established NQF Preparation Working Group to provide assistance and undertake the technical works. In March 2011, it was decided to name the prospective NQF as "Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF)".

The Decree Law (DL) [21] adopted by the Cabinet Decree no KHK/665 dated 11/10/2011 provides for some NQF related sections to be included in the VQA Law no 5544 and also for the inclusion of all quality assured qualifications in the NQF. The term NQF used in these provisions refer to the Turkish Qualifications Framework, and in order to avoid any confusion in internationally comparative studies, TQF will replace NQF in relevant documents.

Feedback Forum (FF) was established to provide information on NQF preparation, and to operate consultation. Annex 1 provides a list of FF member institutions and organisations.

Under the scope of NQF preparation in September 2011, it was decided to prepare TQF Consultation Paper with contributions of international and local experts. The first draft of TQF Consultation Paper was submitted to NQF Preparation Commission in February 2012.

NQF Preparation Commission was simultaneously expanded to include high ranking representatives from MoNE and CoHE. TQF Consultation Paper prepared for discussion at the 1st FF Consultation Event was submitted to NQF Preparation Commission in June 2012.

TQF Consultation was kicked off with the 1st Consultation Meeting held on 5 July 2012. TQF Consultation Paper was submitted to the FF members in this meeting for consultation, and members were asked to communicate views of their institutions and organisations to VQA. Table 1 provides an overview of figures concerning the feedback forms sent throughout the consultation process, which was concluded at the end of September 2012.

---

[21] Decree Law amending the Law on the Organisation and Duties of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and some laws and decree laws, OG. 02.11.2011-28103.

Table 1

Figures concerning TQF Consultation

	Number of Bodies Surveyed	Number of Bodies that Responded
FF Member Bodies	77	35
Other Bodies	63	10
Individual Surveyees		6
TOTAL	**140**	**51**

Completed feedback forms were reviewed by the NQF working group, and all views and opinions were considered and eligible ones were reflected on TQF Consultation Paper, views on the principles and procedures to be regulated in the secondary legislation were consolidated for consideration during the preparatory work on secondary legislation.

VQA cooperated with the designated institutions in the preparation of Regulation on TQF (the secondary legislation), to be enacted after Cabinet approval, which regulates the principles concerning the inclusion in TQF of qualifications achieved in general, vocational and academic education and training programmes as well as in other types of learning environment; quality assurance of qualifications, designation of institutions/organisations to assure the quality of qualifications, and determination of quality assurance structures; recognition of prior learning and progression among qualifications; and duties, tasks and the mandate of relevant institutions.

The legal basis for the Regulation on TQF is provided by the Vocational Qualifications Authority Law no 5544, Law no 2547 on Higher Education, Principal Law no 1739 on National Education, Vocational Education Law no 3308, Law no 222 on Primary Education and Training, Law no 6287 amending the Law on Primary Education and Training and some other laws and Decree Law no 652 on the Organisation and Duties of MoNE.

One of the most significant steps in TQF development is the referencing of TQF with the EQF and Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) and proving TQF harmonisation with these framework. To this end, it is required to conduct TQF-EQF referencing and certify the compliance of higher education levels within TQF with the QF-EHEA. It is essential for the TQF to operate both referencing and self certification within a single process.

Once TQF implementation is initiated, a committee will be built to include local and international experts to prepare referencing and self certification reports regarding the process of TQF-EQF referencing and self certification of higher education levels' compliance with QF-EHEA. Referencing and self certification reports will be published upon approval by the TQF Higher Council, and it will be submitted to EQF Advisory Group, which was built by the European Commission to include representatives from states, and to the Council of Europe.

2.4   Objectives of Turkish Qualifications Framework

The overall goal of TQF is to provide an integrated structure which describes and classifies all qualifications available in Turkey, allowing for links such as transfer or progression among qualifications to be determined.

Some principal objectives have been set as a result of; meetings that were held with stakeholders, series of reviews that are conducted on the various TQF-related policy and strategy papers, characteristics and requirements that are determined pertaining to the education and training system and labour market and undertaken comprehensive work to see international NQF development experiences. The objectives of TQF include the following:

a) to provide a clear and consistent means of describing, classifying and comparing qualifications

b) to provide one integrated framework including all quality assured qualifications, (achieved in general, vocational and academic education and training programmes and in other learning environments).

c) to continuously improve Turkish qualifications system so that it can provide appropriate recognition of qualifications achieved in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

d) to contribute to the training of individuals who are employable and equipped with defined and measurable qualifications, and thus to the reduction of unemployment.

e) to strengthen institutional cooperation among all parties, which primarily include awarding bodies, the industry and social partners.

f) to provide a benchmark for the recognition in Turkey of foreign qualifications and for the recognition of Turkish qualifications abroad, and serve as an instrument of comparison.

NQF Preparation Commission has evaluated national requirements and priorities that the TQF is expected to meet. Institutions involved in NQF preparation agree that the TQF should be a participatory and flexible framework acting as the change leader to meet relevant requirements and priorities.

2.5   Principles taken into account in Turkish Qualifications Framework Development

From all of the foregoing analysis of the local and international contexts in which TQF is being developed, a range of principles have been identified to be taken into account in TQF design. TQF has been prepared taking into account the following principles:

a) the principle of a single national framework to include all quality assured qualifications.
b) to define TQF qualifications based on learning outcomes.
c) to accommodate qualifications of different sizes and purposes under qualification types.
d) to provide a basis for equivalence/recognition, progression/transfer between different levels and qualification types within the framework.
e) to set up and introduce a range of concepts, understandings and terminology that may be novel to many in the Turkish education and training and business world and to citizens in general, beginning with the concept of level and level descriptors.
f) to enable the official recognition and certification that an individual has achieved a

certain qualification described based on learning outcomes.

g) to ensure the recognition of prior learning and support lifelong learning.
h) to enable the mobility of persons.
i) to provide opportunities for the improvement of existing qualifications and development of new ones.
j) to provide a basis for the building of quality assurance systems.
k) to serve for the achievement of key competences.
l) to ensure the mutual recognition of qualifications.

2.6   Expected Benefits of Turkish Qualifications Framework

The purpose is to have a continuously improved TQF. TQF aims and objectives have been finalised as a result of continuous talks with stakeholders and the consultation process. TQF will be a significant driving force to help Turkey achieve its objectives concerning education and training system improvement and reform as well as international comparability and recognition.

Once TQF is enforced, the following benefits will be served to education and training providers, learners, workers and employers:

a) TQF is expected to have an integrated overarching structure to accommodate all quality assured qualifications based on learning outcomes; progress among qualifications, recognition of prior learning and recognition of all individual achievements will be facilitated.
b) Added value for the labour market provided through better qualified workers; more employment for learners and individuals and better access to means of learning; quality references for education and training providers and means of national/international referencing will be ensured.
c) Mobility will be supported through international recognition and transparency of qualifications.
d) TQF will also provide solid ground for the development of new qualifications to meet the increasingly diversifying needs of the society.

In this context, TQF implementation, stakeholder participation in TQF, changes and developments introduced by TQF to the education and training system will help the dissemination of lifelong learning, introduction of changes in the lives of individuals through the recognition and certification of learning outcomes, satisfaction of what is expected by the community and industry, and facilitation of transition from industrial society to information society.

2.7 Potential Areas of Improvement in Turkish Qualifications Framework Implementation

The priorities of education, training and qualifications in Turkey include alignment of qualifications systems with international criteria and improving the rate of individual participation and access to meet the labour market demands. TQF has to be operational to meet these priorities. However, some potential areas of improvement have been observed in relation to TQF implementation.

2.7.1 Education and Training System

Reforms in education include extension of compulsory education to uninterrupted 8 years in 1997, later in 2005 all secondary education programmes were expanded to cover a duration of 4 years and their curricula were reformulated. Recently, there is more investment in information-communication technologies, more money is allocated to the education of individuals with special needs, teaching of foreign languages is more valued, and teachers are provided with opportunities for new career and continuous professional development. Higher education system is expanding and becoming more effective internationally, while investment in education is increasing and measures are being taken to improve participation at all levels of education and training.

Recent developments introduced in the education and training system are expected to bring about some consequences for lifelong learning and vocational education and training. The amendments introduced by the "Law No. 6287 dated 11/04/2012 amending the Law on Primary Education and Training and some other laws"[22] extended compulsory education from 8 uninterrupted years to 12 years with three phases, namely the primary school, junior high school and high school.

In this process of change and expansion, TQF implementation may consider the following potential areas of improvement related to the education and training system;

    a) Teaching and learning qualifications,
    b) Quality and quality assurance,
    c) Gender and geographical differences,
    d) Transparency and recognition in individuals' access to qualifications and mobility,
    e) Education level of working age population,
    f) Stakeholder cooperation.

2.7.2 The Labour Market

Turkish policies on education and employment aim at training young and working individuals to achieve qualifications required by the labour market so that current and future requirements of economic development can be met. Less than half of the students in secondary education (45% according to 2012-2013 MoNE data) are enrolled in the vocational and technical education programmes. Dual forms of learning are now used more effectively in vocational secondary education whereby the link between education and labour market has been strengthened.

TQF implementation may consider the following potential areas of improvement related to the labour market;

    a) Human resources requirements,

    b) Alignment of labour market needs with the qualifications available,

    c) Qualifications to be developed in line with the emerging needs,

    d) Active labour market participation in vocational education decision making,

    e) Participation of employers in financing of vocational education,

    f) Recognition of learning at the work place and improvement of vocational training.

---

[22] This law substantially amends the Law no 222 on Primary Education and Training and the Principal Law no 1739 on National Education. It also amends the Law no 2547 on Higher Education and some other laws related with education and training.

2.7.3 The Legislation

Turkey enacted many laws and secondary legislation to regulate its education and training system. However, many of them had entered into force before TQF was prepared. Thus, they need to be harmonised with the legislation on TQF. The institutions designated for the relevant laws and secondary legislation need to harmonise their legislation with the principles and procedures provided in the TQF regulation once it enters into force. However, it may be difficult to amend those laws that do not comply with the principles of TQF regulation.

Once TQF implementation starts, institutions designated for the quality assurance of qualifications will have to regulate some issues, which will require the legislation to be amended.

Legislation requiring vocational and technical education and training at all levels comply with National Occupational Standards and National Qualifications, and the legislation on equivalence of different qualifications at the same level and transfer among qualifications may need to be updated or new regulations may be required.

New regulations may be required to harmonise the existing legislation with new areas of development concerning quality assurance, recognition of prior learning and informal learning, calculation of qualifications' work load and credit accumulation and transfer.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF TURKISH QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

3.1 The Scope of Turkish Qualifications Framework

Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) has been designed as a single integrated structure allowing for the classification of Turkish qualifications to accommodate all quality assured qualifications achieved at general, vocational and academic education and training programmes including primary, secondary and higher education, as well as those achieved through other means of learning. TQF primarily includes qualifications awarded under Ministry of National Education (MoNE) mandate, national qualifications under Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) mandate, higher education qualifications awarded under the coordination and supervision of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE), and other qualifications awarded under the mandate of some designated institutions. Many vocational qualifications which are available and will be required in the Turkish labour market are covered by TQF under VQA responsibility. TQF includes MoNE and VQA qualification systems and Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF-HE).

