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| **1. NATIONAL COORDINATION OF THE QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK** | | | | |
| * 1. The National Qualification Framework for lifelong learning is approved |  | As foreseen in the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Education Strategy, (point 3.3.3.) | Spring 2016 | Cabinet of Ministers |
| * 1. Roles of the implementing bodies have been clearly identified, and if needed new roles have been attributed | **In particular roles for:**   * **Standard setting**   Who will define the occupational standards, education standards, qualification standards and curricula?   * **Quality assurance**   Different quality assurance processes include checking that standards and curricula are relevant and based on learning outcomes; quality assuring final assessment and certification and quality assuring the institutions that train, assess and issue state documents (diplomas, certificates) |  | April-June 2016 | Suggestion that  MoE and MLSPP establishing of WG for QF implementation chaired by Deputy Minister |
| * 1. The legal implications of the AZQF have been regulated in the appropriate laws | Suggested to analyse existing legislation and define recommendations, and to integrate existing recommendations from international projects  Apart from legislation on education, it may be important to consider as well employment legislation and the labour code. |  | June-October 2016 | Ministry of Education  Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population |
| * 1. The reforms in different sectors of the education system (common principles for describing learning outcomes, for assessment and for QA practices) are coordinated through the AZQF | Establish coordination mechanisms (coordinating committee(s) involving different institutions stakeholders) and secretarial support   * Dealing with decision-making and technical issues may be dealt with by different groups * Clarify links with the implementation of the Education Development Strategy. |  | September2016  2017-2022 | Coordination group established  Technical implementation group(s) to be established later |
| * 1. There is a coordinating body for the implementation for the AZQF including all key stakeholders | See above 1.4 |  | 2016 | MoE |
| * 1. A clear need analysis has been made of the required professional capacities to implement the AZQF | Work to be specified based on expected activities in the implementation plan (incl. different economic sectors, numbers of standards and curricula and number of providers) and checked against existing capacities, | Expert support from EU programme foreseen | December2016-March 2017  Updated annually | Coordinating groups and MoE |
| * 1. Preparing proposals on creation of a legislative framework for organization of lifelong education and informal education and assessment of knowledge and skills of those who were educated this way (Point 3.3.5 National Strategy for Education Development) | Suggest that legislation developed on basis of study/policy document on recognition of non-formal and informal learning drawing on European experiences and pilots in Azerbaijan |  | 2016-2017 |  |
| * 1. The AZQF is reviewed periodically | First review  Followed by recommendations and possibly amendments to decree | Additional donor support needed? | 2020 |  |
| **2. IMPROVING THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS** | | | | |
| * 1. An system for skills anticipation has been established for the use of different institutions, including a new methodology for skills anticipation and workforce planning is in place | Some studies available,  Further methodological support needed.  A working group for skills anticipation exists supported by ETF. | Additional donor support needed? |  | MoLSP |
| * 1. The Classification system for Employment have been updated, a register of occupations is available on-line | The National Classification System for Employment has been updated to ISCO 2008 classification, and is in place in contract registration system, but needs to be maintained and regularly updated. Links occupational standards and where appropriate qualifications? |  | 2016-2022 | MoLSP |
| * 1. Priorities for the development of new profiles are being identified continuously |  |  | 2016-2022 | MoLSP |
| * 1. Occupational standards are reviewed or developed | Currently 275 standards approved and 75 awaiting validation. How many do we need in the future? How can we ensure systematic updating and collecting feedback for improving them?  Should current resources for Occupational Standard development be strengthened? | Additional donor support needed? | ongoing | MoLSP (with inputs from MoE and social partners) |
| * 1. Occupational standards are validated with stakeholders | The procedures for this exist by validating the standards with line ministries and leading enterprises. Should they change? |  | ongoing | MoLSP |
| * 1. Occupational standards are formally approved | Standards that are validated are approved by the MoLSP and published |  | ongoing | MoLSP |
| * 1. A public database of occupational standards is available |  | Additional donor support needed? |  | MoLSP |
| * 1. Other possible actions |  |  |  |  |
| **3. UPDATING AND DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AND CURRICULA ON THE BASIS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND IN LINE WITH AZQF** | | | | |
| * 1. Qualifications (Educational standards or Qualification standards) have been developed or reviewed | **For level 8** develop PhD and DSc standards  Cabinet of Ministers Decree # 65 (March 15, 2012), on the Classification of specialties for Doctoral level of higher education includes 399 specialties.  Would we need 399 standards?  Is there a plan for taught Doctoral degrees? |  | 2017-2018 | Higher Attestation Committee  MoE  Universities  Academy of Science |
