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EVALUATION

OF THE SLOVENIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND THE REGISTER OF QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SQF

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Authors: PhD. Klara Skubic Ermenc, PhD. Borut Mikulec, PhD. Roberto Biloslavo

Methodological support: Nina Kristl

Editors: Nika Mustar, Nejc Jensterle, Daša Cvjetičanin

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Authors:
PhD. Klara Skubic Ermenc
PhD. Borut Mikulec
PhD. Roberto Biloslavo

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INTRODUCTION

The Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF) is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualification into levels with regard to learning outcomes. The SQF includes all types of qualifications that can be gained in Slovenia. The purpose of the SQF is to achieve transparency and recognition of qualifications in Slovenia and the EU, and its **main objectives** are:

- to support lifelong learning,
- to connect and coordinate Slovenian qualifications subsystems and
- to improve the transparency, accessibility and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

The SQF includes three types of qualifications and ten levels, defined by descriptors based on learning outcomes. The qualification level descriptor contains three categories of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences.

The types of qualifications are:

- **formal education qualifications (in vocational and technical education, higher education, and general education)**,
- **vocational qualifications**[1], evidenced by a certificate of national vocational qualification (NVQ) issued in accordance with the regulations governing the NVQ, or by another document on the completed training or advanced training programme issued in accordance with the regulations governing professional, technical, and higher education,
- **supplementary qualifications**[2], which shall be regulated in the manner and in accordance with the procedure laid down in the SQF Act and shall be demonstrated by a proof of qualification.

Each qualification that fits within the framework contains all **three categories of learning outcomes** (knowledge, skills and competences), but not every category within the qualification is necessarily equally important. This choice of categories makes it possible to »capture« all the diversity – in terms of the complexity of comparable – learning outcomes and individual-level qualifications obtained in different environments and for different purposes. Each higher level also contains lower level knowledge, skills, and competences.

In the period from 2013 to 2016, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training set up a **publicly available online register of SQF qualifications** (SQF Register)[3], with 1,683 qualifications included to this

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1 **Vocational qualification** means a qualification obtained under the national vocational qualifications (hereinafter: NVQ) procedure, under vocational and technical training and development programmes and under study programmes for continuing education. These qualifications can be obtained outside formal education system.

2 A **supplementary qualification** is a qualification that supplements an individual's competences at the level attained and in a specific professional field, and is tied to the needs of the labour market. The Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act (2015) provides that an application for the inclusion of a supplementary qualification in the SQF may be submitted by an employer, a group of employers or by the Employment Service of Slovenia.

3 Available at: https://www.nok.si/

point: 1,359 general, vocational, and higher education qualifications, 312 national vocational qualifications, and 12 supplementary qualifications[4].

This report presents the **results of the first large-scale evaluation** carried out among a diverse range of users who use the SQF and SQF Register for various purposes. Overall, the findings show that the SQF is positively accepted among users and that they positively evaluate its contribution to the transparency and orderliness of the education system, together with the transparency of qualifications. At the same time, they believe that the SQF has contributed to the systematic organisation of the education system in those areas that were properly developed before its introduction. The evaluation also shows that the SQF is **mostly recognized** among different users, but only generically. A more detailed knowledge of the content, use, and purpose of the SQF is available only to those users who directly use the SQF in their work. As such, this report should be seen as the beginning rather than the end of the process of evaluating the impact of SQF implementation to ensure that the SQF meets the future needs of Slovenian society and responds to the sustainable challenges of the education system and the economy.

The report is divided into three main sections, which are further divided into several chapters:

The first section contains a **description of the development and implementation of the SQF** and a **description of approaches to measuring the impact** of national qualifications frameworks.

The second section, relating to the **monitoring of the implementation of the SQF**, presents the research methodology, recommendations, the main results, the results of quantitative and qualitative research, and annexes with the instrumentation used.

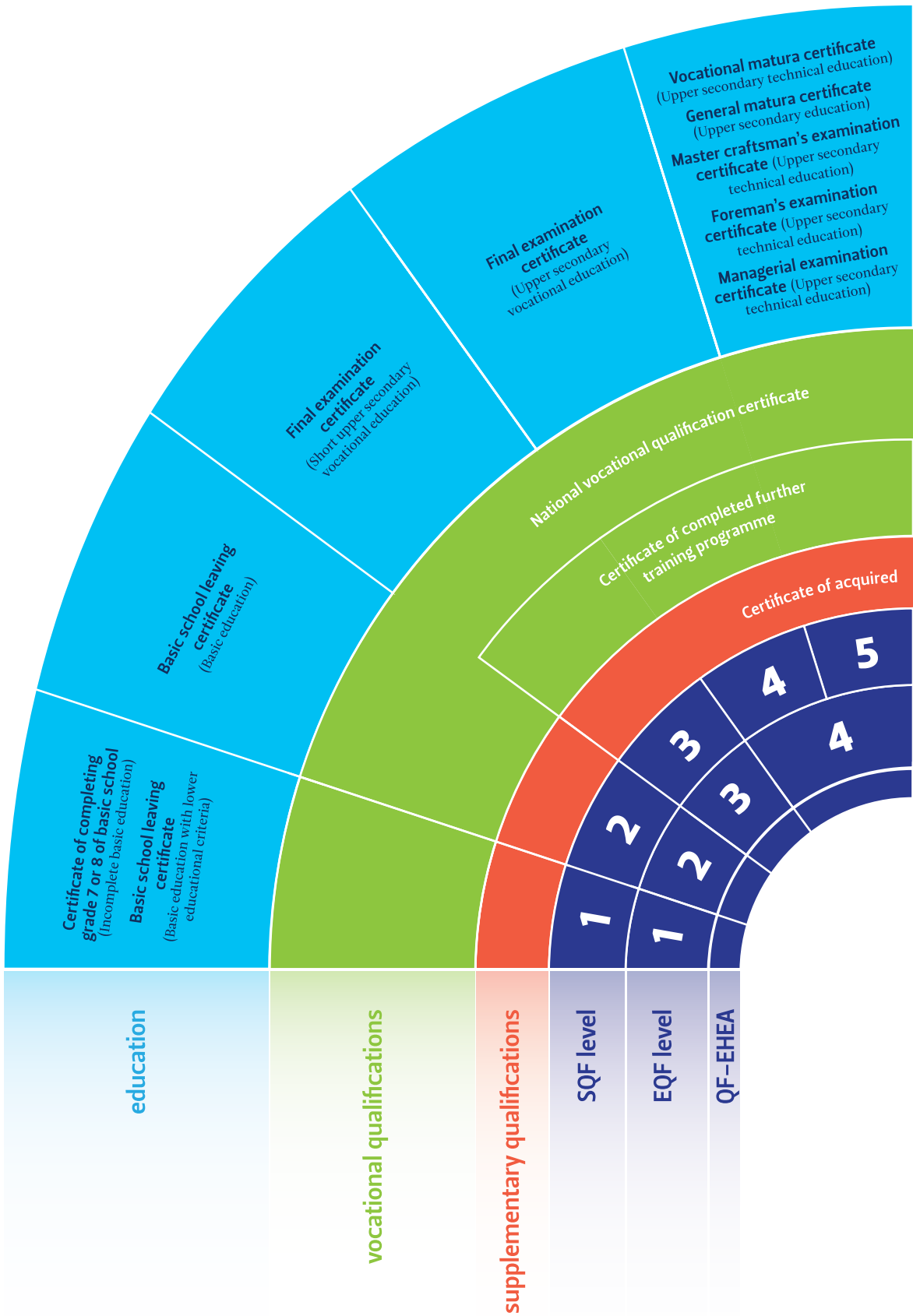
The third section, relating to the **monitoring of the implementation of the SQF Register**, presents the research methodology, recommendations, the main results, the results of quantitative and qualitative research, and annexes with the instrumentation used.

PhD. Borut Mikulec

4 As at 31 December 2019.

Figure 1

SLOVENIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (SQF)



SC – QF-EHEA Short cycle, 1st – QF-EHEA First cycle, 2nd – QF-EHEA Second cycle, 3rd – QF-EHEA Third cycle

The scheme includes all the current qualifications which can be obtained in Slovenia. It also includes the qualification Magisterij znanosti/umetnosti, which is classified as an SQF level 9 qualification and was included into EQF level 8 during the referencing of SQF qualifications in the EQF.

Information about other qualifications included is available at www.nok.si/en/.

I

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SLOVENIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND MEASURING THE IMPACT OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

1. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SLOVENIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

1.1 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF)

So far in Slovenia, in the development of the SQF, we have achieved three fundamental objectives, stemming from the Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008[5], which relate to incentives to Member States to:

- designate National Coordination Points (NCP) for the European Qualifications Framework and define their responsibilities and competences,
- link their national qualifications frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning,
- indicate the appropriate levels of EQF on all authenticating documents (certificates, diplomas, annexes to diplomas/certificates).

On the basis of the Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008, which proposes to Member States the preparation of so-called comprehensive frameworks, the SQF is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualification into levels with regard to learning outcomes. The SQF includes all qualifications and related documents obtained in the formal education system and those qualifications obtained outside the formal education system that have successfully completed the prescribed accreditation procedures.

The milestones defined above have been implemented in the SQF as follows (see Mikulec and Ermenc, 2014):

1. In October 2009, the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) was named the national coordination point of the EQF. In line with its mandate, the CPI implements the tasks of the EQF National Coordination Point as set out in the Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning and the revised Council Recommendations of 22 May 2017 on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. The CPI was, as a National Coordination Point for the EQF, formally based on the adoption of the SQF Act (ZSOK, Official Gazette 104/15), which defines the following tasks of the NCP:

5 Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-eqf/files/journal_sl.pdf

- takes care of the development of the SQF and its referencing to the EQF,
- provides access to information on the SQF, EQF and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF–EHEA) on the website,
- inform the public and promote the SQF and the EQF,
- manages the process of referencing the SQF to the EQF,
- conducts the process of referencing supplementary qualifications to the SQF,
- prepares professional materials and coordinates the work of key stakeholders in referencing the national qualifications to the EQF through the SQF,
- cooperates with the competent international bodies (European Commission, European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), etc.),
- participates in the EQF network of national contact points,
- publishes the SQF Qualifications Register on its website,
- maintains the SQF Qualifications Register and links to the EQF Portal,
- configures the application form for referencing supplementary qualifications to the SQF,
- prepares the proposal of criteria for referencing supplementary qualifications to the SQF,
- issues certificates on the level of the SQF and EQF for NVQ,
- professionally and administratively supports the work of the NCP EQF Expert Commission,
- performs other tasks in accordance with the law.

For all issues related to higher education, the CPI and NCP EQF cooperate with the National Agency for Quality in Slovenian Higher Education (NAKVIS), which is the responsible and competent institution for the quality of higher education qualifications.

2. The first discussions on the EQF in Slovenia began in 2005, when the Ministry of Education and Sport, in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs, organized a national debate on the European Qualifications Framework.

   In January 2010, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia appointed an Interdepartmental Working Group on the Preparation of the National Qualifications Framework (IWG NQF), which would be in line with the European Qualifications Framework. The group (IWG NQF) was composed of representatives of: (then) the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology; Ministries of Labor, Family and Social Affairs; The Center of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education; Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia; Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia; Employers' Associations of Craftsmen of Slovenia; The Federation of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia; The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia; Slovenian Student Union and Slovenian High-School Student Organization. The Government has also defined

its tasks, which implies that the IWG NQF is the highest decision-making body in the establishment of the SQF and its placement in the EQF and the QF-EHEA. The IWG NQF had the following tasks: designation of the NCP in accordance with the Recommendations on the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework; preparation of a strategy and procedures for the placement of Slovenian qualification levels in the EQF in accordance with the criteria; preparing positions for the European Commission's Consultative Group; confirmation of the professional basis for the construction of the SQF preparing guidance for implementation groups and substantive bases for drawing on the European Social Fund (ESF) earmarked funds; monitoring the process of creation of the SQF and inducting individual qualification standards.

In May 2010, the IWG NQF appointed the SQF Expert Group (consisting of three experts in the fields of education, higher education, and the labor market) to prepare the first draft of the SQF (November 2010), as well as the draft proposal for inducting qualification to the SQF and the SQF level in the EQF and QF-EHEA (March 2012).

The SQF proposal, prepared by the designated SQF expert group in November 2010, was discussed and coordinated by the IWG NQF by the end of January 2011. Following consultations on the SQF proposal with different stakeholders, the SQF proposal was thus finally completed in May 2011. Distinguished foreign EQF experts from Ireland (Edwin Mernagh), Austria (Elizabeth Frank, M.Sc.), Finland (phD. Sirkka-Liisa Kärki) and Croatia (phD. Mile Dželalija) also participated in the process of referencing the SQF to the EQF. The CPI later appointed Edwin Mernagh, M.Sc., Elizabeth Frank and de. Sirkka-Liisa Kärki as international experts of the EQF of the Republic of Slovenia (in accordance with the EQF criterion 7).

In May 2013, the Final Report "Referencing of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework in the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the European Framework for Higher Education Qualifications" was presented before the EQF Advisory group.

Based on the written opinion of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the CEDEFOP, further clarifications of the final report from Slovenia have been prepared in the light of the opinion of the EC, the Council of Europe and the CEDEFOP.

In October 2014, the final version of the Final Report "Referencing of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework in the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the European Framework for Higher Education Qualifications" was approved by the IWG NQF.

3. The SQF Act (ZSOK, Official Gazette 104/15) stipulates that the level of qualification acquired under the SQF and EQF shall be recorded in public documents on completion of education, their annexes, NVQ certificates, certificates on completed training or advanced training programs, and certificates of supplementary qualifications, and for higher education and academic education qualifications, and according to the QF-EHEA. The competent ministries harmonized their by-laws relating to public documents with the SQF Act. This provision of the Act has been applied in the Republic of Slovenia since 12 July 2016.

1.2. Revised council recommendation of 22 May 2017 with regard to the european qualifications framework provisions concerning lifelong learning

The revised EU Council Recommendations on the EQF came into force on 22 May[6], highlighting the following new elements that will allow the EQF to adapt to the challenges of the future. These new elements included:

- an invitation to Member States to keep the referencing of their NQFs to the EQF up-to-date;
- revised quality assurance principles focused on qualifications;
- information exchanges and consultation between Member States in order to ensure consistency of the levels allocated to international qualifications included in their NQFs;
- the possibility of developing and applying criteria and procedures to enable third country qualifications frameworks to be compared with the EQF;
- recommendations regarding improved communication about the EQF.

One of the major highlights of the revised Recommendations also relates to inviting countries to review and evaluate national qualifications frameworks. Namely, the reports on the placement of national qualifications frameworks to the EQF are a snapshot of the situation at a given moment and, with the development of national qualifications frameworks, become obsolete over time. The revised recommendations therefore invite Member States to review and update their EQF referencing reports as necessary. The information presented in the referencing reports should be accurate and transparent, as this directly affects trust in national qualifications frameworks and EQFs. In this way, the placement of NQF levels at EQF level will remain relevant and aligned with national qualifications systems. At the same time, this mechanism promotes the comparability and transferability of qualifications included in the EQF across national qualifications frameworks. The integration of national qualifications frameworks into the EQF and the resulting facilitated comparability of qualifications also can have an impact on the renewal of national qualifications. The contribution of the frameworks to lifelong learning, employability, mobility and social inclusion needs to be better communicated to end users.

Confidence in the quality and level of qualifications and in the ranking of EQF levels is crucial to support mobility across geographical borders and transitions between specific educational subsystems. The revised recommendations reinforce the EQF's quality assurance principles. Member States should ensure that qualifications with an EQF level comply with the common quality assurance principles set out in the revised recommendations, without prejudice to national quality assurance principles.

6 Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-eqf/files/sl.pdf

2. APPROACHES TO ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

Determining the impact of national qualifications frameworks is a complex and methodologically demanding process, which is one of the reasons why national qualifications frameworks have so far only been assessed to a limited extent from the impact assessment. A relatively short history of their existence also contributes to this.

However, a survey conducted by CEDEFOP in 2015/16 (Pevec Grm and Bjornavold, 2017)[7], shows that it is possible to analyze the institutional stability and visibility of national qualifications frameworks. The authors conclude that these two factors are a necessary precondition for the impact of national qualifications frameworks, which are also summarized in the following section after the study.

Sustainability and institutional "robustness"

Most European countries treat their national qualifications frameworks as an integral part of the national qualifications system, bearing in mind that a stable formal basis with clear objectives in national policies is essential to ensure and clarify the role of national qualifications frameworks in the future. Active involvement of stakeholders operating outside and within the education and training system is also important.

Few countries have doubts about the future role of their qualifications frameworks, while some stress the need to clarify and/or strengthen the role of frameworks in national policies. Most countries are convinced that their frameworks will continue to play an important role in national qualifications systems, although some point out that the impact of the frameworks will depend on their integration into regular policy processes in the field of qualifications. Even frameworks with the longest tradition, e.g. in Australia, New Zealand or United Kingdom demonstrate the need for change and adapting to new requirements, especially in linking frameworks more effectively with national education and training strategies. Politically and institutionally isolated frameworks will, to a lesser extent, meet the desired expectations. Even frameworks with the longest tradition demonstrate the need for change, especially in linking frameworks more effectively with national education strategies. Other countries see them as tools for transparent presenting qualifications rather than changing them.

7 Pevec Grm in Bjornavold (2017). Background paper for Peer Learning Conference: Do national qualifications frameworks make a difference? Measuring and evaluating NQF impact. Available at: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/background_paper_pla_nqf_impact_cedefop_final_2.11.pdf

Recognition and visibility

To be useful to users, the frameworks must be accessible and visible. Like Slovenia, many other countries already systematically indicate the levels of their national qualifications frameworks and EQFs on public documents (certificates, diplomas, appendices to certificates). It is also important that national and European qualifications databases contain information on the levels and other components of qualifications relevant to their frameworks. The visibility of frameworks is key to increasing the transparency of qualifications. On the other hand, the visibility of frameworks outside the education and training system is limited (especially for employers). Some countries have already invested considerable effort in demonstrating the importance of frameworks for businesses and sectors.

Approaches to assessing the (early) impact of national qualifications frameworks

The monitoring of the implementation of national qualifications frameworks in European countries, which CEDEFOP has been carrying out since 2009 and which is supported by a number of comparative studies, highlights a number of areas where the impact of national qualifications frameworks can be seen:

1. Improved transparency of national qualifications systems.
2. A more consistent use of the learning outcomes approach as a common language in describing qualifications.
3. Linking qualifications frameworks and evaluating non-formal education and opportunity learning.
4. Better cooperation and coordination between stakeholders.
5. Increased visibility of vocational qualifications at higher levels.

Areas of minor impact

1. Visibility and use in the labor market.
2. The bridging gap between the individual qualification subsystems.
3. A deficit in the impetus for institutional reform.
4. Support for the recognition of qualifications between countries.

Lessons learned from selected studies, measuring the impact of national qualifications frameworks

In addition to CEDEFOP's regular monitoring of national qualifications frameworks[8] every two years since 2009, only a few new qualifications frameworks established after 2005 have been included in the systematic evaluation.

In Ireland, an impact assessment of the national qualifications framework was carried out in 2009 and 2017. First evaluation has over a five-year period explored the level of implementation and the impact of the framework on education and training. It included a background document, key stakeholders' reports, stakeholders' involvement, case studies and public discussion. The

8 More information available at https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/national-qualifications-framework-nqf

results relate to different areas: implementation of the framework, impact on learners, learning outcomes and changes in teaching, and recognition of the framework.

The 2017 policy impact assessment of the Irish NFQ[9] (Indecon, 2017) found that the NFQ had a positive impact on the quality, transparency and comparability of qualifications, and the mobility and employability of holders of qualifications in Ireland. It also showed that there was continued strong support for the NFQ as an important element of the national skills and qualifications architecture, continued interest in a qualifications agenda and support for a national forum for knowledge exchange on all qualifications developments, including NFQ and EQF. At the same time, the risks of the NFQ becoming taken for granted and of the weakening of vigilance in maintaining the integrity of the NFQ were acknowledged, including the need to revisit the original levelling of certain qualifications in the light of emerging practice, experience and evidence.

In addition to Ireland, national framework evaluations have also been undertaken in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. In other countries, the priorities are development and implementation, and the issues of assessing and measuring the impact of the Qualifications Framework are shifting into the future.

The literature identifies several challenges arising from research on the impact of the National Qualifications Frameworks on education systems, as this is a complex area where reliable evidence is difficult to obtain. The problem of causality is crucial as it is difficult to separate the direct effects of the introduction of the framework from other factors and measures. Some authors also emphasize the social dimension of national qualifications frameworks due to their connections with specific national context and social constructs based on deeper stakeholder relationships. This implies that a national framework impact study must go beyond a limited technical analysis and take into account the social dimension of the implementation and impact of National Qualifications Frameworks.

Determining the impact of National Qualifications Frameworks

Lessons can be drawn from past experience on how to assess and measure the impact of national qualifications frameworks.

We must take into account both the nature and role of each national qualifications framework and its dynamics and development. The frames change over time, which is most evident in the first-generation frames, as are e.g. Australian, New Zealand and English Qualifications Framework.

When assessing frameworks, we must also pay attention to their multifunctionality. In particular, all-encompassing frameworks address different stakeholders and objectives, so assessing their impact requires both consideration of the individual objectives and characteristics of the subsystems and their integration into the political, organizational and social context. Particular attention must be paid to different objectives of different subsystems: Differ-

9 Available at: https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Policy%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20NFQ_Indecon%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf

ences can arise, for example, between vocational and general education, and different objectives can lead to a higher education framework.

When considering the impact of national qualifications frameworks, it is also important to consider the different types of frameworks and the way in which different subsystems and policy areas are integrated.

The complexity described should be taken into account when assessing and evaluating the impact of the frameworks and it is appropriate to consider the following points:

- The impact of qualifications frameworks must be understood in relation to the social, political and institutional framework in which they operate. All evaluations to date stress the importance of taking context into account when designing evaluations and interpreting results.
- An important aspect is the time dimension, which influences the focus of evaluation and identification of the impact. Experience to date shows that the adequacy of the framework structure can only be assessed after the first two years of its implementation, while its effectiveness can only be assessed after five to ten years from the start of implementation.
- Determining the impact of the Qualifications Framework requires a basic and limited number of indicators that can monitor the implementation and (potential) development of the Qualifications Framework over a given period of time. This starting point must be designed to capture the interests of a broader stakeholder group and the development dynamics of the various subsystems of qualifications.
- Evaluation should be based on agreed criteria among key stakeholders. The framework has a political character, so that it makes sense that the objectives and criteria of the evaluation are achieved by consensus.

Last but not least, as mentioned above, care must be taken when interpreting the results to attribute the causal relationship between the introduction of the framework and changes in this area. It is therefore methodologically more appropriate to supplement quantitative research approaches with qualitative ones.

The role of the Qualifications Framework in the future also depends on our willingness to continuously monitor and evaluate it. Any evaluation is just a step in the longer process, which also provides direction for future work.