3.2 The Design of Turkish Qualifications Framework

There are various quite distinct qualifications widely acknowledged and utilised by the education and training and business community in Turkey. In addition to that, VQA supervises the development of national qualifications which are in harmony with the international trends and EQF approach. The aim of providing a single structure to accommodate qualifications developed with various approaches has led to many challenges concerning TQF design. These challenges have been taken into account in TQF design so as to achieve TQF objectives.

TQF design provides for a single integrated structure to describe and classify all quality assured qualifications so that links among qualifications can be determined. TQF offers a reference framework for existing qualifications.

TQF implementation will also allow for the following;

  a) Development of new qualifications,
  b) Recognition of prior learning,
  c) Mutual recognition and comparison with international qualifications.

TQF has been designed to encompass all qualifications described at each level and achieved at consecutive phases of school education as well as those achieved through experience based learning and individual learning that takes place at the work place or other non-formal and informal learning environments. TQF allows for the development of qualifications that will enable the appropriate recognition of learning outcomes to be achieved by individuals with special needs.

TQF structure comprises of levels and level descriptors. Levels are described through level descriptors and supported by qualification types. Qualification types are described through qualification type specifications.

The abovementioned elements provide an integrated set of instruments whereby a flexible structure is built for describing all kinds of qualifications and for supporting the development of qualifications suitable for all kinds of learning outcome groups. Main instruments used in

TQF structure are illustrated below and described in the following chapters.

Figure 2

Main Instruments of Turkish Qualifications Framework Structure

```
┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
│    LEVELS    │              │ QUALIFICATION│
│              │              │    TYPES     │
└──────────────┘              └──────────────┘
       │                             │
       ▼                             ▼
┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
│              │              │ QUALIFICATION│
│    LEVEL     │   ───────▶   │     TYPE     │
│ DESCRIPTORS  │              │SPECIFICATIONS│
└──────────────┘              └──────────────┘
                                     │
                                     ▼
                              ┌──────────────┐
                              │              │
                              │              │
                              │QUALIFICATIONS│
                              │              │
                              └──────────────┘
```
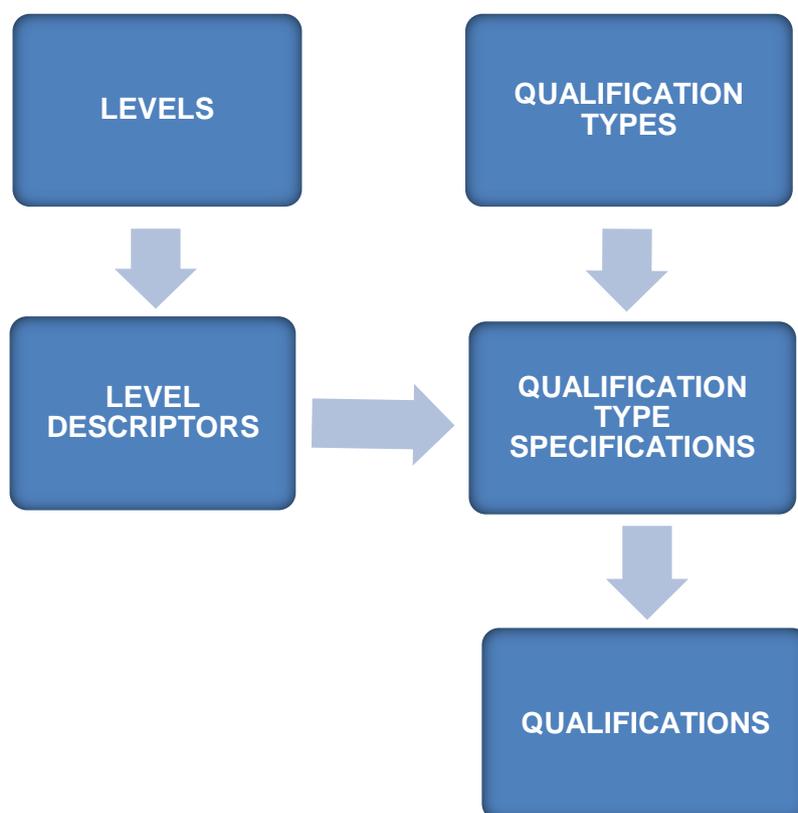
3.2.1 Levels and Level Descriptors

TQF has been designed to comprise of eight levels. Each level of TQF has been described based on the learning outcomes required for the achievement of qualifications at a given level. The set of statements about learning outcomes, defined in terms of knowledge, skill and competence, describing each level is the level descriptor. Level descriptors constitute the core of TQF, and they provide the basis for all other structures and instruments within TQF.

Level descriptors are the set of instruments used for describing learning outcomes at a given level, associating the qualifications with the relevant level, and for referencing TQF with international frameworks.

Learning outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skill and competence; thus, level descriptors are organised based on these three components of learning outcomes. For each of the eight levels, there are descriptors including set of statements for these three components. TQF levels are defined without reference to any particular field of learning. There are common minimum learning outcomes for different qualifications at the same TQF level.

TQF Level 1 qualifications describe qualifications concerning the fulfillment of basic duties, while Level 8 qualifications describe qualifications concerning innovative working and learning, solving emerging complicated problems using methods and approaches under various disciplines. TQF level descriptors are provided below with key words indicated in bold.

Table 2
Turkish Qualifications Framework Level Descriptors

KNOWLEDGE

Under the scope of TQF "knowledge" is defined in general as theoretical and/or practical knowledge involving the comprehension of facts, principles, theories and practices related to an area of work or learning.

SKILL

Under the scope of TQF "skill" is defined in general as "utilisation of knowledge", "problem solving", "transferring knowledge and skills to others" which requires the ability to use logical, intuitive and creative thinking and dexterity, method, material, tools and instruments acquired in an area of work or learning.

COMPETENCE

Under the scope of TQF "competence" is defined as utilisation of knowledge and skills in an area of work and/or learning by taking responsibility and/or displaying autonomy, determination and satisfaction of learning requirements.

LEVEL 1	**KNOWLEDGE**	Possess **basic knowledge** to perform **simple** activities in line with the given instructions in familiar environments of learning or work.
	SKILL	Perform **routine** activities in line with the instructions using the **basic** knowledge in familiar environments of learning or work.
	COMPETENCE	Take **limited** responsibility to perform **routine** activities under guidance and supervision.
LEVEL 2	**KNOWLEDGE**	Possess basic **theoretical knowledge** and **practical knowledge** related to the standard tools, instruments and methods required to perform **clearly defined** activities related to an area of work or learning.
	SKILL	Utilise the knowledge required to perform **clearly defined** activities related to an area of work or learning and to work out solutions for the problems **foreseen**.
	COMPETENCE	Take responsibility in the performance of **clearly defined** activities under guidance and/or supervision, and determine needs and goals of learning **under guidance**.
LEVEL 3	**KNOWLEDGE**	Possess theoretical and practical knowledge required to perform **uncomplicated** activities in different environments related to an area of work or learning.
	SKILL	Interpret data, evaluate results, select appropriate standard tasks and methods and apply them systematically, provide solutions to **unforeseen** problems related to **uncomplicated** activities in an area of work or learning.
	COMPETENCE	Take responsibility in performing **uncomplicated** activities under **limited guidance** and/or supervision; determine needs and goals of learning **under guidance**, when guidance is required.
LEVEL 4	**KNOWLEDGE**	Possess theoretical and practical knowledge required to perform **complicated** activities in different environments related to an area of work or learning.
	SKILL	Analyze data, interpret results, select appropriate tasks and methods and apply them systematically, provide solutions to unique and/or **unforeseen problems** related to **complicated** activities in an area of work or learning; transfer knowledge and skills to others when required.

	COMPETENCE	Take responsibility in performing **complicated** activities in standard settings; undertake **supervision and limited audit** over activities which are performed by others under one's responsibility; satisfy needs of learning and set future goals of learning..
LEVEL 5	KNOWLEDGE	Possess theoretical and practical knowledge required for **expertise** in an area of work or learning.
	SKILL	Analyze data that belong to **complicated and interrelated activities** in an area or work or learning, evaluate results with an interrogative approach, draw conclusions, define appropriate tasks and methods and apply them or have them applied systematically; develop evidence based solutions to unique and/or **unforeseen problems encountered for the first time**; transfer knowledge and skills to others..
	COMPETENCE	Take **limited** responsibility in performing **complicated** activities in environments where **unforeseen** changes take place; undertake **supervision and audit** over activities which are performed by others under one's responsibility; satisfy learning needs in line with learning goals, **guide** people under one's responsibility related to the determination of their learning needs and development of their performance**.**
LEVEL 6	KNOWLEDGE	Possess **advanced** theoretical and practical knowledge required for expertise in an area of work or learning..
	SKILL	**Analyze** approaches, methods and tasks related to activities in an area of work or learning with a **wholistic perspective**, evaluate results critically, suggest improvements based on research and evidence; **predict likely problems** in new practices and suggest preventive action; inform others about improvements and solutions developed.
	COMPETENCE	Take responsibility as an individual or a team member in performing **complicated** activities in environments where **unforeseen** changes take place; conduct an advanced assignment or project **partially independently**; plan and manage activities for the project based development of others **under one's responsibility**; Plan and manage activities to develop **self performance and performance of others** under one's responsibility in line with goals of learning.
LEVEL 7	KNOWLEDGE	Possess **advanced** theoretical and practical knowledge which provide a basis for the development of **original ideas** in an area of work or learning; Comprehend interdisciplinary interactions related to the area.
	SKILL	**Interpret** knowledge one has gained in an area of work or learning through **integrating** them with knowledge in other disciplines, formulate new knowledge, methods and approaches; Solve **complicated unforeseen** problems in one's are through using research methods; Transfer **newly formulated knowledge**, methods, approaches and suggested solutions to others.

	COMPETENCE	Take responsibility as an individual or a team member in performing **complicated** activities in environments where **unforeseen** and complicated changes exist and under conditions requiring new strategic approaches; conduct an advanced assignment or project **independently**; **Lead** studies in his/her area, evaluate the strategic performance of **persons and groups under one's responsibility** and manage improvement.
LEVEL 8	**KNOWLEDGE**	Possess **highly advanced** knowledge in development of **original** thoughts, approaches, design, method and techniques in area of work or learning; relate these to multidisciplines.
	SKILL	Develop an **innovative** thought, method, approach, design and/or application in an area of work or learning or adapt an already recognized thought, method, approach, design and/or applications to another area, conduct research on, comprehend, design and apply an original theme; solve **emerging complicated** problems in one's area using approaches and methods of different disciplines, transfer research and applications results to others.
	COMPETENCE	**Take responsibility** as an individual or a team member or **take leadership** in themes requiring **innovation and creativity**; conduct an advanced original assignment or project **independently**; encourage **continuous learning** through activities within and out of one's area, contribute to the sustainable development of the society.

Annex 4 indicates the evolution of knowledge, skill and competence strands over the levels.

3.2.2 Qualification Types

TQF development has revealed the fact that using only the level structure in the TQF may not be able to provide an effective classification of qualifications. Thus, it was decided to identify and utilise some qualification types in addition to the structure of levels.

Qualification types represent groups of qualifications widely acknowledged and utilised in the education and business community, which include substantially similar learning outcomes. Qualification types are not associated with a specific field of learning. Qualification types will help to distinguish among qualifications which are at the same level but differ significantly in terms of their functions, learning outcomes, sizes and/or orientations. Examples of qualification types are associate degree at level 5 and 5th level vocational qualification certificate; vocational secondary education diploma and skilled worker certificate at level 4.