| **For level 7 and 6:**  All standards to be aligned with AZQF (learning outcomes, levels, ECTS). 154 state educational are to be redeveloped for Bachelor and 156 for masters. 36 occupational standards exist for higher levels. Possible involvement of world of work in standard setting for HE should be clarified. | Possible expert support needed from EU and/or Council of Europe | 2017 | MoE  Universities |
| **For Level 5**  Classifier for secondary specialised education has 156 specialties. Following CabMin Resolution 354 (Dec 2013) 115 state education standards for secondary specialised education reviewed but still need alignment with AZQF. Concrete recommendations from ETF study on qualification standards available. Is stronger input from representatives of the world of work desirable? How will reform of secondary specialised education change standards? |  | 2017-2018 | MoE  Institute of Educational Problems  Universities  Colleges  Representatives from the world of work |
| **For Level 3-4**  56 curricula have been reformed, but other programmes are outdated. 131 programmes are offered out of 216 speciality groups in 9 directions. How many do we really need?  Can specialties be classified by level?  Can we clarify the division of work between stakeholders? | Support will be available from EU programme. | 2016-2018 | MoE  TVET Agency  Institute of Educational Problems  MoLSP  Representatives from the world of work |
| **For Level 1-2 and 4 General Education**  There is a single set of state standards for primary education, secondary education and full secondary education that include key statements on learning outcomes. Is review needed to define separate standards for different levels of general education, to address existing gaps (see ETF Study on qualification standards) extension to 12 years of secondary education? |  | 2016-2017 | Ministry of Education  Institute of Educational Problems |
| **ADULT LEARNING** | | | |
| **Qualifications for different teacher groups** aligned with appropriate occupational standards developed by MoE as well as European best practice. | Donor support needed? | 2018-2020 | Ministry of Education |
| For other most adult learning, quality assurance and certification to be developed further beyond existing licensing arrangements and brought in line with AZQF.  Which standards should be used?  How should adult learning be quality assured and certificated? |  | 2016-2022 | MoE  TVET Agency  Institute of Educational Problems  MoLSP  MoEI  Others |
| * 1. Qualifications have been formally approved | All State Education Standards are approved by the Cabinet of Ministers  Occupational Standards and Qualification Standards are approved by MoLSP  For Higher Education are state standard subject area benchmark or assessment requirements?  Are classifiers of programmes and specialisations still needed once NQF register is established? |  | 2016-2022 | Cabinet of Ministers |
| * 1. Clear criteria and a procedure for the inclusion of qualifications in the Register have been established | Can we identify minimal criteria for inclusion of state education standards, etc, in the AZQF register? |  | 2016-2018 | Cabinet of Ministers  MoE  Stakeholder coordination groups |
| **4. STRENGTHENING QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES** | | | | |
| * 1. A National Register is established, including * Accredited institutions awarding state documents (qualifications/ usually a diploma); * Accredited study programmes; * Awarded qualifications (diplomas, certificates and other state recognised documents). | Guidelines and database development | EU Support through Education Programme | 2016-2019 | MoE |
| * 1. An accreditation system for providers/ certificating bodies is in place | According to the National Strategy for the Development of Education Quality is the main strategic priority  Is there sufficient capacity for this?  How can European experience be used to improve the approach?  . | EU Twinning project Further Adherence of HE system to EHEA | 2016-2019 | MoE |
| * 1. Providers can apply to issue the new qualification | The link between the state educational programmes, accredited programmes and providers needs to be specified. | EU Twinning project Further Adherence of HE system to EHEA? | 2017-2018 | MoE |
| * 1. Providers are identified/apply to design and provide the new programmes | As above  Need guidelines, procedures, IT tools and technical support for this task |  | 2018-2020 | MoE |
| * 1. Providers are accredited/ licensed for providing the new programmes |  |  | 2016-2019 | MoE |
| * 1. Guidelines for establishing internal QA procedures for providers, with a link to ESG and EQAVET, are available | Such guidelines exist in many countries and can be analysed and adapted for application. There is also guidance available on ENQA, EQAR registered agencies and on EQAVET Website. Last year Cedefop has published a ***Handbook for VET providers Supporting internal quality management and quality culture*** <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3068> | EU programme for Education AP 2014 | 2017-2020 | MoE  TVET Agency  Universities  VET providers |
| * 1. Achieved learning outcomes are assessed (summative assessment) by providers **under supervision of different quality assurance organisations?** | Assessment is a very critical area for strengthening trust in qualifications.  Special guidelines for assessment and for internal validators, checking that the assessment process has been carried out objectively, and possible training for assessors are desirable.  If assessment materials for summative assessment are developed at provider level how will the validity and reliability of assessment ensured? Who will verify the assessment criteria and methodology? | EU programme for Education AP 2014? | 2019-2022  Assessment is only due after programmes are completed | Accredited providers  MoE (external quality assurance of assessment of College and Higher Education)  State Commission for Student Admission (general education) and TVET graduates completing full secondary education (vocational Lyceum)  Higher Attestation Commission (PhD and DSc)  TVET Agency  Possibly also  Institute of Educational Problems (test development) |