II

FINAL REPORT: EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SLOVENIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Authors: PhD. Klara Skubic Ermenc, PhD. Borut Mikulec, PhD. Roberto Biloslavo

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Purpose and objectives of the SQF evaluation

The aim of the evaluation is to determine how different stakeholders assess the utility, recognition and visibility of the SQF and their understanding of the framework.

There are four main objectives of the evaluation:

1. We want to find out how stakeholders understand the SQF.
2. We want to find out how stakeholders use the SQF.
3. We want to find out to what extent the SQF is recognised among the stakeholders.
4. We want to find out whether the SQF has an influence on the educational system and what this influence is.

3.2. Areas of the evaluation and research questions

Based on the identified purpose and objectives, we defined four areas of evaluation:

Table 1: Areas of the evaluation

Objectives of the evaluation	Areas of the evaluation
1. Determine how the stakeholders understand the SQF.	**P1. UNDERSTANDING THE FRAMEWORK AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS**
2. Determine how the stakeholders use the SQF.	**P2. USE OF THE FRAMEWORK AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS**
3. Determine the extent of recognition of the SQF among the stakeholders.	**P3. RECOGNITION OF THE FRAMEWORK AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS**
4. Determine whether the SQF has an influence on the educational system and what this influence is.	**P4. ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE SQF ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

Within each field of evaluation, the following research questions were identified:

1. UNDERSTANDING: We want to find out how stakeholders understand the SQF, namely:
   - How do they understand the underlying logic, purpose and goals of the framework?
   - How do they understand each type of qualification?
   - How do they understand the relationships between types of qualifications?

2. APPLICATION: We want to find out how stakeholders use the SQF, namely:
   - How and for what purposes the SQF is used in the various subsystems; education (general, vocational, higher education, adult education) and the labor market?
   - To what extent is the SQF used in national education policies?
   - Is and how is the SQF used in the transition between different qualification subsystems?
   - Is the SQF being used and how is it being used to meet the mobility needs of students, students and staff?
   - Is and how is the SQF used in the recognition of qualifications?
3. RECOGNITION: We want to find out how the SQF is recognized among different stakeholders, namely:
   - It the SQF recognized among individuals (high-school students, students, job seekers)?
   - Is the SQF recognized by representatives of the key stakeholders: representatives of ministries, representatives of student organizations, representatives of high-school school student organizations, high-school representatives, representatives of faculties, representatives of career advisers of the Employment Service of Slovenia?
   - How high is the visibility of the current activities of NCP in promoting SQF?
4. ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE SQF ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: We want to determine whether the SQF descriptors are used in the creation of programming documents, namely:
   - How do SQF descriptors affect the format of learning outcomes (updated vocational standards, catalogues for practical training, selected PUD (on-the-job training) plans)?

3.3. Target groups for evaluation and the method of achievement

Target groups were selected according to the identified evaluation areas, and data collection techniques depend on the area and the intended target group.

1 UNDERSTANDING THE FRAMEWORK AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS

Target group:

1. Professional Council for Vocational and Technical Education, General Education Expert Council, Adult Education Expert Council, Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA), NCP SQF-EQF Expert Committee.
2. Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Public

Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Employment Service of Slovenia, Statistics Office, ENIC NARIC, Europass.

3. Chambers, Unions, Employers.
4. Representatives of ministries, representatives of student organizations, representatives of high-school student organizations, representatives of high schools, representatives of faculties, representatives of career advisers.

Research methods and techniques:

- Focus group with first and second target group.
- Semi-structured interviews for members of the third and fourth target groups (27 interviews conducted).
- Survey with the 4th target group (50 surveys conducted).

2 USE OF THE FRAMEWORK AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS

Target group:

1. Professional Council for Vocational and Technical Education, General Education Expert Council, Adult Education Expert Council, SQAA, NCP SQF-EQF Expert Committee.
2. Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Employment Service of Slovenia, Statistics Office, ENIC NARIC, EUROPASS.
3. Chambers, Unions, Employers.
4. Document drafters (CPI, National Education Institute of Slovenia, faculty representatives, promoters of supplementary qualifications).
5. Representatives of ministries, representatives of student organizations, representatives of high-school student organizations, representatives of high schools, representatives of faculties, representatives of career advisers.

Research methods and techniques:

- Focus group with target groups 1, 2 and 3.
- Interview with the 4th target group (27 conducted interviews are estimated).
- Survey with the 5th target group (50 conducted surveys are estimated).
- Qualitative analysis of national documents.

3 RECOGNITION OF THE FRAMEWORK AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS

Target group:

1. High-school students, students, job seekers.
2. Representatives of ministries, representatives of student organizations, representatives of high-school student organizations, representatives of high schools, representatives of faculties, representatives of career advisers.

Research methods and techniques:

- Survey with the 1st target group (100 conducted surveys are estimated).
- Survey with the 2nd target group (20 conducted surveys are estimated).

4 ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE SQF ON EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING SYSTEMS

Research methods and techniques:

- Qualitative analysis of documents.
- Good practice examples

3.4. Methods and techniques for data collection, instrumentation, sample

A combined quantitative and qualitative research approach was used for the evaluation purposes. In the first one we prepared a questionnaire for the general and professional public, in the second we conducted focus groups and semi-structured interviews with the professional public.

1 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Methods and techniques for data collection

The data collection (survey) among members of the general public was carried out in two ways: an online questionnaire and a physical questionnaire. The physical survey questionnaire was offered to be filled in by the participants of various events, and an online survey was created for the visitors of the portal www.nok.si on the portal itself.

Data collection among the professional public was carried out with the help of an online questionnaire created with the online survey tool 1ka. The link to the online survey was sent by e-mail to the SCOS members (representatives of ministries), representatives of high-school students and student organizations, representatives of higher education institutions (rectors), faculties (student affairs offices) and career guidance centers (ZRSZ, career advisors of universities and independent higher education institutions). The e-mail addresses were obtained from the websites of organizations and faculties, and the SCOS members database was used for SCOS. The data collection took place from 11 February 2019 to 1 March 2019.

Description of instrumentation

In the quantitative part of the evaluation, two measuring instruments were used – questionnaires adapted to the respective target groups (questionnaires for the general and professional public).

The questionnaire for the general public consists of two substantive sets of questions, namely a set of questions that check (1) socio-demographic data, followed by a section that checks (2) the recognition and understanding of the SQF.

The set of socio-demographic questions contains questions on gender, age and educational level, as well as on the role of the respondent. The questionnaire, which was intended to test the identity and understanding of the SQF, started with a culling question on whether respondents had heard of the SQF, after which relevant questions were then asked of the respondents. In addition to this question, the second sction also contains the question where the respondents are familiar with the SQF and the set of four assertions about familiarity with the SQF.

The questionnaire, intended for representatives of the professional public, consists of a content set of questions, which used to test the recognition and understanding of the SQF. The questions (5 sets of statements) used to test the recognition and understanding of the SQF relate to the knowledge of the SQF (7 points), the views of key stakeholders on the contribution of the SQF to the transparency of qualifications in Slovenia (5 points), the views on the contribution of the SQF to lifelong learning, learning and mobility in Slovenia (3 points) and to a stronger link between the labor market and education in Slovenia (4 points), and the positions on the priority of individual SQF functions for its further development (7 points).

Respondents expressed their agreement with the statements made on the individual items of the questionnaire on a five-point approval scale, ranging from »disagree« (grade 1) to »fully agree« (grade 5), or they chose between three priority levels (low, medium and high priority). For each question where respondents expressed their opinion, they were given the opportunity to answer with »I do not know« or »I do not want to answer« in cases where they did not want to answer or knew what to say.

Description of data processing

The collected data was processed using quantitative analysis methods, and the results of the analysis are presented in graphical and tabular form. The data was analyzed using basic descriptive methods of statistical analysis (frequency distribution of the data and calculation of the average value).

Sample

In the quantitative sample were included:

- 270 respondents responded of the general public. More women (57.8%) than men (42.2%) were included and almost two thirds of the sample (63.7%) were aged between 19 and 25 years, while the other age groups were less represented in the sample. Two thirds of the sample is represented by students (62.2%) and high school students (4.1%), slightly less than

a quarter of the respondents belong to the category of employees (23%). The sample also includes job seekers (5.6%), other respondents – adult learners (0.4%), employers (1.1%), representatives of the lifelong learning Center (0.4%), career advisers (0.4%) – were less represented.[10]

- 50 respondents covered the expert public. The survey included the largest number of faculty representatives (44%), followed by high school representatives (18%) and career advisers (12%). The remaining categories – representatives of higher education student organizations (4.0%), ministries (2.0%), adult education (4.0%), colleges (4.0%) – are represented to a much lesser extent.

2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In the qualitative part of the evaluation, we used focus group and interview methods, and conducted two focus groups with professional public and 27 semi-structured interviews with professional public. As a research instrument for focus interviews and semi-structured one-on-one interviews, we used a framework questionnaire with prepared questions, and specific questions were formed during the focus and one-on-one interviews based on the respondents' answers (prepared questions are available in Annexes 6.3 and 6.4). The focus groups were held at the Center for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) on 1 February 2019 (lasted approximately 2 hours) and 5 March 2019 (lasted approximately 2 hours). One-on-one interviews were conducted at the stakeholders premises between 6 March and 15 April 2019 and lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Data processing

Interviews with professional public and focus groups were recorded, transcribed and edited for further processing. Content analysis was inductive; it included open coding, category creation, and abstraction. Using the categories created, we have formulated a general description of the use and understanding of the SQF among the professional public.

Sample

In the qualitative part of the evaluation, 27 respondents from the professional public – 10 representatives of faculties, 15 representatives of the CPI, 1 representative of the Institute of Education, 1 representative of the promoter of supplementary qualifications – were included in the sample, while the focus group included the following 17 stakeholderss: 2 each. representatives of the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational and Technical Education, SQAA and the Expert Commission of the National Coordination Point (NCP) of SQF-EQF, as well as 1. representatives of Europass, Euroguidance, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Higher Education at the Ministry of Education, Science and sports, the Institute of Education of the Republic of Slovenia, the Andragogical Center of Slovenia, the National Examination Center, the Lifelong Education Sector at the Ministry of Labor, Family

10 We used masculine forms for all interviewees.

11 The third planned focus group was conducted in the form of an interview with a trade union representative, due to the low responsiveness of other projected stakeholders.

and Social Affairs, the ENIC–NARIC Center, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and the trade union.[12]

A summary of methodological characteristics of the survey is presented in Table 1.

Table 2: A summary of the methodological characteristics of the survey

Measuring instrument	Methodological data	
Semi-structured interview	Sample size	27 interviewees
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	Personal interview
	Method of data processing	Qualitative (coding of interviewees' answers, creation of categories)
Focus group	Sample size	2 groups, a total of 17 interviewees
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	Personal interview
	Method of data processing	Qualitative (coding of interviewees' answers, creation of categories)
Questionnaire (general public)	Sample size	270 persons
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	A combination of an online survey and a physical questionnaire
	Method of data processing	Quantitative methods (basic descriptive methods)
Questionnaire (expert public)	Sample size	50 persons
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	Online survey
	Method of data processing	Quantitative methods (basic descriptive methods)

12 Representatives of the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education and representatives of the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Adult Education were also invited to the focus group, but the latter were not able to attend.

4. KEY FINDINGS

4.1. Understanding the framework among the stakeholders

In the field of understanding the framework among the professional public, we find the following:

- Stakeholders appreciate the transparency and order that the SQF brings to the whole education system and share the view that the SQF contributes to a better understanding of the country's qualifications. Descriptors and levels are generally well received and some respondents question the classification of learning outcomes into categories of knowledge, skills and competences. This indicates that the communication function of the SQF is well received.
- Stakeholders emphasize two basic functions of the SQF: raising awareness among the population (the need to inform all stakeholders) and the systematic organization of the education system (integration of all segments of the education and training system). This indicates that the contribution of the SQF to the systematization of the education and training system in the country is well received, but only in those segments that were well developed before the introduction of the SQF (formal education, NVQ system). We can say that the transparency and comparability of qualifications at national level stand out in the eyes of the respondents as two fundamental objectives of the SQF. Also, two-thirds of respondents from key stakeholders in the survey agree with the assertion that the SQF makes it easier to compare qualifications. SQF as a means of enhancing mobility and linking education with the labor market has not yet been recognized.
- The finding that, to a lesser extent, the view is held that the SQF contributes to a better transparency of qualifications in a particular field, says a lot. The result is attributable to the fact that almost half of the respondents are from the field of higher education.
- The reform role of the SQF has not performed well in terms of including new types of qualifications into the SQF. Stakeholders point to the challenges posed by qualifications that can be acquired outside the formal education system and the certification system and which did not exist before the framework was introduced or were not systematically and formally placed in the qualification system. There are two types of qualifications: formally non-regulated supplementary qualifications and qualifications resulting from training programs, training courses and study courses. For the latter, which are regulated by Vocational Education and Training Act and Higher Education Act, their function is unclear. This indicates more serious obstacles and challenges that will need to be addressed separately in the future. Respondents identified the function of quality assurance of qualifications as the most important for the further development of the SQF, with the lowest priority being the learning outcomes orientation and the regulatory function.

- The focus on learning outcomes is also less recognized by respondents and is highlighted by those professionally involved in the development of educational programs. In the interviews, the respondents also spoke about their attitude towards learning outcomes orientation: they see this orientation as the most important contribution to improving assessment practice and better developing educational programs. Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving teaching and learning practices.
- The general impression is that the professional and general public are primarily trying to conquer the logic of the Framework, and conceptual considerations are less present. Most doubts are expressed about including supplementary qualifications into the framework.

4.2. Use of the framework among the stakeholders

From the perspective of using the framework among stakeholders, we note that the stakeholders primarily use the SQF to provide information for the needs of their employees and to inform partners and users, which includes the gradual integration of information on the SQF (and EQF) in different documents. For mobility purposes, however, the SQF is not (yet) used or recognized by stakeholders.

The preparers of education and study programs, further education programs, occupational standards (PS) and catalogues of competence standards (Catalogue) and supplementary qualifications use the SQF descriptors with varying frequency and for different purposes. Those who do not yet use the Framework indicate that the SQF descriptors are too general to be used in their work. Representatives of higher education, however, cite the use of KLASIUS as a reason for not using the Framework, because they do not yet know the SQF level obscenities or because of the inconsistent terminology introduced by the SQF. At the level of vocational education and training, SQF level descriptors are used more frequently to determine the level of qualification, but the use is not uniform and the level of qualification is determined by other reasons not directly related to the SQF descriptors (the place of the educational programme in the structure of the educational program). Those who use the SQF descriptors in their work, most often use them in:

- preparing new and revising existing education programs;
- major changes to existing or preparation of new study programs;
- preparing the learning outcomes of the educational programme or in the preparation of learning outcomes (competences);
- preparing of supplementary qualification;
- when preparing a catalogue for hands-on training.

Stakeholders also point out some shortcomings and/or weaknesses in the use

of the Framework that could be addressed:

- The importance of comparing levels for description; when describing qualifications and their placement at the individual level, it is necessary to rely also on a comparison of learning outcomes at higher and lower levels.
- It would be helpful to describe and place learning outcomes and qualifications at the level of separating short descriptions (shorter than they are now) and adding longer versions of descriptions.
- Qualifications obtained outside the formal educational system and the certification system (i.e. supplementary qualifications and qualifications deriving from programs for upskilling in continuing vocational education and training and upskilling study program) are divided into groups according to who proposes them, not according to content differences between them. The latter leads to difficulties in their understanding as well as in their accreditation and referencing to the framework.
- Trade union representatives find that they lack the resources and skilled personnel to seriously analyze proposals on qualifications frameworks, which makes them unable to express their views or opinions in an organized way.

Since the publication of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act (ZSOK), the influence of the SQF Act on national legislation and strategic documents in the field of education, on sectoral legislation or on the field of education, regulations and the content of public documents, job applications and some publicly available forms has been shown.

Even before the adoption of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act, the National Qualifications Framework was included in two national resolutions:

- The Resolution on the National Programme for Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2013–2020 (ReNPIO13–20) addresses the SQF within the priority area of education and training for the needs of work and mentions the preparation of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF), which includes national vocational qualifications in addition to formal education, and probably supplementary qualifications,
- Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme 2011–2020 (ReNPVŠ11–20) cites the SQF within the objectives and measures within which the national framework for higher education qualifications is established as part of the National Qualifications Framework,

and the following acts in the field of education and training and the functioning of the Republic of Slovenia in the EU institutions:

- Higher Education Act (Official Consolidated Text) (ZViS-UPB7) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 32/2012 of 4 May 2012) stipulates that the study programs for obtaining the first and second level education must be stated among the compulsory components classification in the National Qualifications Framework, the European Framework for Higher Education Classifications and the European Qualifications Framework, and this information is also recorded in the eVŠ records.
- Law on National Vocational Qualifications (Official Consolidated Text) (ZNPK-UPB2), Official Gazette of the RS No. 1/2007, of 5 January 2007 provides that Vocational qualifications are to be classified in the National Qualifications Framework.

- Declaration on the Guidelines for the Functioning of the Republic of Slovenia in the Institutions of the European Union in the Period January 2013–June 2014 (DeUDIEU1314) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 22/2013 of 15 March 2013) mentions the procedure for placing the national qualifications framework in the EQF.

In 2016, in accordance with Article 5 of the SQF Act, following rules were adjusted:

- Rules on public documents forms in primary schools (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 40/2016 of 6 June 2016),
- Rules on public documents forms in secondary schools (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 28/2016 of 15 April 2016),
- Rules on diploma supplement (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 38/16 of 27 May 2016) and
- Rules on the form for supplementary qualification certificates (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 28/2016 of 15 April 2016),
- Rules amending the Rules on the national vocational qualification's official document (certificate and its duplicate) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 22/2016 of 23 March 2016).

After the SQF Act came into force, the Slovenian Qualifications Framework was largely integrated into the sectoral legislation and regulations regarding the definition of the training conditions for skilled personnel in the individual sectors with the defined levels of the SQF/EQF.

SQF/EQF levels have also started to appear in job vacancies and in some other publicly available forms. On the other hand, the analysis identified a lack of use of the SQF in collective agreements and some regulations at the local level. There is therefore still considerable space for improvement in the use of the SQF in terms of its integration into national and sectoral legislation and documents.

4.3. Recognition of the Framework among the stakeholders

In the field of recognition of the Framework among the professional and general public, we find the following:

- The general public (among the respondents were mainly students (over 62%) and employees (23%) and between 19 and 25 years old) is familiar with the SQF, with the majority being familiar with the Internet (over 52%) and certificates or diploma/certificate supplement (almost 26%).
- Most general public respondents know how to place their qualifications to the SQF level, slightly less than half know the purpose of the SQF, and a good half (completely) agree that they are familiar with the SQF levels.
- Most (80%) of the professional public (44% of whom are faculty representatives) are familiar with the SQF, although their intentions are somewhat less known (about 63%). The results of the interviews support the finding that stakeholders are familiar with the SQF.

- A more detailed knowledge of the SQF's content is perceived by the representatives of the professional public, who encounter it in various ways in the course of their work. However, not enough experts (various consultants) at the operational level and direct users are familiar with it. Although information is available online, the need for information is particularly emphasized among the stakeholders.
- From a perspective of recognition, the stakeholders further emphasize the need for (a) information on the usefulness of the SQF on the SQF website; (b) promotion of the SQF to the general public (including the placement of qualifications at the SQF level and the distinction between the three types of qualifications); and (c) better awareness of trainers and employers of the SQF level and of old and new qualifications.

4.4. Analysis of the influence of the SQF on the educational system

In terms of the impact of the SQF on the educational and training system, we find the following:

- The SQF enables comparability of qualifications at both national and EU level.
- The SQF also enables comparisons across the "time vertical" – in principle, the SQF enables the comparison of qualifications acquired in the education system in the past and obtainable today.
- Higher education stakeholders highlight a positive impact on higher education qualifications, as level descriptors can:
  - help build competencies in higher education;
  - help differentiate between different levels of higher education qualifications and
  - help as an evaluation tool.
- The Framework promotes the development of a comprehensive approach to competence in education; descriptors of learning outcomes reinforce the pragmatic concept of knowledge while ensuring a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of competence.
- The analysis of curriculum documents shows that the SQF has had a considerable impact with its approach to learning outcomes, which is reflected in two aspects in particular: It has brought a more clearly formulated logic of qualification levels and thus an increase in learning outcomes into the system. It also led to the realization that only by using operative verbs we do not yet achieve comprehensible and unambiguous learning outcomes and that we have to consider both the qualification or the programme as a whole and the other components covered by the basic principles of designing learning outcomes (cf. Ermenc, Biloslavo, Mikulec, 2016).
- Representatives of stakeholders from the field of higher education recognize the improvement of the practice of assessing learning outcomes as the most important contribution of the SQF's focus on learning outcomes.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the Monitoring, outlined in the Key Findings section, it may be worth considering steps in the next steps of the implementation of the SQF regarding:

- promoting a national-level expert debate on the role and purpose of the different types of qualifications included in the SQF and the relationships between them;
  - the reform role of the SQF has not performed well in terms of integrating new types of qualifications. Stakeholders point to the challenges posed by qualifications that can be acquired outside the formal education system and the certification system and which did not exist before the framework was introduced or were not systematically and formally placed in the education system. Stakeholders also express doubts about including supplementary qualifications in the Framework. With the help of a broader professional discussion, it is possible to find answers to the identified challenges and open questions.
- encouraging a professional debate in industry on its needs for supplementary qualifications;
  - The purpose of supplementary qualifications is primarily to enable employers to ensure the development of appropriate skills, competences and competences for their employees that would ensure their sustainable performance and development. At the same time, they note that stakeholders in the industry are hardly aware of the purpose and usefulness of additional competences. Such discussions could lead to a faster and more efficient development of new supplementary qualifications with a greater economic and broader social value.
- further development and updating of the methodological foundations for the placement of supplementary qualifications to the Slovenian Qualifications Framework;
  - Stakeholders note that the function of supplementary qualifications is unclear. This indicates more serious obstacles and challenges that will need to be addressed separately in the future. The latter include methodological bases for their placement.
- continuation to increase visibility and promote the practical use of the SQF among key stakeholders, especially among stakeholders in higher education;
  - Respondents from the higher education field note that the SQF does not significantly contribute to a better transparency of qualifications in each professional area. The latter also note that they continue to use KLASIUS because they do not yet know the level descriptors and terminology of the SQF.
- providing further professional support to qualification preparers through professional training and development of professional materials in the field of application of the concept of learning outcomes and the SQF descriptors in practice;
  - Stakeholders believe that orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving teaching and learning practice. Similarly, when describing qualifications and their placement at the individual level, it is necessary to rely on a comparison of lear-

ning outcomes at higher and lower levels, which is often not known to the preparers. This can be adequately addressed by further professional training and development of professional materials.

- preparation of an all-Slovenian promotion of the SQF among general public, especially among high school students, higher education students and employers;
  - The SQF, as a means of enhancing mobility and linking education, with the labor market, has mainly not been recognized yet.
- establishment of a system and methodology for periodic biannual monitoring of the implementation of the SQF.
  - The impact of qualifications frameworks must be understood in relation to the ever changing social, political and institutional framework in which they operate. Therefore, it is reasonable to establish an appropriate methodology for periodically monitoring the implementation of the SQF, which would provide up-to-date information to decision-makers and stakeholders when making further decisions regarding the SQF.

6. PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

6.1. General public

METHODOLOGY

Description of the sample

The survey involved 270 respondents, representatives of the general public. More women (57.8%) than men (42.2%) participated in the survey. Almost two thirds of the sample (63.7%) were aged between 19 and 25 years, while the other age groups were less represented in the sample (Table 3).

Table 3: Sample structure by gender and age (n = 270)

GENDER	f	%
male	114	42.2%
female	156	57.8%
AGE	**f**	**%**
15 -18 years	14	5.2%
19-25 years	172	63.7%
26-35 years	28	10.4%
36-50 years	40	14.8%
51-65 years	16	5.9%

Two thirds of the sample is represented by students (62.2%) and high school students (4.1%), slightly less than a quarter of the respondents belong to the category of employees (23%). The sample also includes job seekers (5.6%), while other respondents were less represented (3% or less).

Table 4: Sample structure by respondent role (n = 270)

Role	f	%
High-school student	11	4.1%
Student	168	62.2%
Employee	62	23.0%
Adult Education Participant	1	0.4%
Employer	3	1.1 %
Lifelong Learning Center Representative	1	0.4%
Career Advisor (ZRSZ)	1	0.4%
Job seeker	15	5.6%
Other	8	3.0%

According to the educational levels of the SQF, the majority of respondents received education at level 5 (44.8%), with the majority of respondents having completed general high-school education. About a quarter of the respondents (24.4%) received level 7, mainly academic higher education. They are followed by the respondents who have obtained level 8 (13%).

Just over half of the respondents thus obtained level 5 or less.

Table 5: Sample structure by highest level of education, broken down by SQF levels (n = 270)

	f	%		f	%
SQF 1	1	0.4%	Non-completed primary education (certificate of completion of the 7th or 8th grade of elementary school)	1	0.4%
			First-stage basic education	0	0.0%
SQF 2	9	3.3%	Basic education	9	3.3%
SQF 3	2	0.7%	Short-term vocational education	2	0.7%
SQF 4	6	2.2%	Vocational upper secondary education	6	2.2%
SQF 5	121	44.8%	Technical upper secondary education	12	4.4%
			General upper secondary education	109	40.4%
SQF 6	15	5.6%	Higher vocational, short-term higher education	15	5.6%
SQF 7	66	24.4%	Professional higher education/1st Bologna cycle	9	3.3%
			Academic higher education/1st Bologna cycle	54	20.0%
			Professional higher education (former, pre-Bologna)	3	1.1 %
			Specialization after short-term higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	0	0.0%
SQF 8	35	13.0%	Master's education/2nd Bologna cycle	11	4.1%
			Specialization after professional higher education (former, pre-Bologna)	0	0.0%
			Academic education (former, pre-Bologna)	22	8.1%
			Professional higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	2	0.7%
SQF 9	7	2.6%	Master of Science/Art (former, pre-Bologna)	5	1.9%
			Master of Science/Arts according to the Law on Vocational Education	2	0.7%
			Specialization after academic higher education (former, pre-Bologna)	0	0.0%
			Specialisaton after professional higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	0	0.0%
SQF 10	8	3.0%	Doctorate of Science (3rd Bologna level)	3	1.1 %
			Doctorate of science (former, pre-Bologna)	5	1.9%
			Doctorate of science according to the Law on Vocational Education	0	0.0%

RESULTS

Recognition and understanding of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework

Slightly less than a third of respondents (31.4%) answered positively to the question »*Have you heard of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF)?*« Of these respondents (n = 85), more than half (52.9%) know the SQF from the Internet, and about a quarter (25.9%) know the SQF from the certificate or diploma received. Respondents only rarely know the SQF from social networks (10.6%). Slightly less than a quarter of the respondents (23.5%) stated that they knew the SQF from other sources, most frequently from their work (8.2%), from the SQT presentation at the BDTN (4.7%) and from their studies (2.4%).

Table 6: Frequency distribution of answers to the question "Where you know the SQF from?" (n = 85)

Sources of recognition of the SQF	f	%
online	45	52.9%
certificate/diploma	22	25.9%
social networks	9	10.6%
other sources:	*20*	*23.5%*
occupation	7	8.2%
presentation at BDTN	4	4.7%
study	2	2.4%
from filling in scholarship forms	1	1.2%
from parents and family	1	1.2%
from an acquaintance, the opinion of the ENIC–NARIC Centre	1	1.2%
presentations and the CPI website	1	1.2%
applications for employment	1	1.2%
invitation to study within the UL	1	1.2%
registration in student accommodation	1	1.2%

Below, we present the respondents' views on the identity of the SQF, expressed on a 5-point Likert agreement scale, where a rating of 1 means that they strongly disagree with that statement, and a rating of 5 means that they completely agree with the statement. Respondents were also provided with a "I do not know" answer for cases where they did not know or did not wish to answer. Only those respondents who previously stated that they have heard of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (n = 85) are included in the analysis.

Given the mean agreement (M) expressed in the context of points addressing general knowledge of the SQF (Table 6), respondents are best able to rank their own education or qualification at the SQF level (M = 4.27), since most respondents agreed (38.8%) or fully agreed (45.9%) with the stated statement. The level of familiarity with the 10 levels of the SQF (M = 3.73) is slightly lesser, although almost a third of respondents (62.4%) state that they are familiar with them. At about the same level, respondents' knowledge of the purpose of the SQF (M = 3.69), with slightly less than half (48.2%) of respondents agreeing with the statement that they know the purpose of the SQF, but 14.1% of respondents fully agree with the claim. Just over a tenth of respondents do not know (9.4%) or do not know at all (1.2%) the purpose of the SQF. The lowest

level of agreement was found in the assertion relating to the ability to separate qualifications in the SQF (M = 3.43), with one fifth of respondents not being able to separate qualifications in the SQF and one quarter (25.9%) being uncertain.

Table 7: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring general knowledge of the SQF (n = 85)

	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I am aware of the purpose of the SQF.	**3.69**	1.2%	9.4%	21.2%	48.2%	14.1%	5.9%
I am familiar with the 10 levels of the SQF.	**3.73**	1.2%	15.3%	15.3%	38.8%	23.5%	5.9%
I know what level of the SQF my education or qualification belongs to.	**4.27**	1.2%	4.7%	7.1%	38.8%	45.9%	2.4%
I can distinguish between qualifications in the SQF (education, professional qualifications,...).	**3.43**	4.7%	15.3%	25.9%	38.8%	14.1%	1.2%

6.2. Professional public

METHODOLOGY

Description of the sample

The survey involved 50 respondents.

The survey included the largest number of faculty representatives (44%), followed by high school representatives (18%) and career advisers (12%). The remaining categories are represented to a much lesser extent, but each has at least one representative who has given an opinion on the Slovenian Qualifications Framework and the SQF Register.

Table 8: Sample structure by respondent role (n = 50)

Role	f	%
Faculty Representative	22	44.0%
High School Representative	9	18.0%
Representative of career advisers	6	12.0%
Higher education student organization representative	2	4.0%
Representative of Adult Education	2	4.0%
Representative of the University Career Center	2	4.0%
Representative of Professional higher education	2	4.0%
Ministry Representative	1	2.0%
Other (unspecified)	*4*	*8.0%*

RESULTS

Recognition and understanding of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework

The majority of respondents (80%) are familiar with the SQF, however, 12% of key stakeholders are not familiar with the SQF. The proportion of those who know the purpose of the SQF is lower (63.3%), while the share of those who use the SQF in their work is similar (61.2%).

The level of familiarity with the European Qualifications Framework is also relatively high, with just under two thirds of respondents (65.3%) stating that they are familiar with it. More than half of the respondents (57.2%) have access to materials and other information on the SQF, while only a good third of key stakeholders (34.7%) state that the benefits of the SQF are properly presented, less than a third (30.6%) that the benefits of the SQF are not properly presented. Slightly less than half (46.9%) of respondents agree that the SQF is properly aligned with the measures, regulations and policies in their area of expertise, and a quarter (24.5%) are undetermined in this regard (Table 9).

Table 9: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring familiarity with the SQF

	N	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I am familiar with the SQF.	50	**4.04**	8.0%	4.0%	8.0%	36.0%	44.0%	0.0%
I am aware of the purpose of the SQF.	49	**3.73**	8.2%	8.2%	20.4%	28.6%	34.7%	0.0%
I use the SQF at my work.	49	**3.47**	16.3%	6.1%	14.3%	30.6%	30.6%	2.0%
The SQF is appropriately aligned with the measures, regulations and policies in my area of expertise.	49	**3.10**	12.2%	4.1%	24.5%	18.4%	28.6%	12.2%
The benefits of the SQF are presented to me as a stakeholder.	49	**2.94**	12.2%	18.4%	30.6%	20.4%	14.3%	4.1%
The materials and other information I need, are available to me through the SQF.	49	**3.43**	8.2%	4.1%	24.5%	32.7%	24.5%	6.1%
I am familiar with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	49	**3.69**	8.2%	4.1%	18.4%	28.6%	36.7%	4.1%

Respondents largely agree that the SQF contributes to a better understanding of qualifications (M = 3.37) and a simpler description of qualifications (M = 3.37), with more than half of the key stakeholders agreeing with the above (Table 10). More than half of the respondents (54.3%) also believe that the SQF contributes to a better transparency of knowledge, skills and competences of each qualification (M = 3.30), and a relatively high proportion of respondents (30.4%) is unspecified. To a lesser extent, it is considered that the SQF contributes to a better transparency of qualifications in a particular professional field (M = 3.13) and that the SQF contributes to a better understanding of the relationships between different types of qualifications (qualifications acquired through formal education, training and supplementary qualifications) (M = 3.00).

Table 10: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring views on the contribution of the SQF to transparency of qualifications in Slovenia

	N	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF contributes to a better understanding qualifications.	46	**3.37**	2.2%	2.2%	30.4%	43.5%	13.0%	8.7%
The SQF contributes to a simpler description of qualifications.	46	**3.37**	0.0%	2.2%	37.0%	39.1%	13.0%	8.7%
The SQF contributes to a better transparency of the knowledge, skills and competences of each individual qualification.	46	**3.30**	2.2%	4.3%	30.4%	43.5%	10.9%	8.7%
The SQF contributes to a better transparency of qualifications in a particular field of expertise (e.g. construction, agriculture).	45	**3.13**	4.4%	0.0%	40.0%	33.3%	11.1%	11.1%
The SQF contributes to a better understanding of the relationships between qualifications (acquired through formal education, initial and continuing training and supplementary qualifications).	46	**3.00**	4.3%	2.2%	37.0%	37.0%	6.5%	13.0%

With regard to the contribution of the SQF to lifelong education, learning and mobility in Slovenia (Table 11), the greatest agreement among respondents (M = 3.36) is that the SQF facilitates the comparison of qualifications for study and work purposes, with which two thirds of respondents agree. More than half of the respondents (57.8%) believe that the SQF contributes to a better understanding and comparability of Slovenian qualifications abroad (M = 3.22), and less consonantly, respondents believe that the SQF facilitates the understanding of the transition between qualifications acquired in formal education, training and further education and supplementary qualifications (M = 3.04), although almost half (48.9%) of the respondents agree, more than a quarter (26.7%) of the respondents are undecided.

Table 11: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring attitudes towards the SQF's contribution to lifelong learning, education and mobility in Slovenia

	N	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF simplifies the understanding of the transition between qualifications acquired through formal education, initial and continuing training and supplementary qualifications.	45	**3.04**	2.2%	6.7%	26.7%	35.6%	13.3%	15.6%
The SQF contributes to a better understanding and comparability of Slovenian qualifications abroad.	45	**3.22**	2.2%	8.9%	17.8%	40.0%	17.8%	13.3%
The SQF makes it easier to compare qualifications for the needs of study and work.	45	**3.36**	2.2%	4.4%	15.6%	55.6%	11.1%	11.1%

If there is a relatively high consensus among respondents regarding the contribution of the SQF to the transparency of qualifications in Slovenia (Table 10) and to lifelong education, learning and mobility in Slovenia (Table 11), then it is seen in the context of the SQF's contribution to a greater connection between the labor market and education in Slovenia (Table 12) a lower degree of agreement or more undecided respondents. Namely, the qualifications included in the SQF online Register provide relevant information on knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (technical) field (M = 3.10), according to half of the respondents, more than a quarter are undecided (27.5%). More than a third (34.1%) of respondents believe that the SQF contributes to a better dialogue between the labor market and education and training institutions (M = 2.90), and only a good quarter (26.8%) believe that the SQF contributes to a better match between market knowledge and skills and job requirements (M = 2.80), of which almost half (46.8%) of respondents are undecided. Likewise, only a good quarter of respondents (29.3%) believe that the SQF makes it easier to plan the needs for workers and professional development (M = 2.71).

Respondents identified the function of quality assurance of qualifications (M = 2.20) as the most important for the further development of the SQF (Table 13), which is attributed to high priority by 55% of respondents. The transitional function in terms of eliminating barriers to transition between different types of qualifications (education, vocational qualifications and supplementary qualifications) with the help of the SQF (M = 2.18) has a high priority for the largest number of respondents (59%). More than half of respondents (57.5%) attribute high priority to the recognition function (M = 2.13) and half of respondents to the communication function (M = 2.13) and the mobility function (M = 2.05). For respondents, the lowest priorities are learning outcomes orientation (M = 1.88) and regulation function (M = 1.80). Respondents most often attribute the latter functions to medium priority.

Table 12: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring attitudes towards the SQF's contribution to greater integration between the labor market and education in Slovenia

	N	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF contributes to a more successful dialogue between the labor market, education and training institutions.	41	**2.90**	2.4%	12.2%	39.0%	24.4%	9.8%	12.2%
The qualifications included in the SQF online Register provide relevant information on knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (technical) field.	40	**3.10**	2.5%	5.0%	27.5%	35.0%	15.0%	15.0%
The SQF contributes to a better match between the available market knowledge and skills, and workplace needs.	41	**2.80**	2.4%	9.8%	46.3%	14.6%	12.2%	14.6%
The SQF makes it easier to plan the needs for workers and professional development.	41	**2.71**	7.3%	12.2%	36.6%	17.1%	12.2%	14.6%

Table 13: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring views on the priority of each SQF function for its further development

	N	M	Low Priority	Medium priority	High Priority	I do not know
Communication function – to make the SQF and the SQF Act more understandable.	40	**2.13**	2.5%	30.0%	50.0%	17.5%
Quality Assurance – Quality assurance of qualifications with the help of the SQF.	40	**2.20**	5.0%	25.0%	55.0%	15.0%
Regulatory function – to control access to the offer of qualifications in Slovenia with the help of the SQF	40	**1.80**	12.5%	42.5%	27.5%	17.5%
The transitional function – eliminating barriers in transition between different types of qualifications (education, vocational qualifications and supplementary qualifications) with the help of the SQF.	39	**2.18**	10.3%	15.4%	59%	15.4%
Mobility Function – Support the international mobility of high-school students, higher education students and workers in the common European labor market with the help of the SQF.	40	**2.05**	5.0%	25.0%	50.0%	20.0%
Recognition Function – Support the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and acquired qualifications in Slovenia with the help of the SQF	40	**2.13**	5.0%	17.5%	57.5%	20.0%
Learning Outcome Orientation – Broaden the learning outcomes orientation with the help of the SQF	40	**1.88**	7.5%	37.5%	35.0%	20.0%

7. PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

7.1. Focus groups

QUESTION 1/1:

Have you heard of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF)? If so, please explain how you understand: (a) the underlying purpose of the framework, (b) the objectives of the SQF, and (c) the level descriptors in the SQF.

Table 14: Question 1/1

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Acquaintance	Well known Acquaintance due to cooperation at the European level	*We know the SQF.* *We started to use it when we started to work at the European level.*	11
Transparency	Clarity Understandability to educators and employers Understandability to the general public Clarity over time periods	*It is very transparent, clear in the structure itself.* *It is a transparent, simple system. Educators and employers may orient themselves in this system.* *The fundamental purpose was to achieve transparency of qualifications.* *This is important for the individual, for the employer.* *Basic and concrete enough... for the user.* *Everyone can orient themselves at these levels.* *We secured a certain time frame with this framework because the school systems... were changing dramatically.*	9
Mobility	One-way mobility problem	*Mobility is very interesting, but... one-way... totally unacceptable.*	3
National comparability	Clearly defined constituent elements The importance of higher education because of the multitude of qualifications	*In the national context, we very clearly define the individual elements.* *The key is to note, in one place, some standards, descriptions of skills, competences and skills at individual levels that are comparable.* *After the introduction of the Bologna system, it was necessary to determine the relationship between qualifications... we have a very transparent system.*	3
European comparability	Comparability of qualifications across Europe Transparency on a European scale	*The fundamental purpose is the comparability of qualifications across Europe.* *Also transparent in the European context.* *To really come to life... it is a prerequisite for all countries to have such a framework.*	3
Focus on the learning outcomes	Awareness of the role of the learning outcomes Focus on the result, not the path	*Investors began to monitor the SQF and wondered if they had properly described or list competencies.* *The paths to qualification may be different, but we are trying to list the qualification, not the paths... the learning outcomes are important.*	2

All respondents are *familiar* with the SQF and the descriptors of the learning outcomes, highlighting their different basic purposes and goals. Their answers can be divided into five additional categories:

Transparency

Nine respondents highlight the transparency of the qualifications system. Most of them see transparency at the level of the national qualifications system: "the matter is very transparent, manageable, clear in the structure", says one respondent; on the basis of formal education and a comparison between supplementary qualifications, NVQs and educations. "

Some also point to transparency at the European level: "It is also much more transparent within the European framework".

Comparability

Six respondents see the SQF as one of the main purposes of qualifications, with comparability being understood at different levels: two respondents stress the comparability of qualifications *at EU level* ("The primary purpose is the comparability of qualifications across Europe", says a respondent), one respondent complements this broader international level and stresses the importance of alignment with the ISCED classification.

Other respondents emphasised the importance of national comparability – and agreed that level descriptors help to create a "transparent, simple system [in which] educators and employers are located", as one respondent emphasised.

One respondent emphasizes the importance of comparability along the "time vertical" – although the SQF in principle allows a comparison of qualifications acquired in the education system in the past and those that can be acquired today, in practice the focus is still on current qualifications, according to the respondent, so comparability is more difficult.

According to the respondents, the comparability of qualifications is particularly difficult today at the level of higher education degrees, since the introduction of the Bologna reform has led, on the one hand, to unclear relationships between diplomas awarded under the pre-Bologna model and those awarded under the Bologna model, and, on the other hand, to inflation of the so-called Bologna diplomas. In this respect, the SQF also introduces more transparency into the system.

Mobility

Three respondents also explicitly emphasize labor mobility as the purpose of the Framework, while pointing out some challenges: the first respondent highlights the problem of 'one-way' mobility, which he finds 'totally unacceptable', as it leads to an outflow of workers and a brain drain, which is a major problem for the Slovenian economy. The other respondent sees the problem primarily in the fact that not all countries have yet developed their framework conditions, which hinders mobility. Once this is achieved, the procedures for recognizing education will also be easier.

Focus on the learning outcomes

The response of one of the respondents already points to the effect of the Framework and its level descriptors on the description of qualifications themselves: 'Candidates [of the qualifications listed in the Register] began to moni-

tor the SQF and began to wonder whether they had described it or inventoried competences correctly', points out the third.

As the following respondent notes that the descriptive framework reinforces the outcomes approach: "The pathways to qualification may be different, but [...] the pathways are not prescribed [...] the learning outcomes are the ones that are important and not so much the way someone achieved the learning outcomes.

QUESTION 1/2

What is your opinion on the SQF level descriptions?

Table 15: Question 1/2

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Expertly thoughtful description and placement	Preparation and placement require expert judgment	*I think the descriptors are just enough for an expert to be able to write down competencies and place them correctly.*	1
The importance of comparing levels to describe	Promote reflection on the importance of learning outcomes in relation to the level of the framework	*The important thing is that you have a clear delimitation of the subject matter in terms of content and scope... what a level means, what is higher than that level and what is less... it helps when you translate*	1
The specifics of the higher education sector	help build competencies in higher education; help differentiate between different levels of higher education qualifications help as an evaluation tool.	*From the perspective of higher education, they are certainly helpful in the preparation of study programs... they have to describe what a graduate can do... help with writing competencies* *High school students have a problem with this definition... all three [knowledge, skills, attitude] are a competence* *One of the hardest tasks for planners... because the levels differentiate from one another in tiny details*	3
Need for additional guidelines for describing	Short version of descriptors and separate more detailed descriptions	*For a short version to be available, and then a separate more detailed description.*	1
Promoting a comprehensive competence approach in education	Competences as knowledge, skills and attitude	*It is essential that competencies are all that, knowledge, skills and attitude... know how to use knowledge... know how to use it in everyday life* *All three categories must be included in this competency... that is of some value*	2
The impact of placing qualifications on pay scales	Impact on pay scales within companies	*Level-setting also results in pay scales within companies. There are always disagreements between different social partners...*	1
Limitations of the result approach	The result approach is too narrow in the case of recognition of qualifications	*We cannot dispute the fact that the country of origin says that a particular qualification is at a certain level...but we had a case from abroad, when it was about retraining as a nurse from a machine operator, with 800 hours of practice...on the basis of which we can say that he has no skills... You have no lever*	1

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Standardization to support the development of qualifications beyond formal education	Importance of descriptors for supplementary qualifications and standardization of the NVQ	*... Important for the future as new qualifications and NVQs are developing, to keep track of what fits into some level in terms of outcomes*	1
Descriptors as an evaluation tool	Look at descriptors flexibly and responsively with respect to evaluations	*However, this is a flexible matter, it is not eternal... that is why we have an evaluation system*	1

The answers to the second question are rather scattered. Nine categories of answers can be distinguished, but were mostly given by individual respondents. The understanding of the descriptions seems to be diverse. The respondents evaluate them in the light of their experience and work responsibilities.

Expertly well thought-out description and placement: the respondent emphasizes the importance of assessing the learning outcomes of a particular qualification and the related well thought-out placement at a particular level.

The importance of comparing levels for description: the respondent advises that when describing qualifications and their placement at a particular level, it is necessary to rely on a comparison of learning outcomes at higher and lower levels. Similarly, two respondents point to the difficulty of delineating learning outcomes across levels.

Specific characteristics of the higher education sector: respondents in the higher education sector highlighted the positive impact on higher education qualifications, as level descriptors can:

- help build competencies in higher education;
- help differentiate between different levels of higher education qualifications and
- help as an evaluation tool.

Need for additional descriptive guidance: the respondent recommends that it might be helpful to describe and place learning outcomes and qualifications at the level of separating short descriptions (shorter than they are now) and adding longer versions of descriptions.

Promotion of one comprehensive competency approach in education: The answers of two respondents point to the influence of the descriptors of learning outcomes on the strengthening of a pragmatic concept of knowledge (emphasis on applicability), while insisting that competence must be fully understood. It is pointed out that it would be better if competence within the Framework was also understood as a high-level concept combining the components of knowledge, skills and attitude.