An original title has been attached to each and every qualification type in the TQF qualification type specifications. Existing titles have been considered and attention was paid not to give the same title to several qualification types. Many of these titles are already being used within the education and training system and they are acknowledged by learners and employers (e.g. vocational secondary education diploma, master degree etc.). Moreover,

New titles need to be formulated for qualification types that may be required during TQF implementation. Relevant designated institutions and stakeholders cooperate in formulating the most appropriate titles for the qualification types.

Table 3 provides a classification and draft levels of qualification types recommended for the TQF and predominantly utilised in the Turkish education, training and qualification systems. Designated institutions will cooperate to finalise these draft levels during TQF implementation. As the designated institutions analyze their qualification types, they may find

out that some proposed types are not necessary or that there is a need for additional types. Designated institutions may propose addition types to be included in the TQF provided that they comply with the defined criteria, procedures and requirements.

There are other qualification types[23] available in addition to those provided in the table below. Qualification types will be finalised after more comprehensive studies during TQF implementation so that their levels can be defined precisely based on learning outcomes and quality assurance.

According to table 3, there are no qualification types defined for level 1 at the moment. However, there may be one or several qualification types for level 1 in the future (e.g. pre-school qualification, primary school qualification, qualifications concerning individuals with special needs, adult literacy etc.)[24]. Table 6 provides more detailed information illustrating the draft position of qualification types within TQF levels.

Table 3

TQF Qualification Types

TQF Levels	Qualification Types	Designated Institutions
1		
2	Primary School Education Certificate	MoNE
	Level 2 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
3	Junior High School Education Certificate	MoNE
	Semi-Skilled Worker certificate	MoNE
	Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
4	Skilled Worker Certificate	MoNE
	Vocational and Technical High School Diploma	MoNE
	High School Diploma	MoNE
	Level 4 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
5	Level 5 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
	Associate Degree (Vocational)[25]	CoHE
	Associate Degree (Academic)[26]	CoHE
6	Level 6 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
	Bachelor's Degree	CoHE
7	Level 7 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
	Master Degree (without thesis)	CoHE
	Master Degree (with thesis)	CoHE
8	Level 8 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
	Doctoral Degree (PhD, Proficiency in Arts, Specialization in Medicine)	CoHE

---

[23] Course completion certificate, in-service training certificate etc.

[24] Provided in line with priority 2 and 9 in the Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper.

[25] Meslek Yüksekokulları tarafından sağlanan ön lisans diplomalarıdır.

[26] Dört yıllık lisans programlarının ilk iki yılının başarıyla tamamlanması sonucu sağlanan ön lisans diplomalarıdır.

"Qualification type specifications" are used to describe qualification types to be included in the TQF. Qualification type specifications define common characteristics of qualifications within a given qualification type. Qualification type specifications provide the minimum requirements for designated institutions to describe their qualifications based on level descriptors and develop new qualifications.

Qualification type specifications include the following information:

a) Qualification type title
b) Awarding body
c) Orientation
d) Level
e) Category
f) Credit Range and Normal Duration of Programme
g) Learning Outcomes
h) Key Competences
i) Methods of Assessment and Evaluation
j) Quality Assurance
k) Entry Requirements
l) Progression Routes
m) Career and Employment

Annex 7 provides the table including the information required for developing qualification type specifications. Draft qualification type specifications developed by designated institutions during TQF preparation will be improved and finalised during TQF implementation.

3.2.3 Qualification Type Classification

TQF design takes into account the fact that there are many qualifications which widely vary in terms of their credit value, duration and learning outcomes.

While developing their national qualifications frameworks many countries did not opt for including qualification that are as diversified as those in the TQF. Countries that opted for including all qualifications in their national qualifications frameworks used two different approaches to distinguish between the qualifications and classify them according to their functions:

a) Use of credit systems (credit system based on defining the work load that the individual has to undertake to achieve learning outcomes in a qualification)

b) Use of qualification categories (classification of qualifications according to their functions or purposes).

Countries generally use the credit system in their formal and non-formal education and training programmes. Under the Bologna process European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (ECTS) is used for credit formulation for higher education qualifications.

Turkey does not have a common method to classify qualifications based on their size, function and purpose. However, since the aim of TQF is to include all quality assured qualifications, there is an emerging need to classify qualification types that vary in terms of their size, function and purpose. To this end, it was decided to use qualification categories to classify qualification types.

The following qualification categories are specified for the TQF:

a) **Principal qualifications** reflect comprehensive sets of qualifications achieved as a result of learning outcomes assessment that takes place at a defined stage in a field of learning or study. They convey a sense of 'completion' of a learning process, learning programme or vocational training; such as the Vocational and Technical Secondary Education Diploma, marking the end of vocational and technical secondary education, "skilled worker certificate and vocational qualification certificate" marking the lifelong learning or "Bachelor's Degree in Economics", marking the end of undergraduate education.

b) **Supplemental qualifications** are awarded for learning achievement that is additional to a previous principal qualification. They relate to updating and refreshing of knowledge or skills, or to continuing professional development and they can only be achieved on condition that a previous principal qualification is achieved – e.g. "Job and occupational counseling" achieved in addition to any bachelor's degree or "Skilled Instructor" qualification achieved in addition to the "Skilled Worker" certificate.

c) **Unit qualifications** provide recognition for the achievement of a coherent set of learning outcomes that forms part of the combination of the overall requirement for a Principal qualification. Unit qualifications are usually associated with modular learning programmes – e.g. a diploma for a "chef" awarded at the end of vocational and technical secondary education in food and beverages department kitchen field is a principal qualification. Qualifications awarded under "Demi-Chef for cold kitchen" and "Demi-Chef for hot kitchen" under the scope of this degree program are unit qualifications.

d) **Special purpose qualifications** are awarded for sets of learning outcomes that form a distinct, coherent achievement that may be used alone (license to work, license to start up business etc.). These qualifications involve fewer learning outcomes compared to a principal qualification but they can be used as a license to operate. For example, "roller operator" in the construction sector or "computer hardware man" in the IT sector.

The figure below illustrates the links among qualification categories in TQF.

Figure 3
Relations among Qualification Categories

Designed institutions will use qualification type specifications to define qualification categories with different purposes and functions during TQF implementation.

3.2.4 Relation between Levels and Qualification Types

The TQF structure is composed of two main elements. These elements include 8-level structure and qualification types.

8-level structure is the basis of the TQF while the level descriptors are the descriptive elements of the 8-year structure. The level descriptors are totally independent from a general, short, concise and certain learning or working environment relatively.

The qualification types are tools that allow including the significantly different qualifications in the same level. Furthermore, the qualification types will provide the necessary ground to develop new qualifications in the future. The qualification types are defined by using the qualification type specifications. The level descriptors will be elaborated and enriched in order to develop learning outcomes of the qualification type specifications. Therefore, the qualification type specifications are more comprehensive than the level descriptors.

3.2.5 Key Competences and Turkish Qualifications Framework

The key competences are the defined eight competences that each individual is supposed to achieve within the scope of life-long learning. "Key Competences for Life-Long Learning-European Reference Framework" is annexed to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on "Key Competences for Lifelong Learning" [27]. This framework identifies eight key competences and describes the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding each qualification.

The key competences are defined in the concerned framework as follows:

a) *"Communication in the mother tongue": Ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts.*

b) *Communication in foreign languages: In addition to the basic skill of communication in mother tongue, it also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. Level of proficiency will vary between different dimensions and listening, speaking, reading and writing capacities.*

c) *Mathematical competence: Ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a range of problems in everyday situations emphasizing process and activity, as well as knowledge. Competence in science refers to the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world. Competence in science and technology involves an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and responsibility as an individual citizen.*

d) *Digital competence: Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology and thus information-communication technologies.*

e) *Learning to learn: Ability to pursue and persist in learning, to organise one's own learning both individually and in groups in line with one's own needs and being aware of the existing methods and opportunities.*

f) *Social and civic competences: These include social competence, personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and*

---

[27] "Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on "Key Competences for Lifelong Learning"", 23.08.2008-2006/962/EC http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:EN:PDF

working life. Social competence is linked to personal and social well-being. it is essential to understand the codes of conduct and manners generally accepted in different societies and environments. The civic competences and knowledge on especially social and political concepts and structures (democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, and civil rights) equip an individual to be actively and democratically participate.

g) ***Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship:*** *Ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. An individual is aware of the context of his/her own job and knows how to catch the emerging opportunities. It forms the basis for more specific skills and knowledge needed by those who start social or commercial activity or contribute to such activities. This includes awareness of moral values and support to good governance.*

h) ***Cultural awareness and expression:*** *Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media (music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts)."*

(Recommendation no 2006/962/EC, 2006)

All of these competences are interrelated and they focus on critical thinking, creativity, sense of initiative, problem-solving, risk assessment, decision taking and construction management of emotions.

Wide application of key competences in the education policies of our country is the priority. Although some level descriptors are related to one or more key competence, the key competences could not be transposed to the level descriptors of TQF concretely as the TQF levels do not refer to a certain education and training program. In addition to this, it is possible to see the characteristics of key competences in many qualifications in the TQF albeit not in all. It is essential to include the key competences in the outcomes of the education and training programs.

The learning outcomes and key competences to be achieved by an individual are included in a qualification type specification of a qualification type in the TQF. The key competences in the qualification type specifications should be consistent with the qualification type level, purpose, credit range and normal duration of the program. The designated institutions/bodies (MoNE, CoHE etc) shall be responsible for identifying the key competences and the education and certification bodies shall be responsible for awarding the key competences. The qualification type specifications will cover the information regarding the inclusion of the key competences in the qualifications of the concerned type. In the event of new key competences in the future, the concerned competences shall be transposed to the qualification type specifications by the designated institutions/bodies.

3.2.6 Orientation of the Learning Processes regarding the Qualifications

Comprehensive European Frameworks such as Bologna and EQF do not make any distinction between the qualifications based on "orientation". However, such distinction is made in some NQFs. The education and training system in our country has a dual structure including academic and vocational in secondary and higher education. The orientation of the learning processes of the qualifications has been identified by taking account of this structure in the design of the TQF.

Orientation refers to the general, vocational or academic natures of the learning processes of qualifications in the TQF. The orientation of each qualification type is defined in the qualification type specifications.

TQF makes the following distinction:

a) At levels 1 – 4, distinction between "general" and "vocational",
b) At levels 5 – 8, distinction between "academic" and "vocational" orientation.

3.2.7 Credit Rating of Qualifications

The core function of the TQF is to describe the qualifications via the learning outcomes and compare a qualification with another one. One of the systems which can be used in order to compare and recognize the qualifications is the workload-based credit system. For that reason, it is important to determine the workload and credit values of the learning outcomes regarding the qualifications. However, it is extremely difficult to identify an instrument or a method to directly measure the workload required to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualifications, especially the ones acquired through informal learning. Therefore, it is proposed that an evaluation and credit system associated with the workload be used in the TQF. Credit rating of qualifications based on the workload will allow credit accumulation and transfer.

The proposed metric for the qualifications to be included in the TQF is 60 credits as the value ascribed to a learning period of 1500 - 1800 hours. This approach is compliant with both of the transnational credit systems in use in Europe, ECTS and ECVET.

In the workload-based evaluation and credit system; the workload will be found by calculating the total hours spent by an "average" learner for face-to-face, individual, workplace learning and all other studies in order to achieve a qualification in each qualification type. The credit ranges obtained through the workload calculated will be included in all qualification type specifications.