| * 1. Results of the assessment are validated and certificates issued by quality assurance organisation | Guidelines for internal and external validation and for issuing certificates. How can we ensure that nobody receives a state document on education who is not entitled to it? | EU programme for Education AP 2014 | 2018-2019 | MoE |
| * 1. The MoE or an organisation designated by the government is performing the external validation of final assessment and certification processes for all qualifications from L 1-7, including higher education (L5-7) | How will the European Standards and Guidelines be applied? | Possible new regulation by Cabinet of Ministers?  EU Twinning project Further Adherence of HE system to EHEA |  | MoE  State Student Admission Committee  Higher Attestation Committee  TVET Agency |
| * 1. The Higher Attestation Committee is performing the external assessment and certification of PhD and DSc Degrees | Adapting existing guidelines and procedures with European approaches for Doctoral studies see e.g <http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Seminars/050203-05_Monteil_speech.pdf>  <http://www.ehea.info/article-details.aspx?ArticleId=144> |  | 2017-2019 | Cabinet of Ministers  Higher Attestation Committee  MoE  Academy of Science  Universities |
| * 1. Feedback is collected systematically from stakeholders and graduates | Develop a research plan for monitoring the progress of reforms | Financial allocation from government needed | 2016  2018  2020  2022 | MoE  Institute of Educational Problems  Statistical Office  Others |
| **5. SUPPORTING PROVISION** | | | | |
| * 1. New programmes are being provided by accredited providers | (Essential for obtain impact but outside the immediate scope of the AZQF) | Education Development Strategy  EU Support Programme for Education |  |  |
| **6. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFICATIONS, PROGRAMMES AND CAREER, LIFELONG LEARNING AND RECOGNITION OPPORTUNITIES HAS BEEN IMPROVED** | | | | |
| * 1. Information about new qualifications and study programmes have been disseminated to stakeholders | Databases on AZQF website and other organisations  Information, Guidance and Counselling services. | Financial support from government  EU Programme for Education AP 2014 | 2018-2020 | MoE  MoLSP  State Employment Service  Universal Regional Centres (See National Strategy for the Development of Education 4.3) |
| * 1. Different communication tools are available to provide information and promote lifelong learning, career development, the AZQF and the validation of non-formal and informal learning | Training of career counsellors  Handbook for Counselling  Newsletter for guidance counsellors in universal regional centres, state employment service, schools and universities and ngo’s, network of HR officers in companies and organisations |  | 2018-2022 | MoE  MoLSP  State Employment Services  Universal Regional Centers  Universities  Schools  Ngo’s  HR officers network |
| * 1. Awareness is raised on the AZQF and European Qualification Framework among students and researchers (see Mobility Partnership) | Information disseminated via mass media and social media.  Brochure on AZQF, EQF available in Azerbaijani and English in print and and on local websites  Link between AZQF and EQF explained  Possible seminar on Mobility Partnership | Possible EU support for implementation of the Mobility Partnership | 2016-2018 | MoE |
| * 1. Information on alternative routes to qualifications, including alternative pathways within formal systems and validation of non-formal and informal learning is available | Special brochures and information points linked to the career guidance network outlined above  Possible central coordination point for the implementation of Recognition of Non-Formal and Informal Learning in TVET Agency  Links to validation opportunities or career navigation website  Training and awareness raising among guidance officers |  | 2017-2019 | TVET Agency  Stakeholder Coordination Groups  MoE  MoLSP  State Employment Service  Providers |
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| **7. IMPROVED (INTERNATIONAL) RECOGNITION PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE** | | | | |
| * 1. The AZQF is aligned with QF of EHEA and the EQF | **For self-certification to QF EHEA**  perform a preliminary self-certification exercise as a gap analysis; develop action plan to address gaps & recommendations and address gaps progressively  **For alignment / referencing to EQF**  Procedures still need to be clarified | Donor support desirable  ETF and Council of Europe ready to provide advice | 2016-2020  Note that a deadline for self-certification has been set in 2020 making this a very urgent issue | Stakeholder Coordination Groups  implementation support  Erasmus+ Office  MoE |
| * 1. The self-certification report has been completed | Draft completed self-certification report  Involve international experts  Cooperate with Council of Europe and Bologna Secretariat and BFWG | Council of Europe | 2019-2020 | MoE |
| * 1. An alignment or referencing report to the EQF has been prepared | First procedures need to be clarified (the EQF Recommendation is being revised in 2016/2017), then active steps can be undertaken | Possible support under the Mobility Partnership | 2020-2022 |  |
| * 1. The AZQF is used as a tool to support recognition procedures of qualifications | Extend the current information on the ENIC NARIC in Azerbaijan  <https://www.nostrifikasiya.edu.az/frontend/>  Extend the scope of recognition activities  Promote the AZQF  Apply Subsidiary text to the Lisbon Convention: “Recommendation on the use of qualifications frameworks in the recognition of foreign qualifications” Council of Europe 2013 |  | 2017-2022 | ENIC-NARIC contact point  MoE  universities |