Effects of skill placement on pay scales: the respondent points out that mediation neutrality cannot be spoken of, since it is influenced by various interest groups and the influence on pay scales in the companies.

Limitations of the results approach: the respondent points out that descriptors (score approach) should not be a key criterion for the recognition of qualifications (points for those from abroad), as certain information on the duration of training, etc. (input aspect) can supplement the information on the quality of a person's qualifications.

Standardization to support the development of qualifications beyond formal education: the respondent points out that the standardization of learning outcomes supports the further development of qualifications beyond formal education.

Descriptors as an evaluation instrument: the respondent understands descriptors in a flexible sense – as an instrument that can also be modified on the basis of the results of evaluations.

QUESTION 1/3:

Do you know the basic types of qualifications included in the SQF? How do you understand the differences between different classes and types of qualifications? Do they meaningfully summarize the range of qualifications available in Slovenian society

Table 16: Question 1/3

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
The qualifications system is adequately designed	Vocational qualifications (certification system) are adequately embedded Adequately embedded education	*The field of vocational qualifications is very adequate.* *The blue part (of education) is clear.* *The Framework can absolutely function.*	4
Qualifications outside formal and certification systems	Unclear function of supplementary qualifications and training programs Contested distribution of qualifications according to the applicant Supplementary qualifications as a source of income	*The question of training programs is whether we are looking for more knowledge or higher education? These programs have a clear purpose to offer more knowledge as they do not offer higher education.* *... In this group [supplementary qualifications] it was not quite clear to us...does it affect employers, employees... they are used as an opportunity to make money... we do not want extra skills to be turned into moneymaking act.* *There has been confirmation of some supplementary qualifications that are not exactly within the meaning of the law* *There are certain problems with supplementary qualifications*	5
Relationship between class and type of qualification	the difference between class and type of qualification is not clear to the user	*...Class and type are quite similar and confusing... should be arbitrarily explained to people*	1
Qualification and formal education	Employee Benefit: Formal education is not the only criterion for competency assessment	*In the past everything [company's salary systems] was based on the level of education achieved... The essential acquisition [of the framework] consists in the fact that, in addition to the recognition of formal education, we have introduced the certification of informally acquired knowledge.*	1

Only six respondents replied to the third question, indicating a smaller presence of conceptual reflection among the respondents. The answers indicate that, in the view of the respondents, the framework as a whole was correctly designed, and the problems highlighted by up to five respondents were par-

ticularly evident in the case of qualifications that can be acquired outside the formal education and certification system and before the Framework was introduced. they did not exist or were not systematically and formally incorporated into the education system. In other words, challenges arise in three groups of qualifications: supplementary qualifications, and qualifications resulting from training programs and study programs for further development. For the latter, their function is unclear, as one of the respondents states.

In relation to this challenge, another respondent critically notes that the source of the problem is that the qualifications, obtained outside the formal educational system and the certification system (i.e. supplementary qualifications and qualifications deriving from programs for upskilling in continuing vocational education and training and supplemental study program) are divided into groups according to who proposes them, and not in terms of substantive differences between them. The latter leads to difficulties in their understanding as well as in their accreditation and referencing to the framework.

Account should also be taken of the response of the respondent, who said that it is difficult – especially for users – to distinguish between classes and types of qualifications, as their description is very similar. Simpler descriptions and explanations are needed. At the same time, he notes that the demarcation of qualifications on the website is not sufficiently transparent.

However, the fact that the SQF supports the view that qualifications are not only demonstrated through formal education is positively defined by a trade union representative as empowering employees to some extent.

QUESTION 1/4:

What do you think of the procedures for referencing of qualifications, professional and additional, as prescribed by the SQF Act? How could they be improved?

Table 17: Question 1/4

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Referencing processes appropriate	The referencing processes are procedurally and substantively clear and defined	*Zadeva je jasna in definirana, postopkovno in vsebinsko.* *Se mi zdijo urejeni.*	7
Quality guards	Quality guards Defective quality guards for supplementary qualifications	*Adequate quality guards are present.* *I think this part has the quality criteria in place... but problem could arise with supplementary qualifications...*	2
Applicants for supplementary qualifications	The problem of (not) limiting the applicants	*The process is too complicated [for employers]... as much as one opens the possibility that anyone can make a proposal, but everyone is employed in educational institutions, organizations dealing with adult education... then they produce qualifications that do not reflect the needs of the labor market, but they are offering what they have to offer.*	1

Seven of the nine respondents agreed that the procedures were substantively and procedurally clear and substantially defined. Again, warning of problems with supplementary qualifications has been heard. The respondents point out two challenges:

a the first concerns the question of the applicant for an supplementary qualification: on the one hand, the limitation to sole applicants is restrictive, on the other hand, a completely open system could lead to the generation of qualifications that are not related to the needs of the labor market (but to the generation of merit)).

b Ensuring the quality of supplementary qualifications and the negative impact on the labor market, where the quality of qualifications can be reduced, is also a challenge.

The answers to this question confirm the answers in the previous question: where the framework plays a communicative role, the challenges are much less than in the segments where the framework is the starting point for interventions in the education or qualification system. Therefore, respondents do not see any problems with the established pillars of the education system and the warnings point to the need for a more comprehensive and clearer definition and placement of all other qualifications in the system.

QUESTION 1/5:

In your opinion, how does the SQF contribute to more transparency and understanding of the different classes and types of qualifications in the country?

Table 18: Question 1/5

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Having better information for users and advisers	People do not want to be ranked lower than in the past	*People refuse to agree to be classified to a lower level under the new classification... even if it is equivalent.*	2
	The SQF has not come to life in practice	*The usefulness of SQF has not yet been put into practice.*	
	Advisers not yet sufficiently informed	*We are teaching our advisers... where to place people*	
Transparency triggers programme revisions	Transparency of programs forces revisions	*This reporting by the SQF and competencies has forced investors [in higher education] to review programs... once they see that the programme in Europe is transparent... they will check again*	1
Online accessibility	An accessible website	*The whole... website*	1
Actuality	It takes into account the current situation	*It contributes because it is contemporary... it takes into account the current situation.*	1

Five respondents replied to the question that the SQF would be more transparent and the qualifications more comprehensible if the users and specialist personnel knew the SQF better. The accessibility of the Framework online and its relevance contribute to this. An interesting effect is highlighted by the respondent from the field of higher education: In the description of the

programmes, the proposal forced the consideration that their programming would be visible to domestic and foreign audiences. The sparse responses show that the SQF is currently even more a matter for the professionals who encounter it in various ways in their task. However, not enough experts (various consultants) at the operational level and direct users are familiar with it. Although information is available online, the need for information is particularly emphasized.

QUESTION 1/6:

Would you add any other information, remark or (positive, negative) criticism in regard to understanding of the SQF?

Table 19: Question 1/5

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Intensive spreading of information	Need to promote and inform users Informing young people Informing professionals, advisers	*It would be important to promote these matters... to raise awareness as much as possible* *Especially important for young people* *It will take more time to establish itself*	2
Legal regulation of supplementary qualifications	The SQF Act is a source of problems for supplementary qualifications Applicants for supplementary qualifications	*The problems come from the law, the whole committee for supplementary qualifications has concerns. We wanted to create a qualification that is broader for everyone and has a durability of 5 years.... to exclude scholars... then it became complicated... the first qualification was confirmed... there were complaints... then we closed the supplementary qualifications, which again was not right... there were complaints...lawsuits... schools are now envious...*	4
Klasius–SRV vs. SQF	The differences between the SQF and Klasius–SRV are unclear to users and employers Different views, whether to enter Klasius–SRV levels in the Register	*We perceive problems with users... mixing Klasius-SRV and SQF... at employers, even in public administration* *We had a request... that there would be a section where it would be clearly written.* *We have two generations in the labor market from application of the SQF, and, according to the Klasius system, 20 generations... but in the long run, we will not support two systems... information aimed to people is at fore*	3
National regulation of international qualifications	The unclear role of the state in ensuring the quality and comparability of qualifications Pressure from the European Commission Controversial direct placement of international qualifications in the EQF	*If the private system goes national... the country has to play its part... to ensure quality according to national standards* *Will the EQF be set for sectoral qualification and then we no longer need any national point... a systemic problem, even in terms of the importance of the national framework* *EU pressures to place private sectoral qualifications directly at European level... quality assurance is a problem*	3

As many as 11 respondents responded to this general question. Their answers are summarized as follows.

1. Two respondents emphasize the importance of informing users. They believe that promotion and information must continue (special emphasis is placed on young people) and that they must understand what each level means. It is stressed that the information should also be shared with professionals (various consultants) who would benefit from knowledge of the framework conditions when working with their clients.

2. Four respondents addressed the area of statutory regulation of supplementary qualifications, which they consider to be particularly vague and problematic. Respondents highlight the following problems:
   a The process of placing supplementary qualifications within the framework was conceived as a kind of accreditation procedure for non-formal education programs, such as those that companies would offer their employees. These are short programmes that offer specific, relevant knowledge on the market at a particular point. Precisely because of the logic of responding quickly to the needs of the labor market, and therefore perhaps also because of their limited temporal value, the programs are not designed to be permanent and are therefore accredited for five years. According to the respondent, the idea did not materialize. One problem is that it is complicated by the content of the supplementary qualifications (what really falls into this category of qualifications), and the second problem is the limitation that supplementary qualifications should not be proposed by educational institutions, but only by companies. This has led to much ill will, as schools see themselves as education providers and find it difficult to accept that anyone else can intervene in education.
   b The next respondent wonders where there is a limit to the country's interference in qualifications that are of value in the labor market and only relevant to it. If such a qualification is to be placed in a framework, then the state must have a say, as it is responsible for ensuring the quality standards of all qualifications in the Framework and must ensure a standard of comparability between qualifications at the overall levels of the SQF.
   c A similar dilemma is posed by the following respondent, who also refers to international private qualifications (such as qualifications developed by the IBM, Coca-Cola and similar concerns), which he believes should be included in national frameworks, as they will not meet national quality standards, but their own brands. He points out that these are dangerous trends and the country has a role to play.
   d The fourth respondent takes up the issue of international private qualifications and critically adds that he European Commission puts pressure on Member States to integrate these qualifications directly into the EQF and expects countries to recognize them automatically. According to the respondent, this is not only a matter of interfering with a country-wide quality standard, but even a change in the EQF itself.

3. Three respondents also raise the issue of the relationship between the Klasius-SRV and the SQF. The first pleads for a section in the Register, which also contains Klasius-SRV designations. Others support this view to a certain extent, as qualifications that have existed for 20 generations are described in the Klasius-SRV, and the SQF only covers two. Therefore, clear information

to users about the relationship between the Klasius and the SQF would be useful. But at the same time, the respondent stresses that the two systems will not be supported in the long run and a different solution will have to be found.

A specific area that is fully addressed by a trade union representative and which we have not considered because of the specificities we have not taken into account in the above table is the role of the social partners in the SQF and also in a broader sense in education. According to him, the social partners, in particular the trade unions, are facing a shortage of education and training professionals. The liberal law on trade union representation has led to an excessive fragmentation of trade union organization, with the result that a large number of small unions have negotiated only on wages and have seen no interest in regulating the Framework. Trade union representatives lack the resources and skilled personnel to seriously analyze proposals for the Framework. In addition, the Economic and Social Council does not deal with vocational qualifications, lifelong learning, etc. The Social Agreement adopted between the Government and the social partners in 2007 does not mention the involvement of social partners in regulating the National Qualifications Framework. Thus, the regulation of the qualification structure and the definition of the qualification framework is strongly dominated by professional institutions and ministries that propose solutions that are then adopted by the legislative or executive branch without legislative debate. A wide range of workers, small employers or the general public is poorly informed about these issues and cannot express their views or opinions in an organized way. He therefore proposes some measures:

a Greater involvement of the social partners in labour National Qualifications Framework market regulation would require some legislative changes (new definition of the role of chambers in the qualification system, equal rights for chambers on the basis of voluntary membership, new law on trade union representation, law on the Economic Social Council).

b The basis for setting salaries in collective agreements, which are outdated and do not take account of changes in education and training and the role of lifelong learning and thus new pathways to vocational and general skills, should be changed.

c He also supports the adoption of a law, or at least an amendment to the rules on the functioning of the economic and Social Council social system, which should also address issues relating to the qualifications system. "In line with the recommendations of the European Parliament and the European Council, Slovenia must also establish a national body for the implementation of the qualifications framework in which the social partners must be qualified," the respondent said.

d The respondent concludes with the following suggestion: "In order for the social partners to be closely involved in the creation and regulation of the national qualifications framework, the State should provide certain resources on a flat-rate basis, but for the payment of their professional contributions, opinions and analyzes, and not for the additional payment of the mostly poorly qualified representatives of the social partners in the decision-making bodies. In this way, Slovenia would involve a wider circle of professionals and other public opinion, in addition to the narrow professional circles European Council implementing the recommendations and guidelines of the European Commission and the, and would gradually give national qualifications a higher profile at national level. This would encourage the social partners to

become more involved in regulation National Qualifications Framework and thus in the creation of quality jobs, the meaningful professional development of individuals and, last but not least, the social inclusion of the whole population. This would make it easier for the population to have greater confidence in a fair and transparent qualification system and reduce the alienation of a wide range of employees and the population due to the increasing and inclusive national and European bureaucratisation in this area."

QUESTION 2/1:

How and for what purposes do you use the SQF at your work in the educational (general, vocational, higher education, adult education) subsystem or for the needs of the labor market? Please clarify.

Table 20: Question 2/1

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Use in own organization	Private information For the needs of employees and employment Informing own employees, e.g. advisers	*I know where to look or get information.* *We use... for our own needs with our employees.*	5
Informing partners and users	Informing preparers of study programs Informing job seekers Informing users who contact the SURS Informing users of the Europass CV Informing programme preparers in the field of adult education	*We try to bring the SQF closer to advisers with workshops and promotional material* *In the Europass CV presentations, I am indirectly increasingly confronted with this interference.* *These things are used in the preparation of training programs, while advising, informing....*	5
Level entry into the SQF	Preparations for integrating information into the Ministry of Public Administration forms Preparations for integrating information into search engines for job seekers Preparations for integrating information into qualification recognition processes Inclusion of information in the records of higher education programs Inclusion of information on RIC–issued forms	*We are thinking that the SQF would also be used on the forms of the Ministry of Public Administration.* *We will try to bring the SQF into our search engines for job seekers.*	5
Preparation of learning outcomes for the SQF Register	Preparation of descriptions for general education programs	*We are dealing with descriptions of general education programs... we are busy with procedural work, how to verify these descriptions...*	1
Participation in systemic issues	Unresolved systemic issues for the general education field Placement of qualifications International involvement	*At elementary school level, there is a relatively large portion of the programme that is optional. This opens the question of what to attach to the document... do we need an attachment... are systemic issues are present.* *We have a role to play from a systemic perspective... placement of supplementary qualifications, NVQs... we are integrated into the international environment*	3

Twelve respondents responded to the question, citing several ways of using the SQF. Their answers can be divided into five categories. The most prominent answers are those related in different ways to the information on the framework: either that it is its own information and use for the needs of its own staff (two respondents also report on the use of the framework in recruiting their staff); or whether it is information from partners and users, which includes the gradual integration of information on SQFs (and European frameworks) into various documents. Other answers are far fewer: three respondents work together to solve systemic issues. A more detailed extract of the answers is as follows:

1. Use in own organization:
   - Private information (1)
   - For the needs of employees and employment (2)
   - Informing own employees, e.g. advisers (1)
2. Informing partners and users:
   - Informing preparers of study programs (1)
   - Informing job seekers (1)
   - Informing users who contact the SURS (1)
   - Informing users of the Europass CV (1)
   - Informing programme preparers in the field of adult education (1)
3. Incorporation of information on the SQF into the documents for which they are responsible:
   - Preparations for integrating information into the Ministry of Public Administration forms (1)
   - Preparations for integrating information into search engines for job seekers (1)
   - Preparations for integrating information into qualification recognition processes (1)
   - Inclusion of information in the records of higher education programs (1)
   - Inclusion of information on RIC-issued forms (1)
4. Preparation of learning outcomes for the SQF Register (1)
5. Participation in systemic issues (3)

QUESTION 2/2:

To what extent is the SQF used in national education policy according to your knowledge of the subject area you cover (e.g. involvement of the SQF in the lifelong learning strategy, the qualifications strategy, the recognition of qualifications, the Resolution on the National Adult Education Programme, etc.)? Do these policies associate with, or simply mention, the SQF or do they not even mention the SQF?

Table 21: Question 2/2

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Is not being used	Explicitly unrelated, content related	*It is undoubtedly content-related, but as such it does not explicitly connect... people are not aware*	1
Not known	ignorance of strategic documents	*I don't know... I have a hard time answering... we only know NAKVIS*	3
	the workers at VIZ are not familiar with the SQF	*I don't know about these strategic documents.*	
		Teachers do not know about this, they do not know about the SQF, nor where it belongs	

Meagre replies indicate that most of the respondents are either not aware of these issues or believe that the SQF is not included in strategic documents.

QUESTION 2/3:

How do you use the SQF to meet the mobility needs of students, students and staff?

Table 22: Question 2/3

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Not relevant	Not relevant for Europass mobility	*Now this Europass mobility is being used for short-term mobility and the SQF is out of the question for the time being.*	1
Potential use of the SQF to monitor the mobility of graduates through national frameworks	Development of a tool for monitoring graduates and mobility through national frameworks	*At the European Commission level, we have a new working group to monitor graduates and monitor how labor market mobility can also be monitored through national frameworks.*	1

The absence of answers indicates that the SQF is not (yet) used for mobility purposes or that it is not recognized by the respondents. Only two respondents gave a substantive answer: in the context of Europass mobility, the framework is not relevant because it is intended for short-term mobility, says a representative of Europass Slovenia. A representative of the higher education sector within the Ministry of Education and Science says that a working group has been set up at EU level to examine the use of the framework to monitor the mobility of graduates in the labor market.

QUESTION 2/4:

How do you use the SQF in the recognition of qualifications?

Table 23: Question 2/4

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
The SQF is not directly applicable	School law applies Framework information is added The plan adds information for qualifications issued for the purpose of working abroad	*We use school law... we give information about SQF, EQF, and QF-EHEA.* *We are thinking that this would be done in the case of foreign and Slovenian qualifications, who wish to pre-evaluate their education in Slovenia for the purpose of working abroad.*	1

ENIC-NARIC reports that the SQF is not directly used for recognition of qualifications, as it is not intended to be used. Recognition is carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation. Once the recognition process has been completed, the documents shall include information on the SQF, EQF and QF-EHEA. The department is also considering making this information available when it comes to the recognition of qualifications that are assessed for the purpose of working abroad.

7.2. Interviews

27 respondents answered the questions – 10 representatives of faculties, 15 employees from the Center for Vocational Education of the Republic of Slovenia, one representative of ZRSŠ, and a promoter of supplementary qualifications.

QUESTION 1/1:

How do you use the SQF descriptors in your work (in preparing qualifications, programs, curricula, knowledge catalogues)?

Table 24: Question 1/1

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Preparation of the Diploma and Master's Degree Supplement	Preparation of the Diploma and Master's Degree Supplements Preparation of the Diploma Supplements	*When we adapt the diploma and master's degree supplements.* *When issuing diploma papers*	3
Preparation of new and reformation of old qualifications	Changes or preparation of new programs Preparation of catalogues of technical knowledge and skills (Catalogue) and professional standards (PS) Preparation of goals for educational programs Preparation of supplementary qualifications and training programs	*When we are dealing with major programme changes or when we are creating new programs.* *When preparing catalogues and standards.* *Descriptors help me as we write programme goals.* *The SQF's descriptors help me to prepare supplementary qualifications [...], training programs.*	10
Determining the level of qualifications	Entry of the SQF level into NAKVIS forms Determination of professional standard levels	*I think we also have to enter [in the NAKVIS forms] the rank of the level of study.* *I am already involved in the preparation of professional standards and the level of individual standard of knowledge is already determined there.*	4
Information	Preparation of tenders Enrollment information Informing high-school students	*When tenders are being prepared or if we are preparing any information about the enrollment or qualifications of our students.* *High-school students' brochures have the SQF levels included.*	2
Preparation of qualification descriptions for the SQF Register	Creating learning outcomes for primary and high-school school education	*These levels are the starting point for us to create learning outcomes [for the SQF Register] for primary and high-school education.*	1
No use	Non-use and unfamiliarity with the SQF descriptors Non-use with the possibility of future use Non-use of the SQF descriptors for reasons of generality	*We do not use them, we were not familiarised with them.* *Until yesterday, I didn't even know that [the SQF] existed.* *I have not encountered this [the SQF] [...]. Would be an interesting thing to try. I have shortly reviewed the subject and the descriptors are useful.* *However, these [the SQF] descriptors are very general [...] so that the descriptors themselves are not used directly.*	9

The preparers of education and study programs, further education programs, occupational standards (PS) and catalogues of competence standards (Catalogue) and supplementary qualifications use the SQF descriptors with varying frequency and for different purposes.

Two thirds of the respondents (18) use the SQF descriptors in their work, while one third (9) of the respondents do not yet use the SQF descriptors, mainly because they are not familiar with them (8), and one respondent considers the SQF descriptors too general to use them in his work.

Those who use the SQF descriptors in their work, most often use them in the preparation of new and renewal of old qualifications (10 answers):

- preparing new and revising existing education programs (4 answers);
- major changes to existing or preparation of new study programs (2 answers);
- preparing the learning outcomes of the educational programme or in the preparation of learning outcomes (competences) (2 answers);
- preparing of supplementary qualification (1 answer);
- when preparing a catalogue for hands-on training (1 answer).

The SQF descriptors are also used in determining the level of qualification in PS and NAKVIS forms (4 answers), in preparing the diploma and master's application (3 answers), in informing high school students (1 answer) and higher education students about enrolment (1 answer) and in preparing qualification descriptions for the SQF Register (1 answer).

QUESTION 1/2

How do you use SQF level descriptors to propose a level of qualification?

Table 25: Question 1/2

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Noting the SQF level on the diploma supplement	Noting the SQF level on the diploma supplement	*We only use the SQF level to note it on the diploma supplement*	1
Preparation of new qualifications	Priprava novih programov Določanje ravni zahtevnosti v PS in Katalog Preparation of new programs Determining the level of difficulty in PS and the Catalogue Determining the level for supplementary qualification	*When we create new programs.* *This is really [the level of complexity of the SQF] taken into account in the preparation of catalogues, including the PS.* *I used [SQF descriptors] when drafting an opinion for supplementary qualification.*	6
Recording the learning outcomes of the qualification	Coherence of the SQF descriptors with the learning outcomes of the qualification Coherence of the SQF descriptors with the learning outcomes of the PS	*These [the SQF] levels are the starting point for us to create learning outcomes for [...] education.* *For PS, when we have to write down competencies, that level [the SQF] should also be reflected.*	3

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
No use	Non-use due to the use of the KLASIUS Non-use due to unfamiliarity with the SQF Non-use because the qualification level is not determined by the SQF	*We mainly use the KLASIUS.* *Until yesterday, I didn't even know that it [the SQF] existed.* *We do not use descriptors to justify why a qualification was given a higher or lower level.* *Employers know the skill levels according to the level of education.* *There are other reasons why we place [qualification] at the same level of difficulty, not just the SQF descriptors.* *But when you are creating a program, you already know what level it is because you just have to be aware of what level you are creating.*	17

The SQF level descriptors are used to a limited extent in determining the required qualification level, most frequently in preparing new qualifications (6 answers) and in recording the learning outcomes of the qualification (3 answers).