The credit range of the qualification types and the credit values of the qualifications will be determined by the designated institutions/bodies.

4. TURKISH QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) Regulation which will enter into force upon the Cabinet Decree has been drafted to regulate the procedures and principles governing the preparation, development, management and updating of the TQF in the light of the activities performed to develop the policies, relevant processes and protocols which will make the TQF functional by also taking account of the principles on the implementation and management of the TQF.

The TQF Regulation shall cover the procedures and principles on the criteria to include the qualifications achieved in general, vocational and academic education and training programs and in other learning environments into the TQF; quality assurance of the qualifications; identification of bodies, institutions and structures to provide the quality assurance of the qualifications; recognition of prior learning and transfer between the qualifications; and determination of the duties, authorities and responsibilities of the relevant bodies and institutions.

The tasks to prepare, develop and update the TQF shall be exercised by the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA). However, it shall be the joint responsibility of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), Council of Higher Education (CoHE) and VQA to implement the TQF. The MoNE and the education providers such as schools, higher education institutions, public and private education centres operating upon the approval of the MoNE as well as the institutions authorized by the VQA or miscellaneous laws shall function as the awarding bodies within the scope of the TQF.

Figure 4
Responsibilities related to the Turkish Qualifications Framework
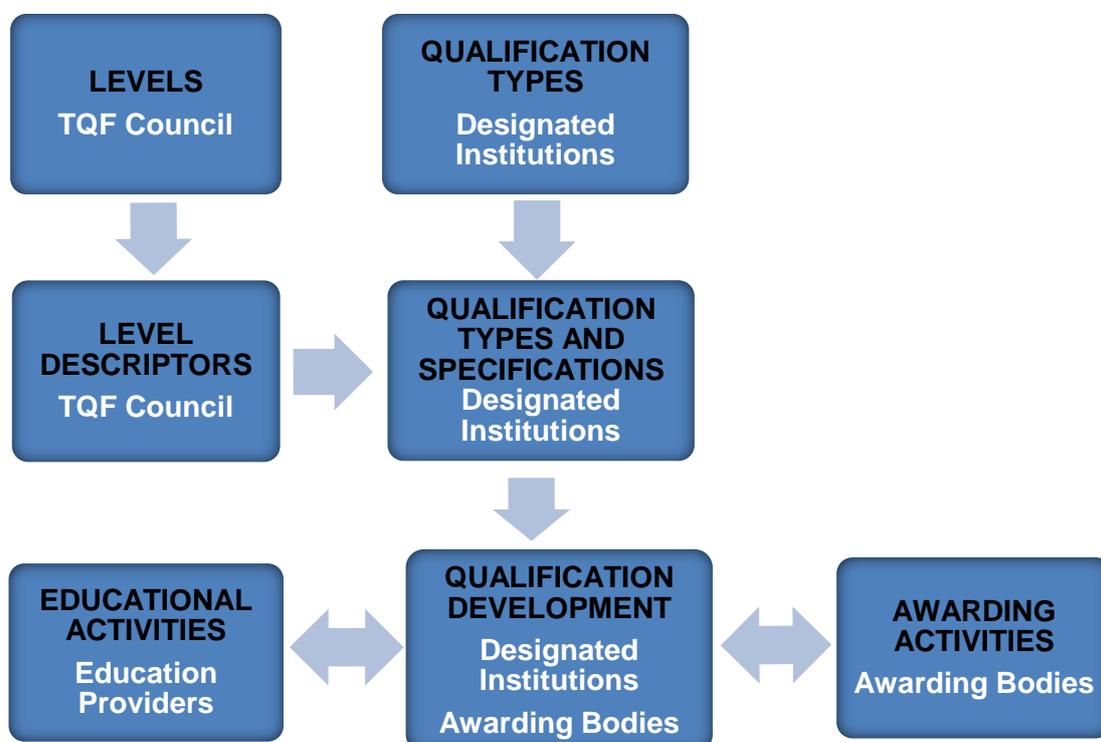
4.1 Turkish Qualifications Framework Governance

The tasks related to the preparation, development and updating of the TQF shall be exercised by the VQA as per the article 23/A of the Law no 5544. The details of the duties and coordination role to be fulfilled by the VQA shall be elaborated in the TQF Regulation. However, all stakeholders have to internalize the TQF and participate in and provide contributions to the implementation process at a certain degree in order to implement the TQF and realize it as a whole as targeted. It is essential to build cooperation between the relevant institutions and bodies in order to accept the TQF design, implement it in the education and training system and apply it in a sustainable way. The duties and responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders including primarily the MoNE and CoHE with respect to the TQF and principles on their relations with the VQA shall be set forth in the TQF Regulation.

The administrative structures for the implementation and operation of the TQF, the bodies/institutions which are responsible for awarding the qualifications and their responsibilities; the bodies/institution which have a responsibility in the operation of TQF, the roles of awarding bodies and their interaction as well as the matters related to the management and monitoring mechanisms of the TQF shall be regulated in the TQF Regulation. The TQF Higher Council, TQF Council, TQF Secretariat and Consultation Committee shall be formed to perform the activities regarding the management and implementation of the TQF.

4.1.1 Turkish Qualifications Framework Higher Council

The TQF Higher Council shall consist of the CoHE President, the MoNE Undersecretary and VQA President.

The duties and responsibilities of the Higher Council shall include the following:

a) To assess and approve the opinions, suggestions and decisions submitted by the TQF Council.

b) To ensure that the TQF-related practices are monitored and evaluated.

c) To cooperate with and support the designated bodies/institutions for all matters regarding the implementation of the TQF and the quality assurance.

d) To ensure the coordination for national and international consultation with regard to the TQF.

e) To assign the personnel to work at the VQA with regard to TQF activities.

4.1.2 Turkish Qualifications Framework Council

The TQF Council shall consist of

a) A total of five members including MoNE, and four representatives designated by the Deputy Undersecretary and the Ministry;

b) A total of five members including the CoHE; and four representatives designated by the Vice President and CoHE, one of whom shall be a member of the National Student Council;

c) A total of three members including VQA, Vice President and two representatives;;

d) One member from the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey;

e) One member from the Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen;

f) One member from each of three employee unions which have the higher number of members;

g) One member from the confederation of employers' unions that have the higher number of members.

The duties and responsibilities of the TQF Council shall include the following:

a) To prepare a three-year "TQF Action Plan" with respect to the implementation of the TQF within six months following its establishment.

b) To adopt recommendations regarding the qualifications to be included in the TQF in cooperation with the designated bodies and institutions.

c) To ensure that the research, technical reviews, studies, projects on matters needed with regard to the TQF are conducted and that any related goods and services are provided by the local, foreign real and legal persons.

d) To ensure that the monitoring and evaluation reports on the implementation of the TQF are prepared and submit to the TQF Higher Council.

e) To propose suggestions to the TQF Higher Council regarding the preparation, development and updating of the TQF.

f) To develop suggestions regarding the institutional arrangements and guidelines which will enable horizontal and vertical transfer between the qualifications.

g) To set the procedures and principles on the examination of the objections to the decisions of acception or rejection of the qualifications approved to be included in the TQF.

h) To publish the reports on the quality assurance system of the general, vocational and academic qualifications.

i) To set the criteria, guidelines, procedures and principles on the overall requirements regarding the qualifications to be included in the TQF, quality assurance of the qualifications, design of the new qualifications, and procedures to apply in the approval process and objections.

j) To develop regulations on the creation, implementation and publication of a national registry of qualifications included in the TQF.

k) To develop the communication strategy on raising national and international awareness regarding the TQF.

l) To form the required expert committees, sub-working groups and etc in order to implement and develop the TQF.

m) To prepare annual work plans and activity reports.

n) To ensure that reviews are conducted on the efficiency and international compliance of the TQF and publish reports on that matter.

o) To form the TQF Consultation Committee and hold meetings.

4.1.3 Turkish Qualifications Framework Secretariat

An independent TQF Department should be established at VQA in order to perform the secretariat activities of the TQF Higher Council and TQF Council effectively and efficiently. Until the Department is established, a TQF Secretariat shall be formed at VQA and the staff of MoNE, CoHE and VQA shall be assigned to work at the secretariat permanently.

The duties of the TQF Secretariat shall include the following:

a) To provide support services to all technical and administrative works of the TQF

Council.

b) To prepare draft strategy plan on the management of the TQF Council, annual work plans and activity reports.

c) To ensure the implementation of the TQF communication strategy.

d) To create a National Qualifications Registry (NQR) keep it up-to-date.

e) To prepare any kind of research and review reports requested by the Head of the TQF Council or perform any kind of tasks for its preparation.

f) To fulfill other duties to be assigned by the Head of the TQF Council.

4.1.4   Turkish Qualifications Framework Consultation Committee

TQF Consultation Committee is a consultation platform where the maximum involvement of the TQF stakeholders are ensured in order to assess the TQF-related activities and provide opinions.

The Consultation Committee shall hold its ordinary meeting minimum once a year and extraordinary meeting upon the invitation of the TQF Higher Council.

4.1.5   Duties and Responsibilities of the Designated Bodies and Institutions

The duties and responsibilities of the designated bodies/institutions within the scope of TQF shall include the following:

a) To assign the members to be involved in the TQF Council and provide the necessary facilitation for the effective work of the members.

b) To assign representatives to work at TQF committees and working groups.

c) To implement the regulations and tasks related to the inclusion of qualifications they're in charge of in the TQF in harmony with the criteria, guidelines, procedures and principles specified in the "TQF Action Plan".

d) To ensure that the design and content of the qualifications they're in charge of be in compliance with the overall requirements applied to the qualifications to be included in the TQF.

e) To prepare the Qualification Type Specifications" for the qualification types they are in charge of and submit them to the TQF Council.

f) To submit the proposals on the inclusion of the qualifications they are in charge of into the TQF and all requested information regarding the qualifications to the TQF Council.

g) To provide training, consultation and guidance about the TQF to the persons involved in the development of the qualifications that they are in charge, training and education activities as well as evaluation and assessment activities with respect to the qualifications.

h) To perform activities within the scope of the responsibilities set forth in the TQF communication strategy and support the national and international awareness-raising activities regarding the TQF.

i) To take the necessary actions in order to quality assure, monitor and improve continuously the qualifications they are in charge of in line with the procedures and principles on the quality assurance set by the TQF Council.

j) To prepare reports on the qualifications and quality assurance practices to be submitted to the TQF Council.

k) To assign the staff to represent the Institutions at the TQF Secretariat.

4.2 Inclusion of the Qualifications in the Turkish Qualifications Framework

All quality-assured qualifications shall be included in the TQF. Accordingly, the policies and procedures on which processes shall be used shall be developed following the entry into force of the TQF Regulation.

The decisions on the qualifications requested to be included in the TQF shall be taken in line with the principles set by the TQF Higher Council. The quality assured general, vocational and academic qualifications including the higher education provided by the public institutions and organizations as well as the organizations outside the public sector upon the permit and under the supervision of the public bodies shall be included in the TQF by the end of 2014, an action shall be develop in order to quality assure other qualifications and it shall be monitored by the Higher Council.

The academic qualifications quality-assured by the Council of Higher Education, the qualifications achieved at the end of the training and education programs accredited by the accreditation bodies authorized by the VQA, and the vocational, technical and professional qualifications which are quality-assured by the VQA shall be included on the relevant levels in line with the principles to be set by the TQF Higher Council. The qualifications shall correspond to the qualification type specifications during their inclusion into the TQF. All qualifications included in the TQF shall be recorded in the database by the VQA. Furthermore, MoNE and CoHE shall keep their traceable records of the qualifications that they are responsible.