At the level of higher education, the SQF descriptors are used to a rather limited extent. They are used in the preparation of new qualifications or study programmes (1 answer) and marking the SQF level in the diploma supplement (1 answer). Two-thirds of the faculty representatives do not use the SQF descriptors (7 answers), because they use KLASIUS (1 answer), because they are not familiar with them (5 answers) or because of the inconsistent terminology introduced by the SQF (1 answer). Among those who do not use the SQF descriptors, three respondents stated that they will use the SQF descriptors in the future in the preparation of curricula or new qualifications (study programmes).

At the level of vocational education and training, SQF level descriptors are used more frequently to determine the level of qualification, but the use is not uniform and the level of qualification is determined by other reasons not directly related to the SQF descriptors. The SQF level descriptors in the preparation of new qualifications – determining the level of difficulty of the professional standard and the Catalogue or determining the level for the supplementary qualification – are used by 5 professionals and 2 experts to record the learning outcomes of the qualification, i.e. to harmonize the SQF descriptors with the learning outcomes of the qualification. Most indicate (5 answers) that level descriptors do not determine the level of difficulty of a qualification or program, but that the latter is determined by "other reasons", such as employers, working group on qualifications, enrolment requirements or Basis for the preparation of lower and vocational upper secondary education and training programs and secondary professional education programmes. Example:

"We do not use descriptors to justify why a qualification was given a higher or lower level."

"Employers know the skill levels according to the level of education. They know, a technician needs to know this [...], with a vocational school this [...] and they say, this is the level we want. And, in fact, when they think about the level of qualification, they don't know these descriptors, but they do know that 'technicians do this here and they need to know how to do it'. That is level 5 for them. "

But when you are creating a [educational] programme, you already know what level it is because you just have to be aware of what level you are creating."

At the level of the primary school and high school. The descriptors of general upper secondary education at the SQF level are the starting point for preparing the learning outcomes of primary and secondary education, i.e. for matching the SQF descriptors to the learning outcomes of the qualification (1 answer).

QUESTION 1/3:

How do you understand and evaluate the division of learning outcomes into categories of knowledge, skills and competences as defined by the SQF?

Table 26: Question 1/3

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Relevance	Rationale for use	*Yes, I think it makes sense.*	10
	Relevance	*I think these three categories mentioned are appropriate and we separate them from each other.*	
	Clarity	*So far, they seem clear enough to me.*	
Partial relevance	Additional interpretation of skills	*Competencies and knowledge are OK. You have to interpret the skills in the working groups.*	3
	Demarcation of skills and competences	*Demarcation of skills and competences is sometimes difficult.*	
	Understanding competence as a superscript	*[...] We had comments about naming competence [...] we would see it as a superset of knowledge, skills and competencies, it [competence] might create relations for us.*	
Inadequacy	Broader definition of competence	*Competence is defined more broadly in reality, learning outcomes are narrower in definition.*	6
	Difficulty of separating categories	*The problem is that competence in a standard is understood differently from that defined in the SQF.*	
		... These categories are sometimes difficult to distinguish. [...] For a study, for example, knowledge is different than somewhere else, or skills and competences.	
No use	Ignorance	*I can't compare to the SQF because I don't know.*	8

A good third of the respondents (10 answers) estimate that the division of learning outcomes into categories of knowledge, skills and competences, as defined by the SQF, is appropriate.

Those who view this division of learning outcomes as partially relevant (3 answers) point out

a that problems arise in understanding one of the categories (skills, competences) or in distinguishing between two categories: e.g. understanding the category of skills, distinguishing between skills and competences, and in understanding competence. As one of the respondents emphasised, the category of competence in the SQF descriptors should be replaced by renaming this category as "relationships";

b the danger that such a division can lead to the performance orientation of study programs: "I understand the word competence more than any serious benefit, and sometimes I can "smell the productivity of what the study programme offers or does. what a student gets for the labor market."

Less than a quarter of the respondents (6 answers) considered the division of learning outcomes into the three categories to be insufficient, a fact which they highlighted:

a that the three categories (knowledge, skills, competences) are difficult to distinguish from one another and that understanding of the latter depends on the field of study. As one of the respondents points out: "For a study, for example, knowledge is different than somewhere else, or skills and competences, [...] for example, [...] what is a serious theory for us, is practice for mathematics, we would say knowledge they would say skill, what we see as practice, geographers would say theory. It is therefore difficult to distinguish these categories in my opinion";

b that competence in curricular planning is defined and understood more broadly than in the SQF, as a superscript containing informative, formative and socializing goals. As one of the respondents points out: "When we talk about competence at a standard, we describe it as some kind of comprehensive learning outcome that should give one set of tasks, with some level of difficulty, with the way someone would achieve that learning outcome. Here, at the SQF, however, is the third level indicator, so it is difficult to think in the way that these three elements are defined by the SQF. Basically, all three categories should be taken into the competence of the standard. "

Other respondents (8 answers) did not judge the appropriateness of sharing learning outcomes due to their lack of knowledge and use of the SQF.

QUESTION 1/4:

Would you add any other information or suggestion for use of the SQF?

Table 27: Question 1/4

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Information	Usability of SQF	*On the basic website, we would add usage of the SQF.*	5
	Awareness of educators and employers	*Educators and employers are not entirely united as to what level means [...], whether it is the old system or the new one.*	
	Promotion of SQF	*More should be done on the promotion.*	
Employers' involvement in the preparation of learning outcomes	Employers should report on the graduates' learning outcomes	*[...] A group of construction companies, they would have to say what they expect from our engineering graduates and then, based on their suggestions, would write down competencies and knowledge, and that would apply to that human profile.*	3
	Employers should prepare descriptors for areas of expertise	*[...] In order for employers to jointly prepare SQF descriptors for individual areas, experts from the Netherlands once advised us that you then have the whole qualification structure.*	
Compatibility of the SQF with knowledge taxonomies	The SQF could combine knowledge taxonomies	*It may not even belong here, but maybe some set of taxonomic rates. [...] There may be different taxonomic levels, and such a set would then make it even easier to use this framework. It would be good if the SQF combined these taxonomies into one such review.*	1
Comparability and transferability of qualifications	Qualification comparability and mobility	*Comparing qualifications, for mobility, the SQF is certainly good.*	2
	International involvement	*I see the usefulness of the SQF in that someone is internationally recruiting and asserting their acquired qualifications.*	
Discordant terminology	Neenotna interpretacija učnih izidov in kompetenc	*Glavna ovira je, da se termini različno tolmačijo. Učni izidi, kompetence.*	1
Differentiation of professional and supplementary qualifications	Discordant interpretation of learning outcomes and competences	*The main obstacle is that the terms are interpreted differently. Learning outcomes, competencies.*	1
	The division into professional and supplementary qualifications is confusing	*Already this basic division [...] we have a professional qualification and an supplementary qualification, there is quite a bit of confusion here. Then there is a lot of confusion because we get a certificate for a professional qualification and a certificate for an supplementary qualification. If you ask me, the certificate is just another word for completion form.*	

The answers to the question can be divided into three sections:

1 Recommendations for improving the use of the SQF:
   - Most respondents (5 replies) believe that more attention should be paid to public awareness of the SQF. And they emphasize: (a) information on the usefulness of the SQF information contained on the SQF website; (b) promotion of the SQF to the general public; and (c) better information for educators and employers on SQF levels and on old and new qualifications – acquired under the old and new (Bologna) higher education system.
   - Three respondents consider that employers should be more involved in the preparation of learning outcomes of qualifications, either by providing the necessary skills, competences and graduates or by involving employers in the preparation of the sectoral framework descriptors (learning outcomes).
   - One respondent stressed that it would be good to combine the SQF descriptors with knowledge taxonomies (learning outcomes), with different taxonomic levels and active verbs, on the SQF website.

2 Benefits of using the SQF:
   - Two respondents emphasized that they see the SQF as having the greatest benefit and use of SQF for the (international) comparability and transferability of qualifications and the mobility of high-school students, students and employees.

3 Criticisms of using the SQF:
   - One respondent highlighted the heterogeneity of terminology, i.e. different interpretations and understandings of competences and learning outcomes, and the other a thoughtless division into professional and supplementary qualifications, which confuses the distinction between the two types of qualifications.

During the interviews, the respondents were also asked to what extent they think that the orientation of the SQF towards learning outcomes contributes to a better development of education and training programs and teaching and learning practices.

The most significant contribution of the SQF to learning outcomes is, according to respondents, an improvement in the practice of assessing learning outcomes (M = 3.71), with slightly less than half of respondents (44.4%) agreeing or fully agreeing that orientation towards learning outcomes, as SQF envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving the practice of assessing learning outcomes, while over a quarter of respondents (29.6%) are undecided.

More than 40% of respondents believe that orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to better development of education and training programs (M = 3.57), while less than 15% of respondents do not attribute orientation to learning outcomes. One third of respondents believe that orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving teaching and learning practice (M = 3.38), while the majority of respondents (37%) are not determined to make this contribution. One third of respondents believe that the SQF makes it easier for educational institutions to monitor learning outcomes (M = 3.47).

Table 28: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points from the qualitative part of the survey (n = 27)

	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to better development of education and training programs.	**3.57**	3.7%	11.1%	22.2%	18.5%	22.2%	22.2%
Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving teaching and learning practice.	**3.38**	3.7%	3.7%	37.0%	25.9%	7.4%	22.2%
Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving the practice of assessing learning outcomes..	**3.71**	3.7%	0.0%	29.6%	25.9%	18.5%	22.2%
The SQF makes it easier for educational institutions to monitor learning outcomes.	**3.47**	3.7%	11.1%	22.2%	14.8%	18.5%	29.6%

Faculty representatives, more often than CPI representatives, believe that orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving the practice of assessing learning outcomes, and that the SQF makes it easier for educational institutions to monitor learning outcomes.

On the other hand, the CPI representatives, more often than faculty representatives, believe that orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to better development of education and training programs and to improving teaching and learning practices.

7.3. Document analysis

We answer the research question of whether the SQF descriptors are used in the production of programme or curriculum documents and how they affect the form of learning outcomes. It is expected that the introduction of learning outcomes and levels in the SQF, despite the communicative function of the framework, will have an impact on curriculum documents, as the placement of qualifications in the SQF requires reflection on learning outcomes at the level of qualifications or of the educational programs themselves. In addition to the SQF Act, the renewed professional basis for the preparation of vocational and professional education programs had a direct impact on the implementation of the learning outcomes concept, i.e. basis for the preparation of vocational education and training programs of lower and vocational upper secondary education and training and programs of upper secondary professional education and training (hereinafter: Basis), adopted by the Professional Council for Vocational and Technical Education on 11 March 2016.

It is clear from the records that learning outcomes first came to the fore in the vocational and technical education and training segment and, in the context of the Bologna process, also in higher education. In general education, they are (for the time being) only used to describe qualifications for the SQF and the

qualifications register. Qualification preparers and their registrants are considering how learning outcomes can be described in an understandable and transparent way, so that they make clear the basic purpose of the qualification and at the same time the relevance of the placement for the level in question.

One of the ways to verify such effects is a qualitative analysis of the corresponding documentation. We have selected three types of curriculum documentation for analysis, which are linked to learning outcomes in different ways and which have recently been updated due to other system requirements and prescribed procedures.

The first group of documents includes professional standards. These are, in principle, living documents as they are expected to change in the light of changing conditions and needs in the labor market. The second group of documents comprises catalogues of practical training – this is a new type of document that has emerged from the introduction of apprenticeship training forms of technical education and is oriented towards the Basis (2016).

We will also take a look at the document entitled Metodologija za pripravo katalogov znanja za praktično izobraževanje v višjih strokovnih šolah (Methodology for the preparation of catalogues of knowledge for practical training in vocational colleges (2019; hereinafter: Methodology). It is a document that has not yet been adopted at national level, it is only internal CPI document, but is very relevant for our analysis as it is directly based on the logic of learning outcomes as developed in the SQF. Moreover, it is restorable because it was drawn up from the bottom up, i.e. on the basis of the results of the evaluation and the needs of higher education. As the authors of the document (Marjan Velej et al. and CPI) stated, the methodology is »based on the results of the evaluation of practical training in short-term higher education from 2013 to 2016 (CPI). For example, we have introduced changes in the mechatronics and computer science programs to record the knowledge catalogues for practical training, the adequacy of which we have previously reviewed with employers; we have introduced changes in the way practical training is conducted and in monitoring the performance of students in practical training. The Nova Gorica ŠC Vocational School and the Velenje ŠC Vocational School were also involved in the preparation of knowledge catalogs for practical training for the study courses of computer science and mechatronics.« (ibid., p. 1).

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

We chose the field of cookery as an example of professional standards. This is an field with a developed occupational vertical, which allows a comparison of qualifications by level of qualification or difficulty. At the same time, this is a field that has been renewed since the adoption of the SQF Act, which can be expected to have some effect.

Assistant Chef (SQF 3)

The following table compares some excerpts from the past and the current professional standard for the profession of assistant chef. A complete comparison is not possible due to the different organization of the two standards, but the focus of the comparison is not on the content of the qualification, but on its form. Therefore, we do not judge the contextual relevance of the qualification, but the way it is described.

Table 29: Comparison of the past and the current professional standard – Assistant Chef

	Past standard	Current standard
	Key assignments: **cleans** foodstuff	Key assignments: **participates** in food preparation
Knowledge and skills	• accepts foodstuff • mechanically cleans foodstuff • determines the usability and quality of foodstuff • weights foodstuff • sorts foodstuff • stores foodstuff • **knows proper foodstuff quality** • knows and obeys the rules of mechanical treatment of foodstuff • **knows the tools and accessories for mechanical treatment of foodstuff** • knows the machines and devices for mechanical treatment of foodstuff • knows how to use the scale and convert units of measurement • knows the technique of mechanical treatment of individual foodstuff • knows how to properly prepare foodstuff and sort foodstuff into storage areas • knows the meaning and use of fragrances and spices • distinguishes dry and water treatment • knows the peeling fruits and vegetables and the types that do not need peeling – pros and cons • complies with ecological standards and regulations	• accepts foodstuff • sensory assess and determines the usability and quality of foodstuffs and determines their freshness • weighs foods using a scale and converts units of measure • sorts foodstuff • reads allergenic ingredients from the packaging • **selects the ingredients for the preparation of each dish according to the instructions of the superior** • **selects suitable utensils, dishes and appliances and prepares them for work according to the instructions of the superior** • knows the right appliances and devices for work, knows how to choose and use them rationally • knows how to properly accept, sort and store foodstuff • knows the basic parameters for determining the quality of foodstuff • knows the energy and nutritional value of individual foodstuff and foodstuff containing allergens • knows the stages of workflows (mise-en-place) • knows the spatial areas of the kitchen and their usage • knows clean and unclean areas and the principle of non-crossing • **knows how to evaluate basic foodstuff changes and foodstuff quality**
	Key assignments: **prepares** foodstuff for warm starters	Key assignments: **thermally processed the foods as directed by the superior using appropriate procedures**
Knowledge and skills	• decorates the food • thermally processes the food • cools the food • assembles individual dishes • knows work accessories and tools for decorative food processing • knows foods that are suitable for the preparation of warm starters • knows the processes for thermal treatment of food • is familiar with complementary food processing procedures • knows how to use basic food supplements to produce a harmonious dish • knows the importance of warm starters • knows the principles of storing and utilizing unused foodstuff and food	• thermally processed the foods as directed by the superior using appropriate procedures: • according to the instructions of the superior, performs cooking in water (liquid) with different amounts of it, in boiling water, in a water bath, steam, humid air, with high pressure, • performs braising according to the instructions of the superior (in its own juice, with the addition of grease, with grease and water) • executes baking (usually baking in a pan, English baking in a pan, frying, baking in the oven with the addition of grease, baking in the oven, baking in dry heat, grilling, au gratin) • participates in preparing food and foodstuff at the appropriate serving or storage temperature, taking into account the control points defined by the HACCAP system and the dangers of food cooling

	Past standard	Current standard
		• thermally processes selected foods to prepare simple dishes from all groups of dishes, e.g.: – soups and boils – basics or fonds – simple side dishes
	Key assignments: **prepares serving dishes and prepared dishes for servings**	Key assignments: **pripravi servirno posodo in pripravljene prepares serving dishes and prepared dishes for servings**
Knowledge and skills	• prepares plates • prepares decoration • prepares side dishes • knows how to prepare mise-en-place for food delivery • knows how to properly cool or heat a serving dish • knows the importance of a serving edge on a serving dish to transport food to the guest table • adheres to general hygiene standards and HACCP in food distribution	• prepares a mise-en-place for serving dishes according to the instructions of the superior • prepares a proper serving dish (heats it) • prepares basic decoration according to the instructions of the superior • serves simple dishes • differentiates between different types of dishes according to their material characteristics and purpose • knows the importance of and knows how to properly cool or heat a serving dish

The comparison of selected elements of the professional standard (or catalog of knowledge and skills) for the assistant chef shows to what extent the professional standards were oriented towards learning outcomes before the introduction of the SQF and how the SQF affected them.

The definition of key works, knowledge and skills in the previous catalogue largely followed the logic of operational learning objectives, including the use of operational verbs expressing the candidate's activity and the way knowledge is expressed (mechanically cleans, prepares plate, weighs, etc.). Many formulations have so far expressed with non-operative verbs ("knows the rules," "knows the meaning," "knows the technique of work," etc.). he use of operative verbs is more appropriate in the case of the current catalog, although not yet consistently implemented: If the verb "knows" still predominated in the previous catalogue, the current learning outcomes are expressed in a more operational and at the same time more specific way: "using thermal process", "prepares", "sensory evaluates", "weighs food with ...", etc.

Unlike the previous catalogue, the current one introduces two new features:

- Dictations are used to **express the degree of autonomy and responsibility** of the candidate's activities at this level of qualification or, more precisely, SQF: since it is Level 3, it corresponds to the SQF level descriptors, a candidate at this level is expected to .e.g. participate in the preparation of meals (does not prepare meals independently), to warm up the dishes according to the *instructions of the superior* (not at their own professional discretion), but on the other hand e.g. prepares serving dishes independently, etc. The description of the qualification provides a more transparent insight into the qualification and its placement in the qualification structure and thus in the SQF. In other words, competency levels in particular are more clearly defined.

- It can also be observed that some tasks or key work that a candidate with an acquired NVQ needs to demonstrate **more specifically** (which is also one of the important principles in designing learning outcomes in the SQF): for example, if the previous catalogue contained the diction "knows the proper quality of food", the current catalogue contains a diction of "assess basic changes in food and the quality of food. " Knowledge about the quality of food is an extremely broad objective, formulated in such a way as to allow very different interpretations of the depth of knowledge that must be present in the background. The second formulation clearly shows that the assistant chef is only expected to have a narrower degree of mastery of this content area of technical knowledge.

Chef (SQF 4)

Similar to the above, the following table compares some excerpts from the past and the current professional standard for the profession of chef.

Table 30: Comparison of the past and the current professional standard – Chef

Past standard	Current standard
Key assignments: prepares menus for regular and extraordinary meals	Key assignments: creates menus
• creates menus – for regular and extraordinary meals • calculates the nutritional value of foods, dishes and meals • prepares norms • prepares a foodstuff request • knows the norms for preparing meals • knows how to calculate the nutritional and energy value of meals using a computer program • knows the basic criteria for the qualitative and quantitative composition of food • knows the composition of regular meals • knows the characteristics of preparing extraordinary meals • knows the composition of menus for specialty dishes • knows how to properly classify dishes in a classic dining structure • knows how to properly combine foods into a menu • knows how to consider the food season • knows how to follow healthy diet recommendations • knows the importance of nutrients for humans and the consequences of malnutrition • is able to explain what is happening to the food in the gastrointestinal tract and how nutrient metabolism occurs • knows the nutritional value of individual foodstuff, their properties and uses • can occasionally replace less popular dishes with newer ones – taking into account market developments	• prepares menus for regular and extraordinary meals and special occasions, menus from national dishes and for diet food • determines the ingredients of each dish • prepares norms for dishes • prepares a foodstuff request • indicates foods containing allergens on the menu • knows how to calculate the nutritional and energy value of meals using a computer program • knows the norms for preparing meals • knows substances or products that cause allergies or hypersensitivity • knows the energy and nutritional value of individual foodstuff, their properties, impact they have on humans, and uses • is familiar with the production and uses of foodstuff and typical foods made from these foodstuff (knows foodstuff that are suitable for preparation of cold and warm starters, soups, additions, stews, bases or foundations, meat dishes, cured meats, sauces, side dishes, vegetables, salads, compotes, fruit salads and purees, desserts, typical national dishes and protective food) • knows the classical composition of menus, the characteristics of the preparation of exceptional meals, the characteristics and ways of transporting meals, the composition of menus for specialties, national dishes and protective nutrition

	Past standard	Current standard
Knowledge and skills		• knows how to properly associate and combine foods to create a full-fledged dish (combines sides with dishes, combines several different foodstuff into a coordinated side dish, can replace meat with selected vegetables equally, combines vegetables with fruits...) • knows how to sort and combine correctly...
	Key assignments: cleans foodstuff	Key assignments: prepares foodstuff, dishes and utensils
Knowledge and skills	• accepts foodstuff • mechanically cleans foodstuff • determines the usability and quality of foodstuff • weights foodstuff • sorts foodstuff • stores foodstuff • knows proper foodstuff quality • knows and obeys the rules of mechanical treatment of foodstuff • knows the tools and accessories for mechanical treatment of foodstuff • knows the machines and devices for mechanical treatment of foodstuff	• accepts foodstuff • sensory assess and determines the usability and quality of foodstuffs and determines their freshness • weighs foods using a scale and converts units of measure • sorts foodstuff • reads a list of allergenic ingredients from the packaging • selects the ingredients for the preparation of a particular dish • selects suitable utensils, dishes and appliances and prepares them for work • knows the right appliances and devices for work, knows how to choose and use them rationally
	Key assignments: guarantees quality and is responsible for the quality of the service and work performed	Key assignments: guarantees quality and is responsible for the quality of the service and work performed
Knowledge and skills	• ensures the quality of his own work • controls the quality of the obtained foodstuff • controls the service of dishes • controls preparation procedures • controls thermal treatment of food • keeps records according to »HACCP« rules by work areas • knows the quality standards • knows the methods of quality control • knows the quality assurance systems • knows the basics of quality assurance of the service provided • knows the procedures and ways to ensure the rational use of energy, material and time	• ensures the quality of his own work • controls the quality of the obtained foodstuff • controls the service of dishes • controls preparation procedures • controls thermal treatment of food • keeps records according to »HACCP« rules by work areas • knows the quality standards, quality control methods and quality assurance systems • knows the basics of quality assurance of the service provided • knows the procedures and ways to ensure the rational use of energy, material and time

The comparison between the former and the current professional standard for chefs shows that substantial corrections have been made when updating the standard, but there **are not many differences in form**: they seem to be more specific in the current standard, but the operative verbs are used inconsistently in both cases. The degree of independence and responsibility is not formulated differently in the revised standard than in the past, which is to be expected, since this qualification is in some ways a **starting point or core qualification in this qualification hierarchy and other qualifications are defined in relation to it**. By comparing the qualifications of assistant chefs and chefs, the revision of the standard for assistant chefs creates a **more transparent di-**

vision between the two qualification levels. It is clear that a chef is a broad and comprehensive qualification where the holder of the qualification is expected to "carry out activities in a known and less known environment with a higher degree of responsibility and independence". Taking responsibility for the characteristics and quality of products / services related to work tasks or work processes "(part of the SQF Level 4 competence descriptor). In the following we show that the higher qualification, i.e. a master chef, again determines the qualification of a chef, but in this case at the level of higher qualification.

Master Chef (SQF 5)

Finally, let us compare the past and current professional standard of a chef.

Table 31: Comparison of the past and the current professional standard – Master Chef

	Past standard	Current standard
	Key assignments: masters all the processes of preparation of dishes at the highest level, uses them sensibly at work and connects them	Key assignments: expertly prepares all kinds of dishes with professional mastery of all cooking processes, connects them in a meaningful and **innovative** way and combines them
Knowledge and skills	• knows and manages all mechanical, thermal and complementary cooking procedures for cold starters • knows how to make pastes, terrines, gallantines, cold cuts • masters the preparation of basics, basic sauces and derivatives and can reduce them properly • knows how to process dairy products • knows the nutritional and gastronomic value of meat, the preparation of meat and meat dishes • **knows different oil and vinegar production** • knows the nutritional and gastronomic value of fish, the preparation of fish and fish dishes • **knows the nutritional and gastronomic value of fruits, vegetables, cereals and pulses and their preparation** • prepares more demanding desserts from different types of dough according to the technique • knows how to shape chocolate and sugar • prepares desserts from light mixtures, creams, Panna Cotta, glazes, frosting and garnishes them in a modern way – portioned desserts • sensibly connects the procedures and applis them at work • uses technical terminology • manages the preparation of meals by group • knows the specifics of certain works in the kitchen • knows the sensory properties and usefulness of fragrances and spices • masters garnishing of dishes in different ways and forms of serving and dinnerware	• **masters** all mechanical, thermal and complementary cooking procedures for the preparation of all kinds of dishes cold and warm starters, soups, additions, stews, bases or foundations, meat dishes, cured meats, sauces, side dishes, vegetables, salads, compotes, fruit salads and purees, desserts, typical national dishes and protective food • knows how to make pastes, terrines, gallantines, cold cuts • masters the preparation of basics, basic sauces and derivatives and can reduce them properly • **masters processing of dairy products** • knows the nutritional and gastronomic value of meat, the preparation of meat and meat dishes • knows different oil and vinegar production • knows the nutritional and gastronomic value of fish, the preparation of fish and fish dishes • **masters the nutritional and gastronomic value of fruits, vegetables, cereals and pulses and their preparation** • prepares more demanding desserts from different types of dough according to the technique • knows how to shape chocolate and sugar • prepares desserts from light mixtures, creams, Panna Cotta, glazes, frosting and garnishes them in a modern way – portioned desserts • prepares meals for individual diets, taking into account the nutritional and energy value of foods • sensibly connects the procedures and uses modern cooking procedures in the preparation of dishes • takes into account the sensory properties of foods at work • controls the quality parameters of food and beverages and their characteristics

	Past standard	Current standard
		• knows how to produce and process individual food groups • knows the specifics of certain works in the kitchen • knows the sensory properties and usefulness of fragrances and spices
	Key assignments: expertly directs the work and **helps at the preparation of more demanding** meals for regular and extraordinary meals	Key assignments: expertly directs the work of the team and **guides it in preparing more demanding dishes** for regular and extraordinary meals
Knowledge and skills	• organizes and distributes work to the team/staff in the kitchen • knows how to predict the time required for a particular job • knows how to organize the team/ staff according to the frequency and professional complexity of the work • knows the basic rules of work organization and business	• organizes and distributes work to the team/staff in the kitchen • knows how to predict the time required for a particular job • knows how to organize the team/ staff according to the frequency and professional complexity of the work • knows the basic rules of work organization and business
	Key assignments: creates and develops recipes with a description of techniques	Key assignments: creates and develops new recipes with a description of techniques and procedures, and composes menus **according to the rules of the profession, the specifics of the restaurant and modern trends in cuisine**
Knowledge and skills	• composes new dishes, and maintains a file of dishes together with description of work techniques and procedures • experiments with recipes • monitors the supply of food and novelties in the supply market • prepares daily menus and menus for special occasions including seasonal food offer	• composes recipes for new dishes, and maintains a file of dishes together with description of work techniques and procedures • experiments with recipes and introduces innovations • determines the ingredients of each dish • combines different cooking processes and uses them **innovatively** • monitors the supply of food and novelties in the supply market • when preparing recipes, he takes into account seasonal and local food supply and characteristics of the restaurant • prepares daily menus and menus for special occasions including seasonal and local offer of food • prepares menus for regular and extraordinary meals and special occasions, menus from national dishes and for diet food • prepares norms for dishes • indicates foods containing allergens on the menu • knows how to calculate the nutritional and energy value of meals using a computer program • knows the norms for preparing meals • knows substances or products that cause allergies or hypersensitivity • knows the energy and nutritional value of individual foodstuff, their properties, impact they have on humans, and uses • ....

A comparison of past and current professional standards for the professional qualification of the chef shows that even in this case the differences between the two qualifications are not significant **in their form**. We have found that both past and present standards for the qualification of a chef, are **based on the inconsistent use of operative verbs** (often the non-operative verb "knows" is used).

The **content** of the qualification shows that this is a **higher qualification level** than a chef, so the formations themselves are not decisive: whether we write that the chef "experiments with recipes" (past standard) or "combines different cooking methods and uses them innovatively, "both records clearly show that mastery requires innovation. Similarly, we see the dictation of "helping in the preparation of more demanding dishes" (past standard) and the team "guides the preparation of more demanding dishes" (current standard). Team management is one of the core competencies of the master chef, so the diction in the current standard is more transparent. However, it should be noted that when recording learning outcomes, we need to look at the qualification as a whole and be aware of what the principles of describing learning outcomes are really for, rather than making adjustments for their own sake or for the sake of agreeability.

It is also noted that the competencies of the master chef at the SQF level 6 (the SQF descriptor for the competences at level 6 states: »The ability to work in different and specific environments with elements of creative activity. Independent action, characterized by the assumption of responsibility for the work of individuals and groups, and material resources and information. In this context, it is important to integrate and situate the issue into the general social context. Identifying own learning needs and taking care of knowledge transfer in own work environment.")

What all current standards have in common is that their authors, when observed in previous standards, have paid much more attention to the **question of the relationship between standards in terms of the increasing complexity and intricacy of learning outcomes** or professional competencies in the background. This seems to be the key effect of the SQF.

PRACTICAL TRAINING CATALOGUES

Formally, the concept of learning outcomes was enforced in 2015 by the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 104/15), and one year later it was given its place in the updated Basis (2016), which classifies learning outcomes in the system of vocational and technical education system as follows:

"The learning outcomes defined by the training programs reflect the expected **level of competence** that the participant should achieve and are verified in the assessment procedures. They are expressed with statements that say what the student knows, understands and is able to do at the end of the learning process. The EQF and the SQF define learning outcomes with knowledge (facts, principles and concepts), skills (cognitive and practical) and competences in the narrow sense (such as the ability to assume responsibility and exercise autonomy).

In addition to education, learning outcomes are also used in other contexts, in the working environment (professional standards and profiles, job descriptions, promotion and reward systems, etc.) or for personal use (CVs, personal competence profiles). Learning outcomes can thus be used in **professional standards, education and study programs, examination catalogues, qualification standards and qualification frameworks**:

- In standards with learning outcomes, we express expectations that are tied to a particular profession and which primarily serve to shape work and training processes. We also determine the requirements of individual qualifications based on professional standards.
- In educational or study programs, learning outcomes inform participants about the expectations or standards that are to be achieved through learning. At the same time, they guide teachers in designing the teaching process and selecting methods.
- Examination catalogues with learning outcomes define the content of the assessment for the whole or part of the programme (course or module). They are a guarantee of uniformity of assessment.
- Qualification standards with learning outcomes determine what to expect from a person who obtained a qualification. Using the learning outcomes in the Qualifications Framework, however, we determine different types and levels of qualifications.

The use of learning outcomes contributes to a better matching of qualifications and educational programs with labor market expectations, to a greater openness to the recognition of learning outcomes regardless of the learning context, and to a greater autonomy and accountability of the education and training system to achieve the expected outcomes results." (Basis, 2016, p. 6), acc. authors)

The above-mentioned introduction of the apprenticeship form of professional training meant that learning outcomes appeared for the first time in the catalogues of practical training. Before the introduction of apprenticeship training, the practical training objectives were among the objectives of the broader professional modules, and after the introduction of apprenticeship training it was necessary to define the learning tubes more precisely according to the learning location and the distribution of tasks of the contractors. These catalogues are drawn up progressively at the time of this evaluation, in line with the extension of the apprenticeship form of professional training to new programs. For our analysis, we collected three randomly selected, which entered into force in the 2018/19 school year to examine the influence of the SQF on the formulation of practical training objectives. All catalogues are at the SQF 4 level, since the apprenticeship format is limited to vocational (but not professional) education programs. As it is a catalogue of practical training, the main goals are skills (as understood in the SQF) and competences (as understood in the SQF):

Skills: "Using knowledge to solve different tasks and problems, even in less typical situations. Mastering skills that are broad and specialized by the area of operation, including the use of appropriate tools, methods, various technological procedures and materials. Performance of relatively transparent, less standardized tasks. "

Competencies: Ability to work in a familiar and lesser-known environment with a greater degree of responsibility and independence. Taking responsibility for the characteristics and quality of products / services related to work tasks or work processes. Taking responsibility for own learning. Acquiring new knowledge and skills in a controlled environment. This level is characterized by a certain entrepreneurial orientation, the ability to organize and join working groups.

Below are excerpts from the second point of catalogues, entitled "Expected Learning Outcomes".

Programme Glassworker (SQF 4)

Expected learning outcomes: The high-school student/apprentice is trained in the following workflows:

Table 32: Comparison of the past and the current professional standard – Programme Glassworker

Tag	Workflows	Serial. no.	Operational Learning Objectives
COMPULSORY PART		High-school student/Apprentice:	
A*[13]	Occupational health and safety	1	follows the rules for safe work and use appropriate protective equipment at work,
B*	Environmental protection and waste management	2	disposes raw materials and glass waste in accordance with the rules for safe work and environmental requirements,
C*	Use of work documentation	3	reads technical and technological documentation,
		4	draws simple technical drawings and quotes them,
Č*	Communication and use technical terminology	5	uses appropriate communication with colleagues, superiors and customers,
		6	uses and connects technical terminology in Slovene and colloquial professional terminology.
D	Quality control of glass materials and batches	7	performs quality control of glass materials and batches (sieve test, % moisture, bulk weight, % alkali, batch homogeneity),
E	Preparation of glass batch	8	prepares the glass batch based on the calculated composition,
F	Blowing glass	9	prepares tools and accessories for the production of less demanding products,
		10	blows smaller balls of the right size, thickness and shape for a particular product,
		11	blows smaller glasses of simple shapes,
G	Grinding of glass with simple elements	12	prepares grinding machines and associated grinding aids for grinding,
			processes glass products with simple grinding elements,

13 Generic competencies that are included in workflows, marked with a star, are meaningfully integrated into other workflows.

Metalworker – Toolmaker (SQF 4)

Expected learning outcomes: The high-school student/apprentice is trained in the following workflows:

Table 33: Comparison of the past and the current professional standard – Metalworker – Toolmaker

Tag	Workflows	Serial. no.	Operational Learning Objectives
COMPULSORY PART		High-school student/Apprentice:	
B*	Measurement and outlining	4	selects and uses the appropriate measuring tool (calipers, micrometers, meters, comparators, angles, protractors, calibers, etc.),
		5	verifies the accuracy of the measuring tool and maintains it properly,
		6	by measuring the accuracy of product production,
		7	transfers the dimensions and shape of the product from the drawing to the work surface (outlining, scoring...),
		8	measures the hardness before and/or after the machining process is performed,
C	Basic metalworking and transformation processes	9	on the basis of the technical documentation, produces products with various machining processes (manual sawing, filing, drilling, broaching, boaring, threading, grinding, polishing...) and controls them,
		10	differentiates the machining abilities of different materials and chooses the right tool,
		11	performs machine cutting of sheet metal or profiles,
		12	creates a simple product with bending or formig procedures for sheet metal or wire and controls it,
Č	Milling	13	prepares machines for startup, selects the cutter and sets the parameters,
		14	monitors the durability of tools, sharpens tools or replaces cutting blades when worn,
		15	uses fastening and clamping aids on a machine to clamp workpieces and tools,
		16	controls the condition of the milling machine and the levels of liquids (oils, coolants),
		17	produce a product/machine part based on a workshop drawing on a milling machine,
D	Turning	18	prepare machines for startup, selects tools, sets the parameters and takes into account the deadlift on the spindles,
		19	monitors the durability of tools, sharpens tools or replaces cutting blades when worn,
		20	uses fastening and clamping aids on a machine to clamp workpieces and tools,
		21	controls the conditions or levels of liquids (oils, coolants),
		22	produce a machine part based on a workshop drawing on a milling machine,
		23	turns threads and cones,
		32	performs a soft/hard soldering process,
		33	arc welds (REO, MIG / MAG, TIG),
		34	gas welds and is able to regulate flames,
		35	cleans and check the quality of the joint,
			carries out the process of gluing/joining non-metallic materials,

Tag	Workflows	Serial. no.	Operational Learning Objectives
J	Assembly of machine parts	39	systematically assembles tool parts into sub-assemblies and assemblies,
		40	performs assembly of machine parts and assemblies on the basis of the component drawing and carries out the test if necessary,
K*	Maintenance of machinery, tools and equipment	41	performs daily inspection of the machine and performs simple maintenance work (cleaning and lubrication),
			performs preventive maintenance of machines, equipment and accessories,
L	Computer aided technologies: CNC turning, CNC milling	43	checks and prepares the CNC machine for work,
		44	clamps tools and workpieces, selects clamping accessories and adjusts tools,
		45	downloads or manually enters the programme into the CNC machine, sets technological parameters, tests and makes corrections,
		46	produces the product on a CNC lathe or CNC milling machine,
M*	Quality Assurance	47	monitors the work process and ensures quality assurance in accordance with instructions and standards,

Confectioner (SQF 4)

Expected learning outcomes: The high-school student/apprentice is trained in the following workflows:

Table 34: Comparison of the past and the current professional standard – Confectioner

Tag	Workflows	Serial. no.	Operational Learning Objectives
		High-school student/Apprentice:	
A*	Preparation and maintenance of the workplace	1	Prepares for work (wears clean protective clothing, headgear, footwear, removes jewelry, washes). Maintains order and cleanliness at work.
B*	Occupational health and safety	2	Uses personal protective equipment in accordance with occupational health and safety regulations.
C*	Communication and use technical terminology	3	Discusses with colleagues, superiors and customers,
		4	Uses technical terminology in Slovene, colloquial technical terminology and connects colloquial and Slovene terms.
Č*	Use of work documentation	5	Reads, uses work documentation (raw material specifications, technology sheets, HACCP forms) for tasks performed in the work process.
D	Produces preserved pastry according to the prescribed technological procedure	6	Produces various types of pastry (biscuits, tea biscutes, crunchy slices and pies, dessert cakes, preserved biscuit and macron pastries, honey dough, meringues, cakes, fruit bread).
		7	Calculates the recipe.
		8	Selects and verifies the quality of raw materials.
		9	Prepares raw materials for making preserved pastries.
		10	Kneads the dough and prepares fillings (shortcrust, foam filling, macrons).
		11	Rolls the dough and applies fillings.

Tag	Workflows	Serial. no.	Operational Learning Objectives
		12	Bakes preserved pastry.
		13	Fills and decorates preserved pastry.
E	Makes semi-finished products for less durable desserts	14	Makes strudel dough, puff pastry, leavened pastry, leavened puff pastry.
		15	Prepares basic and auxiliary raw materials and additives for individual dough.
		16	Mixes or kneads the dough by hand or machine.
		17	Forms the dough evenly.
		18	Supervises the fermentation process of leavened and leavened puff pastry.
F	Produces fresh desserts according to the prescribed technological procedure	19	Makes cakes, slices, rolls, desserts and mignons.
		20	Prepares raw materials according to the recipe, calculates according to the recipes.
		21	Bakes biscuit fillings (light, heavy, medium).
		22	Forms dough and biscuit fillings according to the chosen method (pouring, smearing, or spraying).
		23	Makes different types of creams (butter cream, creamy cream, Parisian cream, cooked cream, basic ganache and ganache for filling cakes, slices).
		24	Fills, sprays, pours cream onto biscuits or into molds.
		25	Makes basic glazings and performs tempering techniques (chocolate coating, fondant, gelatin coating).
		26	Spreads, glazes and decorates desserts.
		27	Forms desserts evenly by slicing or using models.
		28	Applies, models and makes compositions.
		29	Controls the cooling, time and storage conditions of desserts.
G	Produces portioned desserts according to the prescribed technological procedure	30	Prepares raw materials for portioned desserts, mixes, whisks, cooks creams (for panna cotta, model-shaped desserts, souffles, prepared for cold-warm buffet).
		31	Pours and forms creams.
		32	Decorates on a plate, in models and in glasses.
		34	Kneads dough or whisks fillings.
		35	Prepares fillings and forms the pastry, fills the dough with the filling.
J	Makes ice cream and ice cream products according to the prescribed technological procedure	44	Selects and calculates raw materials for ice cream preparation.
		45	Prepares ice creams in 4 basic ways (warm milk ice cream preparation, cold milk ice cream preparation, water based ice cream preparation, sorbet).
		46	In the process of making ice cream, it adheres to the principles of good manufacturing practice (principles, process control, fault prevention, product quality, safe and stable ice cream in the use by date).
		47	Makes ice cream products.
L	Plans and makes own dessert	51	Prepares a plan and makes own dessert.
		52	Makes and forms own dessert.
		53	Decorates and presents own dessert.

Tag	Workflows	Serial. no.	Operational Learning Objectives
M	Sells products	54	Sensory evaluates desserts.
		55	Calculates the cost of raw materials, product manufacturing and packaging.
		56	Packs the product in proper packaging.
		57	Accompanies the product with a corresponding declaration.
		58	Find out the customer's wishes and serves them according to their expectations.
		59	Attractively arranges the display window and showcases.

All selected catalogues of practical training clearly show a very **thoughtful formulation of learning outcomes that reflect the basic principles of their design** (as written in the Guidelines for the Implementation and Use of the Slovenian Framework of Qualifications and Learning Outcomes in Practice (Smernice za implementacijo in uporabo slovenskega ogrodja kvalifikacij in učnih izidov v praksi, Ermenc, Biloslavo, Mikulec, 2015):

1. Consistent use of operative verbs:
   High-school student/Apprentice: Follows rules, draws, performs controls, selects, checks, measures, planes, kneads, cleans...
2. Active verbs are specified and contextualized:
   High-school student/Apprentice:
   - performs quality control of glass materials and batches (sieve test, % moisture, bulk weight, % alkali, batch homogeneity);
   - on the basis of the technical documentation, produces products with various machining processes (manual sawing, filing, drilling, broaching, boaring, threading, grinding, polishing...) and controls them;
   - Prepares raw materials according to the recipe, calculates according to the recipes.
3. The wording is clear: We find it easier for employers to understand as they focus to work processes and work operations.
4. The number of learning outcomes is appropriate as it does not impede understanding.

METHODOLOGY FOR THE PREPARATION OF CATALOGUES OF KNOWLEDGE FOR PRACTICAL TRAINING IN VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

The emergence of this Methodology is partly the case for the catalogues of practical training for the level of vocational upper secondary education, which are explicitly motivated by the desire to adapt the characteristics and requirements of educational programs to employers. Employers find it difficult to understand existing programs and knowledge catalogs, so the authors of the Methodology hope that the logic of learning outcomes will be closer to their thoughts and needs.

The authors of the Methodology combine the terminology of the SQF Act and the Basis, and explicitly define the principles of designing learning outcomes and level descriptors. They also provide Dublin short cycle descriptors. They write as follows:

The core - and key - element of theCatalogue of Knowledge is properly designed competences and learning outcomes.

For each module, it is recommended that up to two competences are identified and entered to the first column. In the workplace it is sometimes difficult to determine the competency needed to perform; in this case we define the workflow that is being performed. Whether it is a competence or a work process, depends on the logic of the program, modules or work situations in the workplace.

We recommend that up to five learning outcomes are identified for each competence/work process. We take into account the actual abilities of employers and the fact that the Catalogue users (employers and students) have no prior knowledge of how to plan learning objectives.

Learning outcomes are sectioned into smaller classes, either linked to competences or work processes; the decision depends on the type of training, the profession and agreement between the stakeholders.

Some principles for designing learning outcomes:

- *we plan the outcomes that a typical student can achieve in a given time;*
- *we bear in mind that our ultimate goal is to a thoroughly trained beginner (we do not expect an expert);*
- *we use active verbs: the focus is on defining how the student APPLIES his knowledge. Therefore, they also serve as a starting point for evaluation (e.g. a basis for the creation of evaluation lists for mentors in companies);*
- *we formulate the learning outcomes as uniquely as possible: state the context of use and take into account the level of complexity and independence.*

THE LEARNING OUTCOMES REFLECT THE EXPECTED LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY AND COMPLEXITY REGARDING THE TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAM.

The learning outcomes are based on a level that is relevant to short-term higher education programmes. In doing so, we rely on: SQF level 6, EQF level and Dublin short cycle descriptors.

Adequate level is important in judging the Catalogue as a whole and in those outcomes that are the "heart" of the profession. Supportive learning outcomes may also be lower or less complex. We may also put some learning outcomes at a higher level to allow for better transition to higher levels of study.

Examples of this include the following:

Year 1

Table 35: M1 (Technical communication)

Competencies/Workflows	Learning Outcomes
Communicates in professional and technical way in Slovene and foreign languages.	Uses appropriate technical terminology when communicating with different stakeholders. Interpersonal and business sovereign communication in different business environments and teams. Takes into account organizational culture in all business situations.
Uses modern ICT in communication.	Independently uses programs and/or online services to write documentation. Analyzes, summarizes and presents data for various work tasks on the basis of appropriate methodology.