A standardized process shall have been developed to include the qualifications into the TQF during the TQF implementation process. Accordingly, all designated bodies/institutions shall have the obligation to identify the learning outcomes related to the qualifications and create the assessment mechanisms to check whether each qualification is in compliance with its TQF type specifications.

The designated bodies/institutions shall ensure that the appropriate key competences are included in the qualifications and set the principles on the quality assurance systems of the qualifications. The quality assurance principles that are set shall be submitted to the TQF Higher Council for approval and included in the database upon the agreement of the TQF Higher Council. The qualifications which are fully in compliance with the qualification type specifications shall be included in the TQF according to their levels, types, and categories. Those qualifications which are not compliant with any of the qualification type specification shall be included in an appropriate level under a new qualification type. The administrative arrangements covering the clear and explicit tasks to shape and standardize that process shall be developed by the TQF Higher Council following the entry into force of the TQF Regulation.

The requirements and processes regarding the inclusion of the qualifications achieved in other countries or awarded by foreign awarding bodies into the TQF or determination of their corresponding place in the TQF shall be set by the TQF Higher Council. The referencing and mutual recognition agreements concluded on the basis of the EQF shall be taken into account for the recognition of the abovementioned qualifications.

4.3 Use of the Qualifications in the Turkish Qualifications Framework

The rules applying to the publication of the qualifications in the TQF and their use by the awarding bodies shall be set by the TQF Higher Council and published on the web page of the TQF.

The education and training providers and awarding bodies shall perform their education, testing and awarding tasks by using the qualifications in TQF and referring to them. The persons, institutions and bodies which are not authorized by the TQF Higher Council shall not perform education, training, testing and awarding activities by referring to the qualifications in the TQF.

The persons, institutions and bodies which are found to be performing education, training, testing and awarding activities by referring to the qualifications in TQF although they are not authorized by the designated bodies/institutions shall be subject to administrative and penal sanctions pursuant to the overall provisions.

4.4 Updating, Modification and Cancellation of Qualifications in the Turkish Qualifications Framework

The suggestions on the modification of qualifications in the TQF shall be submitted to the TQF Higher Council with the justifications by the designated bodies/institutions and other real or legal persons affected by the qualifications. The suggestions shall be examined and concluded by the TQF Higher Council according to the procedures and principles on the updating, modification and cancellation of the qualifications.

The impact of the modification of a qualification in TQF on the holders of the qualification certificate shall be assessed. If a certain obligation is imposed on the relevant parties due to the modification, this shall be notified to all relevant parties minimum six months prior to the commencement of the concerned practice and published on the web page of the TQF and designated bodies/institutions.

In the event of the cancellation of a qualification in the TQF, the status of the certificates awarded according to the cancelled qualification and the necessary actions to be taken by the designated bodies/institutions shall be elaborated in the cancellation decision. The valid qualification units of the holders of certificates awarded according to the qualifications excluded from the TQF due to cancellation shall be evaluated during the certification to be performed according to the other qualifications that include the concerned units.

4.5 Quality Assurance

Entry into force of the TQF in our country will also require reliable and comprehensive quality assurance regulations in order to support the validity of the qualifications. The precondition to include the qualifications in the TQF is that the qualifications shall satisfy all criteria including primarily the quality assurance criteria.

Inclusion of the qualifications in the TQF at a certain level shows that the qualifications have been awarded based on the achievement of comparable learning outcomes. "Level" approach is based on the fact that all stakeholders guarantee the reliability of the qualifications. It is necessary to use transparent quality assurance processes in order to guarantee the validity of all qualifications included in the TQF.

Quality assurance has been one of the most important matters in the development and implementation of the Overarching *Framework* for *Qualifications* of the *European Higher*

Education Area (QF - EHEA) and EQF. As a result of the intense works performed in close cooperation between the EU Member States and relevant stakeholders for many years, several European quality assurance principles and systems have been developed in order to achieve the concerned quality assurance goal. These principles and systems are as follows:

a) Quality Assurance Standards and Principles in the European Higher Education Area

b) European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System for Higher Education (ECTS)

c) European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

d) Common Quality Assurance Framework

e) European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education And Training

f) European Guidelines on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning

g) European Inventory regarding the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and Open Coordination Management.

All these principles and systems is associated with life-long learning policy of which the "European Union Strategic Framework for Cooperation in Education and Training - 2020 (ET2020)[28]" and this the EQF is an integral part. These principles and systems provide a multilayered approach which will enable each country to deal with the quality assurance properly. As a result of this approach, a quality assurance structure where all decisions, tasks and practices related to the TQF will be subject to internal and external monitoring has been created.

As per the VQA Law no 5544, all quality-assured qualifications shall be included in the TQF. The relevant law does not define the quality assurance criteria but sets forth the following explicit provision.

> *"The quality assurance of the vocational and technical qualifications to be included in the National Qualifications Framework shall be performed by the Authority. The procedures and principles on the quality assurance criteria of the qualifications to be included in the National Qualifications Framework, designation of the bodies and institutions to quality assure the qualifications other than the vocational and technical qualifications, horizontal and vertical transfer between various qualifications as well as the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework shall be set forth in the regulation to enter into force upon the Cabinet Decree."*

(VQA Law, Article 23/A - (2))

Pertaining to this provision, quality assurance of all qualifications to be included in the TQF shall be performed in compliance with the international standards such as the European Quality Assurance Standards and Principles in the Higher Education Area[29] as well as the European Quality Assurance reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training[30].

Quality assurance of the general, vocational and academic qualifications as a result of which individuals are awarded with a diploma within the framework of the responsibilities set forth

---

[28] "European Strategic Framework for Cooperation in Education and Training– 2020 (ET2020)", http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/general_framework/ef0016_en.htm, *(29.03.2012)*

[29] European Quality Assurance Standards and Principles in the Higher Education Area, http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_3edition%20%282%29.pdf, *(29.01.2012)*

[30] European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0001:01:EN:HTML, *(29.01.2012)*

in the Law shall be under the responsibility of the MoNE in secondary education, and CoHE in higher education. The vocational and technical qualifications which enable individuals to be awarded with diplomas shall be prepared in line with the National Occupational Standards. The VQA shall be responsible for the quality assurance of the vocational qualifications which are outside the scope of the diploma programs. The qualifications achieved in other learning environments shall be quality-assured by the designated body/institution which award the concerned qualifications.

The overall criteria regarding the principles and procedures to be taken into account in the quality-assurance of the qualifications to be included in the TQF shall be set by the TQF Higher Council. The TQF Higher Council shall monitor the activities for the continuous improvement of all quality assurance processes.

The dynamics and requirements that resulted in creation of different quality assurance processes in general education, vocational education and higher education have been taken into account in the quality assurance structure created under the TQF. The quality assurance structure that has been identified requires that all designated bodies/institutions fulfill the quality assurance tasks and create the mechanisms necessary to make internal and external evaluation on the quality assurance processes. The concerned structure covers the quality assurance tasks regarding the functioning of TQF's own management mechanism.

An overall TQF policy has been developed regarding the quality assurance to identify the common requirements in line with different approaches in the education and training system. The quality assurance criteria regarding the qualifications to be included in the TQF shall be based on the following main principles:

a) The quality assurance policies and procedures shall cover all qualifications in the TQF.

b) The designated institutions/bodies shall ensure that the quality assurance of the qualifications be the complementary parts of internal management.

c) The quality assurance of the qualifications shall be regularly evaluated by external monitoring and evaluation institutions.

d) The external monitoring and evaluation institutions that evaluates the quality assurance of the qualifications shall be subject to regular assessment.

e) The quality assurance shall also cover the scope, input and process aspects primarily including the learning outcomes, evaluation and certification.

The designated institutions/bodies shall be responsible for establishing and operating the required quality assurance structure in compliance with the quality assurance standards to be set by the TQF under the supervision of an independent quality assurance organization and in a way to cover the following elements:

a) Explicit and measurable objectives and standards,

b) Practical guidelines which will cover the involvement of the stakeholders,

c) Appropriate resources,

d) Consistent evaluation methods for self-evaluation and review by external parties,

e) Procedures on feedback mechanisms and improvement,

f) Widely accessible evaluation results.

Other matters related to the quality assurance shall be set forth in the TQF Regulation.

4.6   Turkish Qualifications Framework and Mobility of Learners

One of the benefits of the TQF is the development and improvement of the mobility conditions of the learners. The TQF includes the policies which will promote the designated institutions/bodies to make the necessary arrangements for the systems of credit accumulation, transfer and recognition of prior learning. TQF is based on an approach in which learners can achieve a qualification through various ways. According to this approach, it is possible to accumulate the learning outcomes of a certain qualification in different learning environments and at different times. The arrangements, which will enable the accumulation and evaluation of different learning outcomes, shall be made in the TQF and the tasks of recognizing prior learning and accumulating credits shall be identified.

Following the entry into force of the TQF, a guideline on the ways of horizontal and vertical progression between the qualifications in the TQF shall be prepared. The designated institutions/bodies shall be responsible for ensuring that the qualification type specifications regarding the qualifications they award include the information on the ways of horizontal and vertical transfer.

The TQF Council shall work with the designated institutions/bodies in order to prepare a plan for the implementation of credit accumulation and transfer systems and this plan shall be implemented. The Council shall also cooperate with the designated institutions/bodies in order to ensure that the credit accumulation and transfer systems for the vocational and higher education qualifications in the TQF are prepared in compliance with the relevant European credit and transfer system.

4.7   Recognition of Prior Learning within the Scope of Life-Long Learning

The processes regarding the recognition of prior learning are complementary to every qualification system that aims to promote the life-long learning approach. Within the scope of lifelong learning, *learning* is considered as a process, which continues, in the formal, non-formal and informal learning environments at every level of education including the higher education without limitation with a predetermined learning environment and time.

The processes regarding the recognition of prior learning within the scope of life-long learning aim to ensure that the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning at all levels of the TQF are described and recognized.

The learners are provided with the following possibilities through the recognition of prior learning:
   a) Access to programs,
   b) Access to exams,
   c) Exemptions,
   d) Certification of units,
   e) Credit accumulation and transfer,
   f) Recognition of qualifications.

TQF supports the processes regarding the recognition of prior learning. The concerned processes help clarifying the meaning of the qualifications and make it visible which learning outcomes are necessary to achieve the qualifications. Based on that, the purpose of the policies supporting the recognition of prior learning is to prepare an environment in which all qualifications in the TQF have facilities enabling the recognition of prior learning.

The TQF Higher Council shall publish the overall principles on the recognition of prior

learning. Following the publication of the principles on the recognition of prior learning, the designated institutions/bodies shall be responsible for publishing the procedures on how these principles will be applied to the qualifications they are responsible for.

4.8 National Qualifications Registry

A National Qualifications Registry (NQR) where all qualifications agreed to be included in the TQF are recorded officially and information regarding the qualifications are stored will be created. A guide on the information to be recorded in the NQR will be published and such information will be reviewed periodically and the information that is requested to be stored may be modified when deemed appropriate. The designated institutions/bodies shall be responsible for the accuracy of the information they provided to be stored in the NQR. The NQR will be created within a year following the entry into force of the TQF Regulation and then updated periodically and published on the web page of the TQF as a database.

4.9 Covering the TQF-Related Expenses

All expenses arising from the activities regarding the preparation, development, updating, promotion and dissemination of the TQF shall be covered from the VQA budget. The stationary, printing, distribution, catering, allowance and other expenses with respect to the meetings of the TQF Higher Council, TQF Council, Consultation Committee, relevant committees and working groups shall be covered by the VQA. Meeting expenses shall be identified by the TQF Higher Council.

5.   UPDATING OF TURKISH QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

Under Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF), TQF Higher Council is responsible for updating, amending and expanding levels, level descriptors, qualification types, qualification type specifications, qualification categories, National Qualifications Registry and all other TQF-related principles and procedures, based on proposals by TQF Council.

TQF develops in line with the changes in the different parts of the education and training system. There must be effective collaboration among designated institutions to ensure consistency and successful implementation of TQF.

Current policies and criteria aiming at a functional TQF will be further improved to achieve progress. To this end, TQF implementation strategy will be prepared to explain inclusion of qualifications in the TQF as well as the building and implementation of procedures for the quality assurance of qualifications included in the framework. Structures will be introduced to support governance systems for TQF implementation and effective maintenance.

Once TQF implementation is initiated, a committee will be built to include local and international experts to prepare referencing and self certifications report regarding the process of TQF-EQF referencing and self certification of higher education levels' compliance with QF-EHEA. Referencing and self certification report will be published upon approval by the TQF Higher Council, and it will be submitted to EQF Advisory Group, which was built by the European Commission to include representatives from states, and to the Council of Europe.

Steps of TQF implementation are provided in the table below.

Table 4

Turkish Qualifications Framework Implementation Timetable

Steps of TQF Implementation	Estimated Dates
<u>Official Approval of TQF</u> Submission of TQF Document and Regulation to the Cabinet and approval process	June 2013
<u>Official Introduction of TQF</u> • Organizing an international conference • TQF logo, identity and deciding for visible identity • Developing TQF website • Publication of information and publicity materials	April-June 2013
<u>Establishment of TQF management system</u> • Establishing TQF Higher Council and TQF Council • Setting up VQA Secretariat	July 2013
<u>Preparation of 3-Year Action Plan for TQF</u> • Preparation of 3-year TQF Action Plan by the TQF Council	December 2013
<u>Preparation of Guidelines, Principles and Procedures for TQF Implementation</u> Preparation of • Principles and procedures of appeals to recommendations and decisions concerning the admission or rejection of qualifications proposed for TQF, • Regulations and guidelines concerning horizontal and vertical transfer among qualifications, • General requirements for qualifications to be included in TQF, • Principles and procedures concerning quality assurance of qualifications, • General criteria for designing new qualifications • Criteria, guidelines and procedures required by administrative principles and regulations to be adopted for qualification approval, • Developing a communication strategy to raise local and international TQF awareness.	July 2013 - April 2014
<u>TQF-EQF Referencing</u> • Establishing referencing steering committee • Preparation of Draft EQF Report • Verification of draft report through workshops and advisory meetings with stakeholder participation • Finalisation of Referencing Report • Publication of Referencing Report and submission to European Commission	April- December 2013

6.   ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of Contributors to Turkish Qualifications Framework Development

Annex 2: Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education

Annex 3: Definitions

Annex 4: Table of Level Descriptors Indicating the Progression Among Levels

Annex 5: Turkish Qualifications Framework Draft Qualification Types and Designated Institutions

Annex 6: Qualification Type Specifications Table

Annex 7: Examples of Qualification Type Specifications

Annex 1

List of People Directly Contributed to the Development of Turkish Qualifications Framework

Executive Board Members of Vocational Qualifications Authority (Period of 2009-2012)

Name - Surname	Title
Bayram AKBAŞ	Chairman – Representative of Ministry of Labour and Social Security
Prof. Dr Oğuz BORAT	Deputy Chairman - Representative of Ministry of National Education
Prof. Dr Yücel ALTUNBAŞAK	Representative of Professional Associations
Assoc. Prof. Dr Ömer AÇIKGÖZ	Representative of Council of Higher Education
Dr Osman YILDIZ	Representative of Labour Unions
Celal KOLOĞLU	Representative of Employers Union

Members of NQF Preparation Commission

Name - Surname	Institution Represented	Title
Prof. Dr Oğuz BORAT	MoNE	Commission Chairman
Assoc. Prof. Dr Ömer AÇIKGÖZ	MoNE	Deputy Chairman of VQA Executive Board – General Director of Vocational Education and Training
Assoc. Prof. Dr Mustafa Kemal BİÇERLİ	MoNE	General Director of Lifelong Learning
Mehmet KÜÇÜK	MoNE	General Director of Private Education Institutions
Mustafa KOÇ	MoNE	General Director of Innovation and Education Technologies
Prof. Dr Şaban H. ÇALIŞ	CoHE	Deputy Chairman Of CoHE
Prof. Dr Metin TOPRAK	CoHE	Representative
Prof. Dr Mehmet DURMAN	CoHE	Academic - Bologna Expert
İbrahim BÜKEL	MoNE	Board Member of Head Council of Education and Morality
Firuzan SİLAHŞÖR	VQA	Vice Chairman of VQA
Ahmet GÖZÜKÜÇÜK	VQA	Head of Office at VQA (Former)
Hülya ERTÜRK KOÇ	MoNE	Head of Group at General Directory (GD) of Secondary Education
Dr Ayşe ALTAŞ GİRGİÇ	MoNE	Head of Group at GD of Primary Education (Former)
Zafer ÇELİK	MoNE	Head of Group at Head Council of Education and Morality
Hüseyin DEMİRBAŞ	MoNE	Education Expert at GD of Religious Education
Şennur ÇETİN	MoNE	Head of Group at GD of Vocational Education and Training
Hafise KAYNARCA	MoNE	Expert at GD of Vocational Education and Training
Kamil TOPÇU	MoNE	Branch Manager at GD of Primary Education (Former)
Derya BARLAK	CoHE	Expert at EU and International Affairs Unit

Members of Working Group for TQF Paper Preparation

Name - Surname	Institution	Title
Prof. Dr Mehmet DURMAN	CoHE	Academic - Bologna Expert
Prof. Dr Selda ÖNDEROĞLU	CoHE	Academic - Bologna Expert
Prof. Dr Gönül AKÇAMETE	CoHE	Academic - Bologna Expert
Hafise KAYNARCA	MoNE	Expert
Osman Seçkin AKBIYIK	VQA	Assistant Expert
Abdullah ÖZDEMİR	VQA	Assistant Expert
David HANDLEY	UYEP	Team Leader
Edwin MERNAGH	UYEP	Expert

Members of Working Group for Level Descriptors Preparation

Name - Surname	Institution	Title
Prof. Dr Selda ÖNDEROĞLU	CoHE	Academic - Bologna Expert
Suat ŞAHİN	MoNE	Teacher
Aysun BÜLBÜL	MoNE	Teacher
Şehnaz N. ÇELİK	MoNE	Teacher
Elif SEYLİM	MoNE	Teacher
Nesrin ŞANLI	MoNE	Teacher
Şerif KARAKUŞ	MoNE	Expert Teacher
Filiz METE	MoNE	Project Manager
Sevinç AKSAY ALBUZ	MoNE	Project Manager
Dilek AYDOSLU	MoNE	Teacher
Kenan KÜTÜKDE	MoNE	Teacher
Turan KÜÇÜK	VQA	Expert
Tuğba YILMAZ	VQA	Assistant Expert
Yaprak AKÇAY	VQA	Assistant Expert
Osman Seçkin AKBIYIK	VQA	Assistant Expert

Members of Extended Working Group for NQF Preparation

Name - Surname	Institution
Nuh MARAL	Ministry of National Education
Aysun BÜLBÜL	Ministry of National Education
Filiz METE	Ministry of National Education
Abdullah BÜYÜKYILDIZ	Ministry of National Education
Osman YALÇIN	Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology
Didem BAYKARA	
Betül ERSİN UYSAL	Ministry of Development
Hilal BEYCAN	Ministry Of European Union
Arzu AKAR	Ministry Of European Union
Metin TOPRAK	Council of Higher Education
Emrullah ASLAN	Turkish Employment Agency
Esin ÖZDEMİR	Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges
Zehra KAYA	Turkish Confederation of Craftsmen and Artisans
Hakkı KIZILOĞLU	Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations
Seda BASMACI	Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions
Şahin SERİM	HAK-İŞ Trade Union Confederation
Turan KÜÇÜK	Vocational Qualifications Authority of Turkey
Yaprak AKÇAY	Vocational Qualifications Authority of Turkey
Tuğba YILMAZ	Vocational Qualifications Authority of Turkey
Osman Seçkin AKBIYIK	Vocational Qualifications Authority of Turkey

UYEP Assistants :Müjde SADIKOĞLU

Nil GÖLCÜKLÜ

Beril BİNERBAY

Translators :Çağlayan SAYHAN

Necla Yılmaz

Editor :Assoc. Prof. Dr Canan KARABABA

Members of TQF Consultation and Evaluation Platform

	Authorities/Institutions Represented
1	Prime Ministry
2	Ministry of National Education
3	Ministry of National Defence
4	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
5	Ministry of Finance
6	Ministry of Environment Forestry and Urbanization
7	Ministry of Health
8	Ministry of Food Agriculture and Livestock
9	Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology
10	Ministry of Justice
11	Ministry of Internal Affairs
12	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
13	Ministry of Transportation, Maritime Affairs and Communications
14	Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
15	Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs
16	Ministry of the Culture and Tourism
17	Under secretariat of Treasury
18	Ministry of Customs and Trade
19	Ministry of Economy
20	Ministry of Development
21	Ministry of Family and Social Policies
22	Ministry Of European Union
23	Council of Higher Education
24	Centre of EU Education and Youth Programmes
25	Turkish Employment Agency
26	Turkish Standards Institution
27	Turkish Statistics Authority
28	Turkish Accreditation Authority
29	Sciences Academy of Turkey
30	The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey
31	Leadership for Management of Disaster and Emergency Case
32	Turkish Radio and Television Institution
33	Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency
34	Information Technology and Communication Agency
35	Energy Market Regulation Agency
36	Leadership of State Staff
37	Leadership of Administration for Developing and Supporting Small-Medium Size Enterprises
38	Intercollegiate Council
39	Capital Markets Board
40	Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges
41	Turkish Confederation of Craftsmen and Artisans
42	Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations
43	Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions

44	Hak-İş Trade Union Confederation
45	Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey
46	The Confederation of Industry and Businessmen of Turkey
47	Confederation of Turkish Initiative and Business World
48	Union of State Education Staff (Memur-Sen)
49	Union of State Education Staff (Kamu-Sen)
50	Union of Education and Science Proletarians (KESK)
51	Turkish Union of Chambers of Engineers and Architects
52	Turkish Union of Chambers of Certified Public Accountants and Sworn-in Certified Public Accountants
53	Turkish Union of Bar Councils
54	Turkish Union of Banks
55	Turkish Union of Doctors
56	Turkish Union of Dentists
57	Turkish Union of Vets
58	Turkish Union of Nurses
59	Turkish Union of Midwives
60	Turkish Union of Pharmacists
61	Turkish Union of Public Notaries
62	The Association of Capital Market Intermediary Institutions of Turkey
63	The Association of Insurance and Reinsurance Companies
64	The Union of Turkish Chambers Of Agriculture
65	The Association of Turkish Travel Agencies
66	The Assembly of Turkish Exporters
67	The Association of Turkish Industry and Businessmen
68	The Association of Separate Industry and Businessmen
69	ASKON Association of Anatolian Businessmen
70	The Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Turkey
71	Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Engineering Programs
72	Turkish Union of Social Sciences
73	Turkish Union of Quality
74	The Community of Journalists of Turkey
75	Turkish Education Foundation
76	Turkish Foundation of Volunteers for Training
77	National Student Council of Higher Education Institutions of Turkey

Annex 2

The Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education

The development of the Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQFHE) has been a major success within the framework of the Bologna Process Implementation in Turkey. This is because it forms the starting point and core of programme development based on a learner-centred approach providing education, recognition and transparency at both a national and international level. It also provides a basis for assessment and monitoring of study programmes through an integrated internal and external quality assurance approach at programme or institutional level.