Table 36: M2 (Basics of Mechatronics) and M3 (Mechatronics 1)

Competencies/Workflows	Learning Outcomes
Works with elements or assemblies of mechanical or electrical devices.	Analyzes the physical principles and operation of mechanical or electrical elements, assemblies, devices or machines. Constructs or maintains simple electrical, pneumatic or hydraulic circuits.
Works with elements or assemblies of mechatronic systems.	Independently uses and analyzes more complex mechatronic system. Participates in the design, installation or maintenance of pneumatic, hydraulic, electrical or control components of mechatronic systems, assuming responsibility for specific works Measures mechanical and/or electrical quantities using appropriate tools and measuring methods. Analyzes the results of mechanical and/or electrical measurements.
Ensures safety and adheres to environmental guidelines.	Adheres to the rules of safe work and safety standards. Identifies risks and potential errors related to occupational health and safety. Safely implements simpler measurement procedures in process technology and utility power. Operates in accordance with the principles and guidelines of sustainable development.

The methodology clearly reflects the intentions of the SQF by focusing attention on the **degree of complexity** of the learning outcomes in relation to the level of the SQF. In the case of the catalogues for practical training, we have found that the examples of learning outcomes offered in this case also **correspond to the principles of formation of learning outcomes**.

It can be concluded that the SQF, with its approach to the role and formation of learning outcomes, has already had a significant impact on the system of vocational and technical education in our country. As we have already noted (Ermenc, Biloslavo, Mikulec, 2016), since the reform in the mid-1990s there has been a learning objectives approach in our educational system with the use of operative verbs. There are differences between the segments of the system, different terminology is used, which has changed over the last quarter of a century, but thinking about the goals or outcomes of education is quite entrenched, which is a favorable situation for the introduction of the SQF. The SQF introduced two new dimensions to the situation described, which to a certain extent unified the system – initially in the area of vocational and professional education and training. More specifically, they gradually lead to a greater unification:

- it has brought a more clearly formulated logic of qualification levels and thus an increase in learning outcomes into the system.
- it also led to the realization that only by using operative verbs we do not yet achieve comprehensible and unambiguous learning outcomes and that we have to consider both the qualification or the programme as a whole and the other components covered by the basic principles of designing learning outcomes.

8. APPENDICES

8.1. Appendix 1: Questions for focus group

Pre-start presentation for respondents:

The semi-structured interview in front of you is part of an evaluation study on the SQF carried out by the Center for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) together with the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) to obtain information on the understanding, visibility and benefits of the SQF among the main stakeholders. The questions in the interview relate to the understanding of the SQF (1 set of questions).

The evaluation study will help to understand the effects of the implementation of the SQF in practice and to address any shortcomings of the SQF. As an important stakeholder, you (name of the target group; mentioned in the document Accession Areas under point 1) play an important role in the evaluation of the SQF, therefore we kindly ask you to participate.

The interview is fully anonymous and will be used for the purposes of the SQF evaluation study.

Part 1: Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF) – Understanding

1. Have you heard of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF)? If so, please explain how you understand: (a) the underlying purpose of the framework, (b) the objectives of the SQF, and (c) the level descriptors in the SQF.
2. What is your opinion on the SQF level descriptions?
3. Do you know the basic types of qualifications included in the SQF? How do you understand the differences between different classes and types of qualifications? Do they meaningfully summarize the range of qualifications available in Slovenian society?
4. What do you think of the procedures for referencing of qualifications, professional and additional, as prescribed by the SQF Act? How could they be improved?
5. In your opinion, how does the SQF contribute to more transparency and understanding of the different classes and types of qualifications in the country?
6. Would you add any other information, remark or (positive, negative) criticism in regard to understanding of the SQF?

Part 2: Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF) – use

1. How and for what purposes do you use the SQF at your work in the educational (general, vocational, higher education, adult education) subsystem or for the needs of the labor market? Please clarify.
2. To what extent is the SQF used in national education policy according to your knowledge of the subject area you cover (e.g. involvement of the SQF in the lifelong learning strategy, the qualifications strategy, the recognition of qualifications, the Resolution on the National Adult Education Program, etc.)? Do these policies associate with, or simply mention, the SQF or do they not even mention the SQF?

3. How do you use the SQF to meet the mobility needs of students, students and staff?
4. How do you use the SQF in the recognition of qualifications?

8.2. Appendix 2: Questions for interview

Pre-start presentation for respondents:

The interview in front of you is part of an evaluation study on the SQF carried out by the Center for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) together with the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) to obtain information on the understanding, visibility and benefits of the SQF among the main stakeholders. The questions in the interview relate to the **understanding of the SQF (1 and 2 set of questions)**.

The evaluation study will help to understand the effects of the implementation of the SQF in practice and to address any shortcomings of the SQF. As an important stakeholder, you (name of the target group; mentioned in the document Accession Areas under point 1) play an important role in the evaluation of the SQF, therefore we kindly ask you to participate.

Part 1: Application of the SQF (descriptors and learning outcomes)

1. How do you use the SQF descriptors in your work (in preparing qualifications, programs, curricula, knowledge catalogues)?
2. How do you use SQF level descriptors to propose a level of qualification?
3. How do you understand and evaluate the division of learning outcomes into categories of knowledge, skills and competences as defined by the SQF. (sub-question for the questioner: Do you think these three categories are relevant, do you miss any other category and would you form the categories in another way).
4. Would you add any other information or suggestion for use of the SQF?

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know / I prefer not to answer
Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to better development of education and training programs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving teaching and learning practice.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Orientation towards learning outcomes, as envisaged by the SQF, contributes to improving the practice of assessing learning outcomes..	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF makes it easier for educational institutions to monitor learning outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	0

8.3. Appendix 3: Questionnaire for professional public

The questionnaire before you is a part of the evaluation study on the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter SQF). The SQF is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualification into levels with regard to learning outcomes. It consists of 10 levels.

The questions in the survey questionnaire mainly relate to the **recognition and understanding of the SQF**.

We kindly ask you to read and answer the following questions and statements carefully so that your evaluation reflects your view of the SQF.

The terms used to refer to persons and written in the masculine grammatical form are used as neutral for both the female and male gender.

The survey is anonymous, and it will take you about 5 minutes to complete. The data collected will be treated strictly confidential and analyzed in general (and by no means at the level of individual responses). They will be used exclusively for the purpose of the evaluation study.

We kindly ask you to read and answer the following questions and statements carefully so that your evaluation reflects your view of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter SQF) Register. The purpose of the research we are doing with this survey is to evaluate the recognition and use of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework. It will take you a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous.

1. What is your role while answering the questionnaire? Please select the appropriate answer
   - ☐ Ministry Representative
   - ☐ High-school student organization representative
   - ☐ Higher education student organization representative
   - ☐ High School Representative
   - ☐ Faculty Representative
   - ☐ Representative of career advisers
   - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

2. Please evaluate to what extent you are familiar with the SQF and how well it has been promoted in Slovenia. Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 (I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know / I prefer not to answer
I am familiar with the SQF.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I am aware of the purpose of the SQF.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF at my work.	1	2	3	4	5	0

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know / I prefer not to answer
The SQF is appropriately aligned with the measures, regulations and policies in my area of expertise.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The benefits of the SQF are presented to me as a stakeholder.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The materials and other information I need, are available to me through the SQF.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I am familiar with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	1	2	3	4	5	0

3. Please evaluate the extent to which the SQF contributes to the transparency of qualifications in Slovenia. Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 (I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know / I prefer not to answer
The SQF contributes to a better understanding qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF contributes to a simpler description of qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF contributes to a better transparency of the knowledge, skills and competences of each individual qualification.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF contributes to a better transparency of qualifications in a particular field of expertise (e.g. construction, agriculture).	1	2	3	4	5	0
To what extent is the SQF used in national education policy according to your knowledge of the subject area you cover (e.g. involvement of the SQF in the lifelong learning strategy, the qualifications strategy, the recognition of qualifications, Resolution on the National Adult Education Program, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5	0

4. Please evaluate the extent to which the SQF contributes to lifelong education, learning and mobility in Slovenia. Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 (I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know / I prefer not to answer
The SQF simplifies the understanding of the transition between qualifications acquired through formal education, initial and continuing training and supplementary qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF contributes to a better understanding and comparability of Slovenian qualifications abroad.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF makes it easier to compare qualifications for the needs of study and work.	1	2	3	4	5	0

5. Please evaluate the extent to which the SQF has contributed to a greater connection between the labor market and education in Slovenia. Please rate the statements below on a scale of 1 (I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know / I prefer not to answer
The SQF contributes to a more successful dialogue between the labor market, education and training institutions.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The qualifications included in the SQF online Register provide relevant information on knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (vocational) field.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF contributes to a better match between the available market knowledge and skills, and workplace needs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF makes it easier to plan the needs for workers and professional development.	1	2	3	4	5	0

6. Please evaluate the priority given to each function of the SQF for its further development. Please rate the priority on a scale of 1 (low priority) to 3 (high priority).

	Nizka prioriteta	Srednja prioriteta	Visoka prioriteta	Ne vem / Ne želim odgovoriti
Communication function – to make the SQF and the SQF Act more understandable.	1	2	3	0
Quality Assurance – Quality assurance of qualifications with the help of the SQF.	1	2	3	0
Regulatory function – to control access to the offer of qualifications in Slovenia with the help of the SQF	1	2	3	0
The transitional function – eliminating barriers in transition between different types of qualifications (education, vocational qualifications and supplementary qualifications) with the help of the SQF.	1	2	3	0
Mobility Function – Support the international mobility of high-school students, higher education students and workers in the common European labor market with the help of the SQF.	1	2	3	0
Recognition Function – Support the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and acquired qualifications in Slovenia with the help of the SQF	1	2	3	0
Learning Outcome Orientation – Broaden the learning outcomes orientation with the help of the SQF	1	2	3	0

8.4. Appendix 4: Questionnaire for general public

The questionnaire before you is a part of the evaluation study on the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter SQF). The SQF is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualification into levels with regard to learning outcomes. It consists of 10 levels.

The questions in the survey questionnaire mainly relate to the **recognition and understanding of the SQF**.

We kindly ask you to read and answer the following questions and statements carefully so that your evaluation reflects your view of the SQF.

The terms used to refer to persons and written in the masculine grammatical form are used as neutral for both the female and male gender.

The survey is anonymous, and it will take you about 5 minutes to complete. The data collected will be treated strictly confidential and analyzed in general (and by no means at the level of individual responses). They will be used exclusively for the purpose of the evaluation study.

1. Socio-demographic characteristics:

   Gender (circle as appropriate): M F

   Age (circle as appropriate):
   15–18 years 19–25 years 26–35 years 36–50 years 51–65 years
   over 65 years

2. **Highest obtained education** (circle the SQF level appropriately after the selected answer):

Non-completed primary education (certificate of completion of the 7th or 8th grade of elementary school) First-stage of basic education	SQF LEVEL 1
Basic education	SQF LEVEL 2
Short-term vocational education	SQF LEVEL 3
Vocational upper secondary education	SQF LEVEL 4
Technical upper secondary education General upper secondary education	SQF LEVEL 5
Higher vocational, short-term higher education	SQF LEVEL 6
Professional higher education/1st Bologna cycle Academic higher education/1st Bologna cycle Professional higher education (former, pre-Bologna) Specialization after short-term higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 7
Master's education/2nd Bologna cycle Specialization after professional higher education (former, pre-Bologna) Academic education (former, pre-Bologna) Professional higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 8
Master of Science/Art (former, pre-Bologna) Master of Science/Arts according to the Law on Vocational Education Specialization after academic higher education (former, pre-Bologna) Specialisaton after professional higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 9
Doctorate of Science (3rd Bologna level) Doctorate of science (former, pre-Bologna) Doctorate of science according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 10

3. What is your (current) role while answering the questionnaire? Please choose **ONLY ONE appropriate answer**.
   - ☐ High-school student
   - ☐ Student
   - ☐ Employee
   - ☐ Adult Education Participant
   - ☐ Employer
   - ☐ Representative of the University Career Center
   - ☐ Lifelong Learning Center Representative
   - ☐ NVQ candidate
   - ☐ Career Advisor (ZRSZ)
   - ☐ Job seeker
   - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Part 1: recognition of SQF

4. Have you heard of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF)? (encircle accordingly):
   YES (**complete all questions except 12 b**)
   NO (if your answer is NO**, complete only questions 12 b and 13**)

8. Where you know the SQF Register from (multiple answers are possible)?
   a Someone told me about it. b from the web c from social networks d from the presentation at the event. d Other media: _____

6. Please evaluate the extent to which you are familiar with the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF) by expressing your agreement with the statements below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do not know« if you do not have enough information to make up your mind.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I am aware of the purpose of the SQF.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I am familiar with the 10 levels of the SQF.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I know what level of the SQF my education or qualification belongs to.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I can distinguish between qualifications in the SQF (education, professional qualifications,...).	1	2	3	4	5	0

8.5. Appendix 5: Analysis of integrating the SQF into national documents

One of the aspects of the implementation and use of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework is the inclusion of the SQF and EQF levels into various public documents, forms and various sectoral legislation and regulations. Since the publication of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act (ZSOK), the influence of the SQF Act on national legislation documents, job vacancies and some publicly available forms has been shown. In some cases, however, records of educational levels that do not comply with the SQF Act still appear.

Integration of the SQF levels in public documents

In 2016, in accordance with Article 5 of the SQF Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 104/15), which stipulates that the level of qualification acquired under the SQF and EQF shall be recorded in public documents on completion of education, their annexes, NVQ certificates, certificates on completed training or advanced training programs, and certificates of supplementary qualifications, and also according to the QF-EHEA for higher education and post-secondary education qualifications:

- Rules on public documents forms in primary schools (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 40/2016 of 6 June 2016),
- Rules on public documents forms in secondary schools (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 28/2016 of 15 April 2016),
- Rules on diploma supplement (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 38/16 of 27 May 2016) and
- Rules on the form for supplementary qualification certificates (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 28/2016 of 15 April 2016),
- Rules amending the Rules on the national vocational qualification's official document (certificate and its duplicate) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 22/2016 of 23 March 2016).

Levels of SQFs and EQFs have been appearing on all public certificates of completion of education, their annexes, certificates for NVQ, certificates of completion of the training or advanced education programme and certificates of supplementary qualifications since 2016, in accordance with the SQF Act.

Examples of public documents:

Figure 2: Certificate of completed primary education

Figure 3: Certificate of final examination

Figure 4: Certificate of vocational matura examination

Figure 5: Certificate of general matura

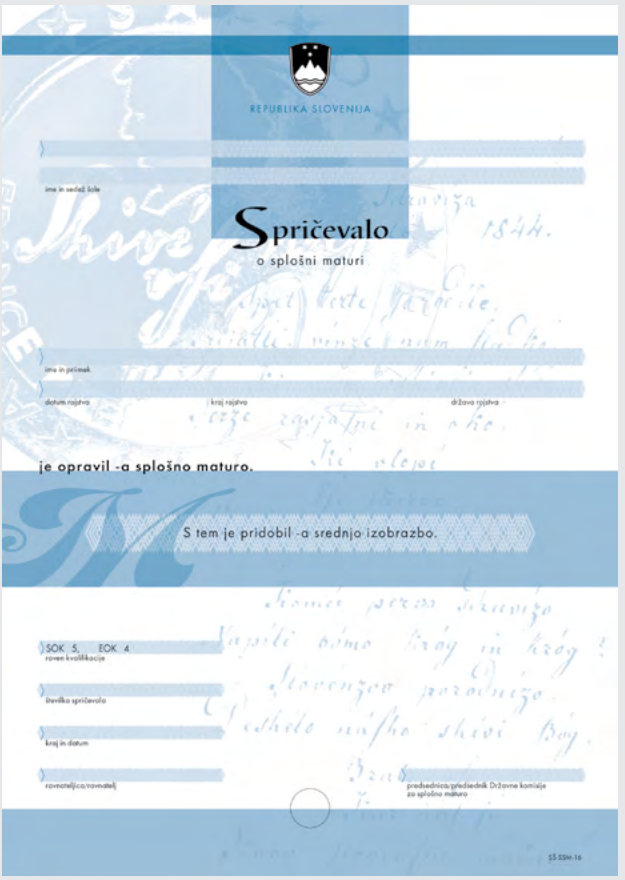
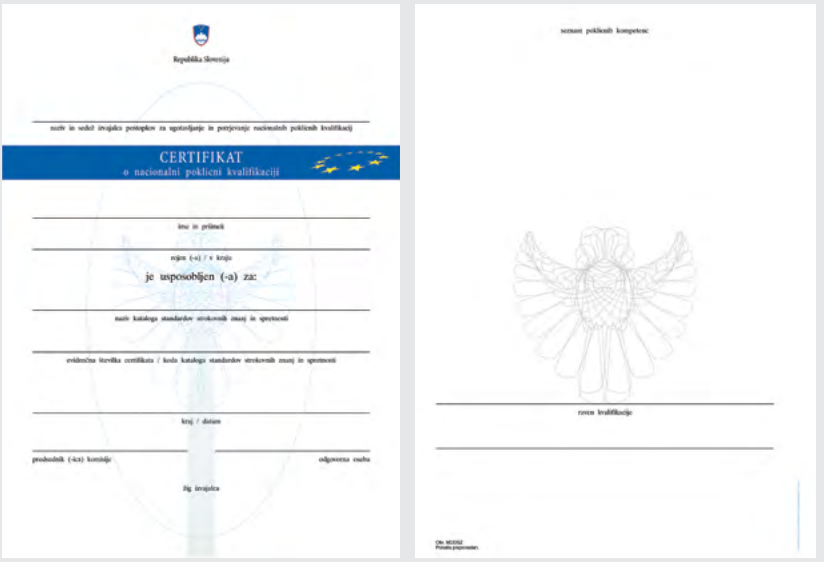


Figure 6a and 6b: National vocational qualification – certificate

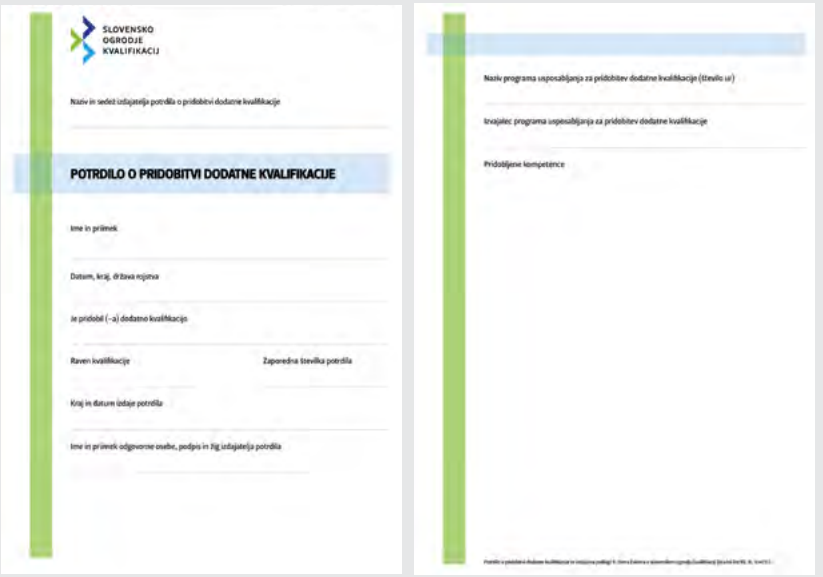


Republika Slovenija

CERTIFIKAT
o nacionalni poklicni kvalifikaciji

je usposobljen (-a) za:

Figure 7: Certificate of supplementary qualification



SLOVENSKO OGRODJE KVALIFIKACIJ

POTRDILO O PRIDOBITVI DODATNE KVALIFIKACIJE

Ime in priimek

Datum, kraj, država rojstva

je pridobil (-a) dodatno kvalifikacijo

Raven kvalifikacije

Zaporedna številka potrdila

Kraj in datum izdaje potrdila

Ime in priimek odgovorne osebe, podpis in žig izdajatelja potrdila

Naziv programa usposabljanja za pridobitev dodatne kvalifikacije (število ur)

Izvajalec programa usposabljanja za pridobitev dodatne kvalifikacije

Pridobljene kompetence

Figure 8: Excerpt from the Supplement to the certificate

5. PRAVNA PODLAGA ZA IZDAJO SPRIČEVALA	
Naziv in sedež šole, ki podeljuje spričevalo	**Naziv in status nacionalnega/regionalnega organa, pristojnega za zagotavljanje javne veljavnosti spričevala** **Vsebina rubrike določena na nacionalni ravni*
Raven pridobljene izobrazbe (nacionalna ali mednarodna klasifikacijska lestvica) Opisna stopnja izobrazbe Slovensko ogrodje kvalifikacij Evropsko ogrodje kvalifikacij ISCED	**Ocenjevalna lestvica** 5 – odlično 4 – prav dobro 3 – dobro 2 – zadostno
Dostop do naslednje ravni izobraževanja **Vsebina rubrike določena na nacionalni ravni*	**Mednarodni sporazumi** **Vsebina rubrike določena na nacionalni ravni*
Pravna podlaga Zakon o organizaciji in financiranju vzgoje in izobraževanja Zakon o poklicnem in strokovnem izobraževanju Zakon o slovenskem ogrodju kvalifikacij Zakon o vajeništvu[1] Odločba Europass	

Figure 9: Excerpt from the Supplement to the Diploma

3 Podatki o ravni izobrazbe
3.1 Raven izobrazbe:
3.2 Uradno trajanje študija:
3.3 Vpisni pogoji:

Vpišite raven izobrazbe glede na slovensko ogrodje kvalifikacij (SOK 6, SOK 7, SOK 8, SOK 9 ali SOK 10), evropsko ogrodje kvalifikacij (EOK 5, EOK 6, EOK 7 ali EOK 8) in evropsko ogrodje visokošolskih kvalifikacij (EOVK kratki cikel, EOVK prva stopnja, EOVK druga stopnja ali EOVK tretja stopnja), in sicer glede na tabelo v poglavju 8 (Informacija o visokošolskem sistemu v Republiki Sloveniji).

Incorporation of the SQF into national legislation and regulations

Even before the adoption of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act, the National Qualifications Framework was included in two national resolutions:

- The Resolution on the National Programme for Adult Education in the Republic of Slovenia for the Period 2013–2020 (ReNPIO13–20) addresses the SQF within the priority area of education and training for the needs of work and mentions the preparation of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF), which includes national vocational qualifications in addition to formal education, and probably supplementary qualifications,
- Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme 2011–2020 (ReNPVŠ11–20); cites the SQF within the objectives and measures within which the national framework for higher education qualifications is established as part of the National Qualifications Framework,

and the following acts in the field of education and training and the functioning of the Republic of Slovenia in the EU institutions:

- The Law on Vocational and Technical Education (ZPSI-1) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 79/06 of 27 July 2006), in so far as it covers National Vocational Qualifications, states that the relevant national vocational qualification is acquired in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework.
- Higher Education Act (Official Consolidated Text) (ZViS-UPB7) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 32/2012 of 4 May 2012) stipulates that the study programs for obtaining the first and second level education must be stated among the compulsory components classification in the National Qualifications Framework, the European Framework for Higher Education Classifications and the European Qualifications Framework, and this information is also recorded in the eVŠ records.
- Law on National Vocational Qualifications (Official Consolidated Text) (ZNPK-UPB2), Official Gazette of the RS No. 1/2007, of 5 January 2007 provides that Vocational qualifications are to be classified in the National Qualifications Framework.
- Declaration on the Guidelines for the Functioning of the Republic of Slovenia in the Institutions of the European Union in the Period January 2013–June 2014 (DeUDIEU1314) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 22/2013 of 15 March 2013) mentions the procedure for placing the national qualifications framework in the EQF.