The TQFHE development has reached the implementation stage and the steps which have so far been taken are briefed as follows:

- Level descriptors for short, first, second and third levels have been prepared, based on the reference level descriptors of European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF–LLL)

- Two basic areas for higher education qualifications that consist of higher education and vocational profiles have been separately defined in the TQFHE

- Credit levels for the qualifications of associate, bachelor, master and doctorate degrees have been defined on the basis of student's study hours and ECTS credits

- Fields of education have been defined in parallel to ISCED 97 and field-specific learning outcomes for 22 fields of education have been prepared

- Level Descriptors have been shared with the universities, trade unions, 18 Ministries and the other representatives of the relevant stakeholders covering 55 NGOs including student councils.

- The final version of the TQFHE was approved by the CoHE in January 2010;

- Pilot Implementation has been started in 4 universities

- Some other HEIs have also initiated the implementation process

The Law on Higher Education No. 2547 as amended by Law No. 6111 emphasises the urgent need for a fully functional NQF and QA System to be established. This has been agreed on by all the internal and external stakeholders of HE.

Annex 3

Definitions

The phrases and concepts that have been used in the Turkish Qualification Framework are defined below.

Awarding Body: A body authorised by a designated body to conduct the relevant tasks for assessing and evaluating the learning outcomes of a qualification that an individual wants to possess and in case the individual is successful certifies the requested qualification.

Competence: Under the scope of TQF "competence" is defined as utilisation of knowledge and skills in an area of work and/or learning by taking responsibility and/or displaying autonomy, determination and satisfaction of learning needs.

Credit: The numeric description of the workload based on learning outcomes.

Designated Institution: The institutions that are responsible for the legal arrangements, tasks and coordination related to the identification, definition and presentation of the qualifications in the education and training system.

Formal (Structured) Education: Defined and sequential education delivered in schools including education at pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools and universities as defined within the national education system designed from a learner's perspective with structured learning objectives, learning time and learning support.

Informal (Non-Structured) Education: All kind of learning based on experience that cannot be acquired in formal and non-formal education institutions ranging from learning obtained without any purpose or intention to conscious and intentional learning.

Key Competences: Basic competences required by the information society that all the individuals should possess and that support the personal development, the social participation in society as efficient and responsible individuals and the employability in the scope of lifelong learning.

Knowledge: Under the scope of the TQF, "knowledge" is defined as theoretical and/or practical knowledge involving the comprehension of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a working or learning area.

Learning Outcome: Knowledge, skills and competences acquired by an individual after the completion of any process.

Level Descriptors: Knowledge, skills and competences required by the levels in the Turkish Qualifications Framework.

Level: Each of the eight levels defining knowledge, skills and competences.

Lifelong Learning: This covers all the activities to certify the outcomes that are obtained through and as a result of formal, non-formal and informal learning events voluntarily or consciously participated by an individual throughout his/her life for personal and/or vocational reasons in order to decrease social exclusion and increase active citizenship by improving knowledge, skills and competences as well as increasing personal development, competitiveness and employability.

National Occupational Standard: The minimum norms for the required knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes as has been adopted by the VQA for the successful practice of a vocation.

National Qualification Framework: All the qualification principles that have been designed in compliance with the European Qualifications Framework and that are obtained through general, vocational and academic education and training programs including primary, secondary and higher education programs and through other learning paths.

National Qualification System: All the activities in a country related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that links education and training to the internal market and civil society.

Non-Formal (Semi-Structured) Education: Education that actually functions to fill the gaps in the system of formal education and supports the development of personal skills, that is structured in terms of its objective, timing and support, is designed according to the learner, can take place either within or outside educational institutions and can target every age group, results with obtaining a certificate, is qualified as an organized and continuous learning event, can be obtained at school or outside school and that does not take place within defined and sequential education.

Orientation: Description of general, vocational and academic features of learning processes that are related to qualifications.

Prior Learning Recognition: The process of evaluating the credits and learning outcomes acquired priorly by an individual through formal education, non-formal education and informal learning in order to achieve a qualification or to be exempt from a part of an education program.

Qualification Type Specifications: The tools defining the common features specific to the qualifications that are placed under each qualification type.

Qualification Type: A group of qualifications classified under the same level covering highly similar learning outcomes known and utilized commonly in the world of education and business.

Qualification: An official output of the process for evaluation and validation that is obtained when an authorised body establishes that an individual has achieved the learning outcomes according to certain standards.

Quality Assurance: All of the activities related to planning, implementing, evaluating and reporting in order to provide that education and training programs and their delivery comply with standards and that the assessment and verification procedures for learning outcomes are objective and reliable.

Skill: Under the scope of TQF, "skill"; is defined in general as "utilisation of knowledge", "problem solving" and "transferring knowledge and skills to others" which requires the ability to use logical, intuitive, and creative thinking and dexterity, method, material, tools and instruments acquired in an area of work or learning.

Turkish Qualifications Framework: The name of the National Qualifications Framework specific for Turkey.

Workload: The total time that is spent for all the learning events required for achieving the learning outcomes.

Annex 4

Level Descriptors Table Indicating the Progression among Levels

	Knowledge	**Skill**	**Competence**
Level 1	Possess **basic** knowledge to perform **simple** activities in line with the given instructions in familiar environments of learning or work.	Perform routine activities in line with the instructions using the **basic** knowledge in **familiar** environments of learning or work.	**Take limited responsibility to perform routine activities under guidance and supervision.**
Level 2	Possess basic **theoretical** knowledge **and practical** knowledge related to the standard tools, instruments and methods required to perform **clearly defined** activities related to an area of work or learning.	Utilise the knowledge required to perform **clearly defined** activities related to an area of work or learning and to work out solutions for the problems **foreseen**.	**Take responsibility in the performance of clearly defined activities under guidance and/or supervision, and determine needs and goals of learning under guidance.**
Level 3	Possess **theoretical and practical** knowledge required to perform **uncomplicated activities** in different environments related to an area of work or learning.	Interpret data, evaluate results, select appropriate standard tasks and methods and apply them systematically, provide solutions to **unforeseen** problems related to **uncomplicated** activities in an area of work or learning.	Take responsibility in performing **uncomplicated** activities under **limited** guidance and/or supervision; **determine needs and goals of learning under guidance, when guidance is required.**
Level 4	Possess **theoretical and practical** knowledge required to perform **complicated** activities in different environments related to an area of work or learning.	Analyze data, interpret results, select appropriate tasks and methods and apply them systematically, provide solutions to **unique and/or unforeseen** problems related to **complicated** activities in an area of work or learning; transfer knowledge and skills to others when required.	Take responsibility in performing **complicated** activities in standard settings; undertake **supervision and limited audit** over activities which are performed by others under one's responsibility; satisfy needs of learning and set future goals of learning.

Level 5	Possess **theoretical and practical knowledge** required for **expertise** in an area of work or learning.	Analyze data that belong to **complicated and interrelated** activities in an area or work or learning, evaluate results with an interrogative approach, draw conclusions, define appropriate tasks and methods and apply them or have them applied systematically; develop evidence based solutions to **unique and/or unforeseen** problems encountered for the first time; transfer knowledge and skills to others.	Take **limited** responsibility in performing **complicated** activities in environments where **unforeseen** changes take place; undertake **supervision and audit** over activities which are performed by others under one's responsibility; satisfy learning needs in line with learning goals, **guide** people under one's responsibility related to the determination of their learning needs and development of their performance.
Level 6	Possess **advanced theoretical and practical knowledge** required for **expertise** in an area of work or learning.	**Analyze** approaches, methods and tasks related to activities in an area of work or learning with a holistic perspective, evaluate results critically, suggest improvements based on research and evidence; **Predict likely** problems in new practices and suggest preventive action; inform others about improvements and solutions developed.	Take responsibility as an individual or a team member in performing **complicated** activities in environments where **unforeseen** changes take place; conduct an advanced assignment or project **partially independently;** plan and manage activities for the project based development of ot**hers under one's responsibility**; **Plan and manage** activities to develop **self performance and performance of others under one's responsibility** in line with goals of learning.
Level 7	Possess **advanced theoretical and practical knowledge** which provide a basis for the **development of original ideas** in an area of work or learning; Comprehend interdisciplinary interactions related to the area.	**Interpret** knowledge one has gained in an area of work or learning through **integrating** them with knowledge in other disciplines, formulate new knowledge, methods and approaches; Solve **complicated unforeseen** problems in one's are through using research methods; Transfer **newly formulated** knowledge, methods, approaches and suggested solutions to others.	Take responsibility as an individual or a team member in performing **complicated** activities in environments where **unforeseen and complicated** changes exist and under conditions requiring new strategic approaches; conduct an advanced assignment or project **independently**; **Lead** studies in his/her area, evaluate the strategic performance of **persons and groups under one's responsibility** and manage improvement activities.
Level 8	Possess **highly advanced knowledge** in development of **original** thoughts, approaches, design, method and techniques in area of work or learning; relate these to multidisciplines.	**Develop an innovative thought**, method, approach, design and/or application in an area of work or learning or adapt an already recognized thought, method, approach, design and/or applications to another area, conduct research on, comprehend, design and apply an original theme; solve emer**ging complicated problems** in one's area using approaches and methods of different disciplines, transfer research and applications results to others.	Take responsibility as an individual or a team member or **take leadership in themes requiring innovation and creativity**; conduct an advanced original assignment or project **independently**; encourage **continuous learning** through activities within and out of one's area, contribute to the sustainable development of the society.

Annex 5

Draft Qualification Types of Turkish Qualifications Framework and Designated Institutions

Level	Institution	Qualification Type			Authority	Vocational Qualification
8	Higher Education Institutions	**Doctoral Diploma (Doctorate, Doctorate in the Arts and Specialization in Medicine)**			Vocational Qualifications Authority	**Level 8 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
7		**Master Degree (with Thesis) Master Degree (without thesis)**				**Level 7 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
6		**Bachelor's Degree**				**Level 6 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
5		**Associate Degree (Academic) Associate Degree (Vocational)**				**Level 5 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
4	Ministry of National Education	**High School Diploma**	**Vocational and Technical High School Diploma**	**Skilled Worker Certificate**		**Level 4 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
3				**Semi-Skilled Worker Certificate**[31]		**Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
		Junior High School Education Certificate				
2		**Primary Education Certificate**				**Level 2 Vocational Qualification Certificate**
1		*No Qualification Type is currently defined at Level 1, but one or more Qualification Types at Level 1 may be developed in the future (e.g. pre-school qualifications, primary school qualifications, qualifications of individuals with special needs, adult literacy etc.).*				

---

[31] To obtain the Semi-Skilled Worker Certificate, Junior High School Education Certificate is a precondition.

Annex 6

Qualification Type Specification Table

Qualification Type Title				
Awarding Body				
Orientation	**General:**	**Academic**		**Vocational:**
Level	**TQF:**	**EQF:**	**ISCO:**	**ISCED (2013):**
Category	**Principal:**	**Supplemental:**	**Unit:**	**Special Purpose:**
Credit Range and Normal Duration of Programme				
Description				
Learning Outcomes				
Key Competences				
Assessment and Evaluation Methods				
Quality Assurance				
Entry Requirements				
Progression Paths				
Career and Employment Paths				

Annex 7

Examples of Qualifications Type Specifications

Table 3 shows a draft of qualification types that are considered to be placed in the TQF. Some are already existing qualification types whilst others are either in development or planned for development in the future.

Examples of Qualification Type Specifications prepared by the three main awarding bodies are:

TQF Level 3

Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate (Special Purpose)

TQF Level 4

Secondary Education Diploma

TQF Level 6
Bachelor Degree

These qualification type specifications have been prepared as a draft. After the qualification types are finalized in the implementation process of the TQF, all the qualification type specifications shall be prepared by the awarding bodies and submitted to the TQF Council.

Qualification Type Title	Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate			
Awarding Body	VQA			
Orientation	General:	Academic:	Vocational: X	
Level	**TQF:** 3	**EQF:** -	**ISCO:** -	**ISCED (2013):** -
Qualification Category	Principal:	Supplemental:	Unit:	Special Purpose: X
Credit Range and Normal Duration of Program	-		-	

Description	A Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate shows that vocational standards of learning outcomes for a specific vocation at this level have been achieved. An individual who has the qualifications under this qualification type possesses the basic level knowledge and understanding as well as the relevant skills related to the specific vocational area and performs uncomplicated activities under limited guidance and/or supervision.
Learning Outcomes	**An individual with the Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate demonstrates the learning outcomes he/she possesses in his/her vocational area related to the knowledge and skills that have been defined below as well as the ability to work independently and to take responsibility that are required for the efficient implementation and development of knowledge and skills.** • Possess theoretical and practical knowledge required to perform uncomplicated activities in different environments of the relevant vocational area related to the qualification; • Interprets data related to uncomplicated activities of the vocational area related to the qualification; • Evaluates the results that derive from the interpretations of the data; • Performs systematically the standard procedures and methods related to uncomplicated activities by using the appropriate tools, equipment and materials; • Implements the procedures for occupational health and safety, environmental protection and quality required by the vocational area of the qualification; • Provides solutions to unforeseen problems that occur in uncomplicated activities; • Takes responsibility in performing uncomplicated activities under limited guidance and/or supervision; • Determines needs and goals of learning under guidance, when guidance is required; • Participates in activities for vocational development and conducts activities for personal vocational development.

Key Competences	In addition to the learning outcomes, the "Key Competences" required for each of the qualifications placed under this qualification type has been defined for the related qualification or has been explicitly described in accordance with the objective of the related level and qualification type and the learning area within the scope of the learning outcomes to be defined. This shall be implemented under the responsibility of the VQA
Assessment and Evaluation Methods	The assessment and evaluation of the learning outcomes of the qualifications related to this qualification type shall be conducted through authorized by the VQA. Procedures for Assessment and Evaluation shall be carried out according to the criteria defined in the National Qualifications that has been prepared on the basis of the National Vocational Standards or International Standards.
Quality Assurance	The quality assurance of the certification processes related to Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate shall be provided through certification bodies authorized according to the requirements identified by the VQA. These bodies; • Have to meet the pre-requirement of being accredited under the ISO Standard 17024 in accordance with the assessment, evaluation and certification system defined in the National Qualifications prepared for the related qualification of this qualification type and • Have to be authorized as a result of the observation, audit and evaluation that have been conducted according to the quality assurance requirements identified by the VQA.
Entry Requirements	There is no general and common entry requirement for the qualifications placed under this qualification type; however there might be some typical entry requirements required by special legislation for certain qualifications placed under this qualification type. These entry requirements are defined in the related National Qualification.
Progression Paths	If an individual, who holds a Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate, also possesses advanced Vocational Qualification Certificates that have been certified in the same area, then this person can apply for these certificates or for a Vocational Qualification Certificate in an different area.
Career & Employment Paths	An individual with a Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate is employed in working areas related to the National Qualification.

Qualification Type Title	Secondary Education Diploma			
Awarding Body	Secondary Education Institutions			
Orientation	General: X	Academic:	Vocational:	
Level	**TQF:**4	**EQF:** 4	**ISCO:**	**ISCED (2011):** 344
Qualification Category	Principal: X	Supplemental:	Unit:	Special Purpose:
Credit Range and Normal Duration of Program	-		4 years	
Description	An individual with a Junior High School Education Certificate possesses the qualifications to undertake supervision and limited audit over activities which are performed by others under one's responsibility; to satisfy needs of learning and to set future goals of learning by interpreting the data related to complicated activities, selecting appropriate tasks and methods and applying them systematically, and providing solutions to various problems in line with the theoretical and practical knowledge required for the related area of learning			
Learning Outcomes	A graduate from a junior high school program demonstrates the learning outcomes he/she possesses in his/her learning area related to the knowledge and skills that have been defined below as well as the ability to work independently and to take responsibility that are required for the efficient implementation and development of knowledge and skills. • Uses theoretical and practical knowledge required to perform complicated activities in different environments related to an area of learning, • Analyses data related to activities of the learning area, interprets their results, selects appropriate tasks and methods and applies them systematically, • Adapts knowledge and skills related to the learning area to other learning situations, • Transfers knowledge and skills to others when required, • Transfers to others on a written and oral basis the proposals for solutions to problems on issues related to the learning area , • Takes responsibility in performing complicated learning activities in standard settings, • Works independently in the conduct of learning activities under his/her responsibility, • Takes responsibility related to the learning activities that he/she conducts, • Acts in compliance with social, scientific, cultural, and ethic values when conducting tasks, • Uses information and communication technologies in activities related to the learning area, • Meets the learning needs, sets future goals for learning and career. • Takes responsibility for his/her own learning, • Undertakes supervision and limited audit over activities which are performed by others under his/her responsibility,			

	• Conveys thoughts on a written and oral basis, • Uses Turkish properly and effectively and interprets written texts and oral expressions specific to the culture of the language, expresses him/herself on a written and oral basis by using elements of language and culture in different situations and takes care to use simple and proper Turkish as a tool of communication, • Fulfills target behaviour of reading, writing, speaking and writing skills in a foreign language required at level B2, • Respects different cultures and social values in society, • Internalises efficiently ethical, social and cultural aspects, • Implements in daily life the knowledge and skills required both by the societal structure based on human rights and the economic system bearing the power of global competition.
Key Competences	In addition to the learning outcomes, the attainment of the "Key Competences" required for the qualifications placed under this qualification type is under the responsibility of the educational institutions in accordance with the education and training programs prepared by the Ministry of National Education.
Assessment and Evaluation Methods	The assessment and evaluation of the learning outcomes of the qualifications related to this qualification type shall be conducted with assessment and evaluation methods defined internally on this subject by the junior high school institutions and many various types and ways of assessment and evaluation methods can be applied depending on the learning area.
Quality Assurance	The quality assurance of all the qualifications related to this qualification type shall be provided by the general principles and rules of the Ministry of National Education as well as the quality assurance approaches and methods related to these qualifications identified by junior high school institutions.
Entry Requirements	Graduates with a Basic Education/Primary School Diploma can enter junior high school programs related to this qualification type.
Progression Paths	Graduates with this qualification can progress to Bachelor Level (Level 6) and in some cases to Higher Vocational /Associate Level (Level 5) programs.
Career & Employment Paths	Graduates with this qualification can orient towards working life by completing the lacking education in the vocational area in line with the knowledge and skills they have in the related learning area.

Qualification Type Title	Bachelor Degree			
Awarding Body	Universities			
Orientation	General:	Academic: X	Vocational:	
Level	TQF: 6	EQF: 6	ISCO:	ISCED (2011): 655
Qualification Category	Principal: X	Supplemental:	Unit:	Special Purpose:
Credit Range and Normal Duration of Program	240 ECTS Credits		4 years	
Description	A graduate from a bachelor program (a graduate that holds a bachelor degree) has the qualification to possess knowledge required for expertise in relation with an area of work or learning for conducting analysis with a holistic perspective, evaluate results critically, suggest improvements based on research and evidence, predict likely problems in new practices and suggest preventive action, inform others about improvements and solutions developed, and by using the attained knowledge and skills to conduct an advanced assignment or project partially independently; perform leadership, plan and manage activities to develop self-performance and performance of others under his/her responsibility in line with the learning objectives.			
Learning Outcomes	A graduate holding a "Bachelor" degree after having successfully completed a bachelor program demonstrates the learning outcomes he/she possesses in his/her working or learning area related to the knowledge and skills that have been defined below as well as the ability to work independently and to take responsibility that are required for the efficient implementation and development of knowledge and skills. • Possess advanced theoretical and practical knowledge required for expertise in an area of work or learning. • Analyze approaches, methods and tasks related to activities in an area of work or learning with a holistic perspective, evaluate results critically, suggest improvements based on research and evidence, predict likely problems in new practices and suggest preventive action; inform others about improvements and solutions developed;. • Take responsibility as an individual or a team member in environments where unforeseen changes take place; • Conduct an advanced assignment or project partially independently • Plan and manage activities for the project based development of others under one's responsibility; • Plan and manage activities to develop self-performance and performance of others under one's responsibility in line with goals of learning; • Inform individuals and institutions on issues related to one's field; transfer on a written and oral basis thoughts and proposals to			

	solve problems;
	• Share with experts and non-experts thoughts and proposals to solve problems related to one's area by supporting these with qualitative and quantitative data;
	• Organize and implement projects and events for the social environment one is living in with a conscience of social responsibility;
	• Act in compliance with social, scientific, cultural, and ethic values when collecting, interpreting, implementing data related to one's area and disseminating the results of these.
Key Competences	In addition to the learning outcomes, the "Key Competences" required for each of the qualifications placed under this qualification type has been defined for the related qualification (bachelor degree) or has been explicitly described in accordance with the objective of the related level and qualification type and the learning area within the scope of the learning outcomes to be defined. This shall be implemented under the responsibility of the Council of Higher Education and the relevant institution for higher education awarding the qualification.
Assessment and Evaluation Methods	The assessment and evaluation of the learning outcomes of the qualifications related to this qualification type shall be conducted with assessment and evaluation methods defined internally on this subject by the higher education institutions and many various types and ways of assessment and evaluation methods can be applied depending on the learning area.
Quality Assurance	The quality assurance of all the qualifications related to this qualification type shall be provided by the general principles and rules of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) as well as the quality assurance approaches and methods related to these qualifications identified by higher education institutions.
Entry Requirements	Graduates holding a High school Diploma or Vocational Associate Diploma can enter the bachelor programmes related to this qualification type, the latter by undergraduate transfer.
Progression Paths	Graduates who possess the qualification (bachelor degree) related to this qualification type can progress to programs at Postgraduate level and in some situations Doctorate level.
Career Paths	Graduates who possess the qualification (bachelor degree) related to this qualification type can start their career in some related areas as professionals and/or managers and in some areas as experts and/or general professionals