The Slovenian Qualifications Framework has also been included in the *Methodology for the preparation of study programs for higher professional education* and is also an integral part of the form for the submission of a proposal for a new study programme for higher professional education.

Slovenian Qualifications Framework or National Qualifications Framework was added to the Statute of the University of Ljubljana and the decision on the establishment of the public institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training:

- The Statute of the University of Ljubljana (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia No. 4/2017 of 27 January 2017) specifies the SQF in determining the conditions for performing the named function.
- Decision on Establishment of the Public Institution Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 57/2016, of 31 August 2016) mentions the SQF in the framework of the implementation of the tasks of the National Coordination Point (hereinafter: NCP SQF–EQF) for the purpose of establishing a uniform system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia and placement of qualifications from the SQF into the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (hereinafter: EQF).

Figure 10: Excerpt from general information on the improvement study program

Č. OBRAZEC ZA ODDAJO PREDLOGA NOVEGA ŠTUDIJSKEGA PROGRAMA ZA IZPOPOLNJEVANJE NA PODROČJU VIŠJEGA STROKOVNEGA IZOBRAŽEVANJA

ŠTUDIJSKI PROGRAM ZA IZPOPOLNJEVANJE NA PODROČJU VIŠJEGA STROKOVNEGA IZOBRAŽEVANJA *(ime kvalifikacije)*

1. PODATKI O PREDLAGATELJU

Predlagatelj	
Naslov	
Kontaktna oseba	
Telefon	
E-naslov	

2. SPLOŠNI PODATKI O ŠTUDIJSKEM PROGRAMU ZA IZPOPOLNJEVANJE

Ime študijskega programa		Študijski program za izpopolnjevanje na področju višjega strokovnega izobraževanja *(ime kvalifikacije)*
Naziv strokovne izobrazbe		Ni določeno[3].
Okrajšava naziva strokovne izobrazbe		/
Ime kvalifikacije		
Vrsta študijskega programa		Študijski program za izpopolnjevanje na področju višjega strokovnega izobraževanja
Razvrstitev po KLASIUS-SRV		
Razvrstitev po KLASIUS-P-16		
Raven kvalifikacije	**SOK**	6
	EOK	5
	EOVK	/

Študijski program za izpopolnjevanje je (*ustrezno podčrtajte*): **- spremenjen oz. dopolnjen *** **- prenovljen in nadomešča obstoječega *** **- nov**	*(identifikacijska številka programa, številka Uradnega lista, v katerem je bil objavljen)*

Integration of the SQF in other sectoral legislation, regulations and documents

The Slovenian Qualifications Framework was largely integrated into the sectoral legislation and regulations regarding the definition of the training conditions for skilled personnel in the individual sectors with the defined levels of the SQF/EQF.

List of regulations:

1. Rules on train drivers, training centres, examiners and examination centres (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 35/2019 of 31 May 2019)
2. Rules amending the Rules on technical, professional and organisational conditions to be met by organisations preparing expert groundwork in agriculture (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 12/2019 of 27 February 2019),
3. Rules on the conditions for providing radiopharmaceutical services (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 82/2018 of 21 December 2018)
4. Act Amending the Investment Funds and Management Companies Act (ZISDU-3C) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 77/2018 of 30 November 2018)
5. Decree amending the Decree on the implementation of the »Cooperation Measure« pursuant to the Rural Development Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2014–2020 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 71/2018 of 9 November 2018)
6. Rules on the personnel license of the aviation meteorological service (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 66/2018 of 12 October 2018)
7. Rules on first aid training and first aid examinations for driving licence applicants and the conditions to be met by organisations authorised to carry out first aid training (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 61/2018 of 14 October 2018),
8. Rules on authorising radiation protection experts (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 47/2018 of 6 July 2018)
9. Rules on the acquisition of titles in the field of cultural heritage protection (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 47/2018 of 6 July 2018)
10. Rules on traineeships and professional examinations for healthcare and allied professionals in healthcare activities (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 47/2018 of 6 July 2018)
11. Rules on the obligations of persons performing radiation practices and holders of ionising radiation sources (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 43/2018 of 22 July 2018)
12. Rules on authorising ionising radiation practitioners (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 39/2018 of 8 June 2018)
13. General Legal Act on the certification examination for chartered engineers (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 37/2018 of 1 June 2018)

14. General Legal Act on the supervision of the performance of chartered engineers (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 37/2018 of 1 June 2018)
15. Rules on the criteria for using ionising radiation sources for medical purposes and for the deliberate exposure of individuals for non-medical purposes (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 33/2018 of 18 May 2018)
16. Rules on traineeships, professional examinations and professional training for workers in the public forestry service (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 33/2018 of 18 May 2018)
17. Railway Traffic Safety Act ((ZVZelP-1) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 30/2018 of 26 April 2018)
18. Rules on the requirements to be met by a bearer of public authority in the monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions and removals relating to agriculture (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 18/2018 of 20 March 2018)
19. Rules on detailed requirements for the provision of public forestry services by the Slovenian Forest Service (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 17/2018 of 16 March 2018)
20. Rules on the expert commission for the 'Cooperation Measure' pursuant to the Rural Development Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2014–2020 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 6/2018 of 2 February 2018)
21. Decree on the methods and conditions for ensuring the rights of persons with international protection (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 72/2017 of 15 December 2017)
22. Decree amending the Decree on the implementation of the »Cooperation Measure« pursuant to the Rural Development Programme of the Republic of Slovenia 2014–2020 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 68/2017 of 1 November 2018)
23. Rules on the conditions regarding premises, equipment and human resources for the provision of agricultural consultancy public services (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 63/2017 of 10 November 2017)
24. Rules on professional exams and the acquisition of academic titles in the field of the protection of archives (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 33/2017 of 30 June 2017)
25. Rules on conditions for providing consumer lending (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 11/2017 of 3 March 2017)
26. Rules on the conditions to be met by credit intermediaries (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 11/2017 of 3 March 2017)
27. Rules on technical, professional and organisational conditions to be met by organisations preparing expert groundwork in agriculture (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia 80/2016 of 15 December 2016)

Integration of the SQF in job vacancies

Job vacancies advertised by ministries include the required level of the SQF.

Figure 11, Figure 12, Figure 13: Example of a job vacancy, which includes the required level of the SQF

Šifrant - raven izobrazbe (obkrožite)	1. visokošolska strokovna (prejšnja ali 1.bolonjska) ali visokošolska univerzitetna (1.bolonjska stopnja), specializacija po višješolskih programih -6/2 (7 SOK) 2. univerzitetna (prejšnja), specializacija po visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi (prejšnja) ali magisterij po visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi (prejšnja) ali magistrska (2. bolonjska stopnja) -7 (8 SOK) 3. magisterij znanosti (prejšnji), specializacija po univerzitetnih programih - 8/1 (9 SOK) 4. doktorat znanosti prejšnji in doktorat znanosti (3. bolonjska stopnja) – 8/2 (10 SOK)

REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA INFRASTRUKTURO

EVROPSKA UNIJA
KOHEZIJSKI SKLAD
NALOŽBA V VAŠO PRIHODNOST

VLOGA ZA ZAPOSLITEV, št. JN 1100-14/2019
za prosto uradniško delovno mesto VIŠJI SVETOVALEC (šifra DM 1628)
v Oddelku za trajnostno rabo energije v Sektorju za nizkoogljično družbo
v Direktoratu za energijo
za nedoločen čas, s polnim delovnim časom in trimesečnim poskusnim delom, za izvajanje nalog delno v okviru projekta Tehnična podpora Kohezijski sklad – Ministrstvo za infrastrukturo – Operativni program za izvajanje Evropske kohezijske politike – 2014 - 2020

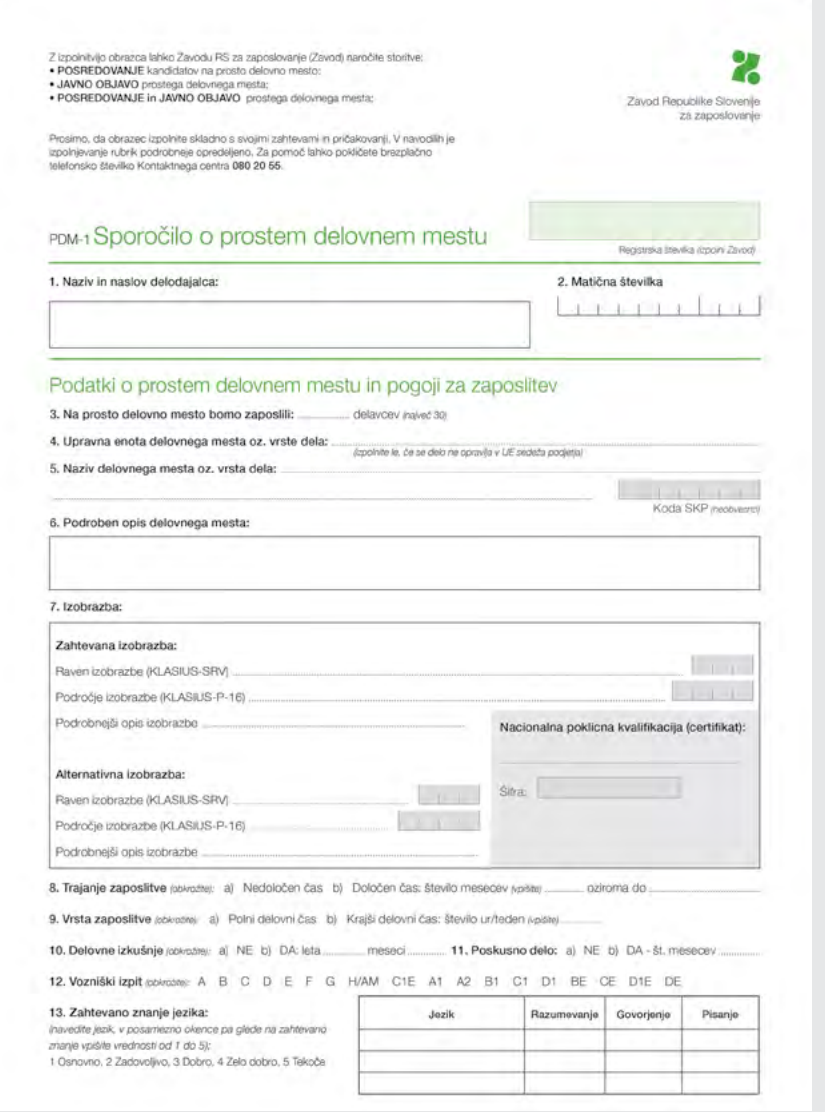
OSNOVNI OSEBNI PODATKI	
Ime	
Priimek	
Datum rojstva	
Stalni naslov *(ulica, številka, poštna št. in kraj)*	
Naslov za vročanje pošte, če je drugačen od stalnega *(ulica, številka, poštna št. in kraj)*	
Mobilni telefon	
Elektronska pošta	
Pridobljeni strokovni naziv izobrazbe	
Raven izobrazbe (ustrezno OBKROŽI)	1. srednja splošna ali strokovna izobrazba ali manj - 5 2. višješolska prejšnja - 6/1 3. visokošolska strokovna (prejšnja ali 1. bolonjska) ali visokošolska univerzitetna (1. bolonjska stopnja) - 6/2 4. univerzitetna (prejšnja), specializacija po visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi (prejšnja) ali magisterij po visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi (prejšnja) ali magistrska (2. bolonjska stopnja) - 7 5. magisterij znanosti (prejšnji), specializacija po univerzitetnih programih - 8/1 6. doktorat znanosti (tretja bolonjska stopnja) - 8/2
Skupna delovna doba (let/mesecev/dni)	
Delovne izkušnje na **6/2 ravni** izobrazbe (7. SOK) **ali več** (let/mesecev/dni)	

Trenutna oz. zadnja zaposlitev	
Naziv in naslov delodajalca:	**Obdobje zaposlitve:** **Od** (mesec/leto): / **Do** (mesec/leto): / **skupaj** *(let / mesecev)*:
Naziv delovnega mesta:	
Zahtevana stopnja izobrazbe za opravljanje dela na tem delovnem mestu (obkroži): ☐ srednja splošna ali strokovna izobrazba ali manj ☐ višješolska prejšnja, višješolski strokovni programi - **6/1 (6 SOK)** ☐ visokošolska strokovna (prejšnja ali 1.bolonjska) ali visokošolska univerzitetna (1.bolonjska stopnja), specializacija po višješolskih programih - **6/2 (7 SOK)** ☐ univerzitetna (prejšnja), specializacija po visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi (prejšnja) ali magisterij po visokošolski strokovni izobrazbi (prejšnja) ali magistrska (2. bolonjska stopnja) - **7 (8 SOK)** ☐ magisterij znanosti (prejšnji), specializacija po univerzitetnih programih - **8/1 (9 SOK)** ☐ doktorat znanosti prejšnji in doktorat znanosti (3. bolonjska stopnja) – **8/2 (10 SOK)**	
Opis del in nalog:	
Dolžina odpovednega roka:	

National documents without the use of the SQF

Forms PDM–1 and PDM–2 of the Employment Service of Slovenia for reporting a vacancy, only KLASIUS–SRV is used to determine the level of education.

Figure 14: Example of the PDM–1 form without the use of the SQF



Z izpolnitvijo obrazca lahko Zavodu RS za zaposlovanje (Zavod) naročite storitve:
- **POSREDOVANJE** kandidatov na prosto delovno mesto;
- **JAVNO OBJAVO** prostega delovnega mesta;
- **POSREDOVANJE in JAVNO OBJAVO** prostega delovnega mesta;

Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje

Prosimo, da obrazec izpolnite skladno s svojimi zahtevami in pričakovanji. V navodilih je izpolnjevanje rubrik podrobneje opredeljeno. Za pomoč lahko pokličete brezplačno telefonsko številko Kontaktnega centra **080 20 55**.

PDM-1 Sporočilo o prostem delovnem mestu

Registrska številka (izpolni Zavod)

1. Naziv in naslov delodajalca:

2. Matična številka

Podatki o prostem delovnem mestu in pogoji za zaposlitev

3. Na prosto delovno mesto bomo zaposlili: ..... delavcev (največ 30)

4. Upravna enota delovnega mesta oz. vrste dela: .....
(izpolnite le, če se delo ne opravlja v UE sedeža podjetja)

5. Naziv delovnega mesta oz. vrsta dela: .....

Koda SKP (neobvezno)

6. Podroben opis delovnega mesta:

7. Izobrazba:

Zahtevana izobrazba:
Raven izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV) .....
Področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16) .....
Podrobnejši opis izobrazbe .....

Nacionalna poklicna kvalifikacija (certifikat):

Alternativna izobrazba:
Raven izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV) .....
Področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16) .....
Podrobnejši opis izobrazbe .....

Šifra:

8. Trajanje zaposlitve (obkrožite): a) Nedoločen čas b) Določen čas: število mesecev (vpišite) ..... oziroma do .....

9. Vrsta zaposlitve (obkrožite): a) Polni delovni čas b) Krajši delovni čas: število ur/teden (vpišite) .....

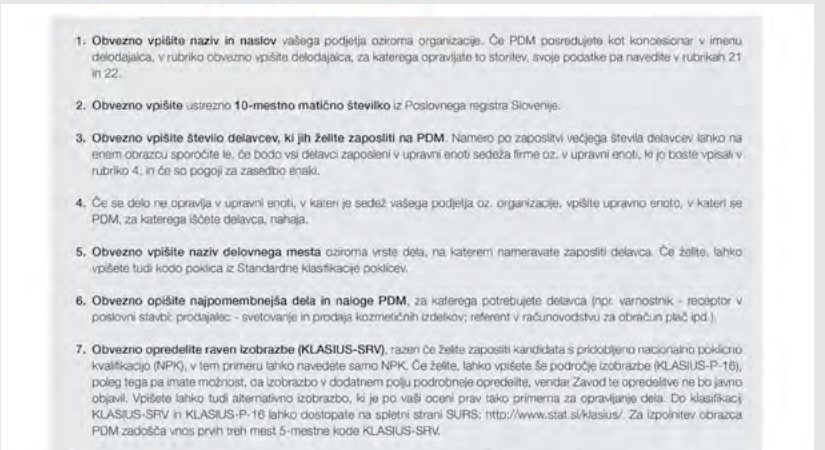
10. Delovne izkušnje (obkrožite): a) NE b) DA: leta ..... meseci ..... 11. Poskusno delo: a) NE b) DA - št. mesecev .....

12. Vozniški izpit (obkrožite): A B C D E F G H/AM C1E A1 A2 B1 C1 D1 BE CE D1E DE

13. Zahtevano znanje jezika:
(navedite jezik, v posamezno okence pa glede na zahtevano znanje vpišite vrednosti od 1 do 5):
1 Osnovno, 2 Zadovoljivo, 3 Dobro, 4 Zelo dobro, 5 Tekoče

Jezik	Razumevanje	Govorjenje	Pisanje

Figure 15: Excerpt of instructions for completing the PDM–1 form: Job vacancy notice



1. **Obvezno vpišite naziv in naslov** vašega podjetja oziroma organizacije. Če PDM posredujete kot koncesionar v imenu delodajalca, v rubriko obvezno vpišite delodajalca, za katerega opravljate to storitev, svoje podatke pa navedite v rubrikah 21 in 22.

2. **Obvezno vpišite** ustrezno **10-mestno matično številko** iz Poslovnega registra Slovenije.

3. **Obvezno vpišite število delavcev, ki jih želite zaposliti na PDM**. Namero po zaposlitvi večjega števila delavcev lahko na enem obrazcu sporočite le, če bodo vsi delavci zaposleni v upravni enoti sedeža firme oz. v upravni enoti, ki jo boste vpisali v rubriko 4., in če so pogoji za zasedbo enaki.

4. Če se delo ne opravlja v upravni enoti, v kateri je sedež vašega podjetja oz. organizacije, vpišite upravno enoto, v kateri se PDM, za katerega iščete delavca, nahaja.

5. **Obvezno vpišite naziv delovnega mesta** oziroma vrste dela, na katerem nameravate zaposliti delavca. Če želite, lahko vpišete tudi kodo poklica iz Standardne klasifikacije poklicev.

6. **Obvezno opišite najpomembnejša dela in naloge PDM**, za katerega potrebujete delavca (npr. varnostnik - receptor v poslovni stavbi; prodajalec - svetovanje in prodaja kozmetičnih izdelkov; referent v računovodstvu za obračun plač ipd.).

7. **Obvezno opredelite raven izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV)**, razen če želite zaposliti kandidata s pridobljeno nacionalno poklicno kvalifikacijo (NPK), v tem primeru lahko navedete samo NPK. Če želite, lahko vpišete še področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16), poleg tega pa imate možnost, da izobrazbo v dodatnem polju podrobneje opredelite, vendar Zavod te opredelitve ne bo javno objavil. Vpišete lahko tudi alternativno izobrazbo, ki je po vaši oceni prav tako primerna za opravljanje dela. Do klasifikacij KLASIUS-SRV in KLASIUS-P-16 lahko dostopate na spletni strani SURS: http://www.stat.si/klasius/. Za izpolnitev obrazca PDM zadošča vnos prvih treh mest 5-mestne kode KLASIUS-SRV.

Figure 16: Example of the PDM-2 form without the use of the SQF

Če za prosto delovno mesto v roku treh mesecev po prejemu potrdila o tem, da je Zavod RS za zaposlovanje (Zavod) prejel vaše sporočilo o prostem delovnem mestu (PDM-1), niste izbrali delavca, lahko Zavodu naročite **PONOVITEV OBJAVE** oziroma **POSREDOVANJA KANDIDATOV IZ EVIDENC ZAVODA** z enakimi ali spremenjenimi pogoji za zaposlitev. Če ste v času objave prostega delovnega mesta in izbire kandidata za zaposlitev ugotovili, da so se razmere spremenile in zato ne boste zaposlovali, nam to prav tako lahko sporočite s tem obrazcem. Vaše prosto delovno mesto bomo **RAZVELJAVILI**.

Prosimo, da obrazec izpolnite skladno s svojimi zahtevami in pričakovanji.
Za pomoč lahko pokličete brezplačno telefonsko številko Kontaktnega centra **080 20 55**.

Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje

PDM-2 Ponovitev, sprememba in razveljavitev sporočila o prostem delovnem mestu

Registrska številka (obvezno vpišite registrsko številko, ki jo je Zavod dodelil sporočilu, ki ga želite ponoviti, spremeniti ali razveljaviti)

1. Naziv in naslov delodajalca:

2. Matična številka

3. Sporočilo o prostem delovnem mestu (obkrožite):

a) PONAVLJAMO z enakimi ali spremenjenimi pogoji za zasedbo prostega delovnega mesta.

b) RAZVELJAVLJAMO.

4. Kontaktna oseba delodajalca/agencije **za sodelovanje z Zavodom:**

Ime in priimek ..... tel. ..... e-naslov: .....

Naziv in naslov agencije za posredovanje zaposlitve: .....

Izpolnite le, če želite spremeniti pogoje za zaposlitev, način objave ali način posredovanja kandidatov

5. Na prosto delovno mesto bomo zaposlili: ..... delavcev (največ 30)

6. Izobrazba:

Zahtevana izobrazba:

Raven izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV) .....

Področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16) .....

Podrobnejši opis izobrazbe .....

Alternativna izobrazba:

Raven izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV) .....

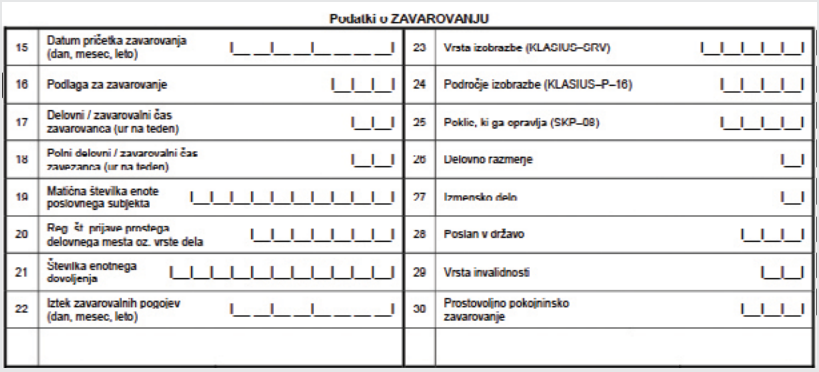
Področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16) .....

Podrobnejši opis izobrazbe .....

Nacionalna poklicna kvalifikacija (certifikat): ..... Šifra

Similarly, Form M-1 (Report of data for inclusion into the pension and disability- and health insurance, parental insurance and unemployment insurance;) and Form M-3 (Change of data regarding the pension and disability- and health insurance, parental insurance and unemployment insurance), where only KLASIUS-SRV is used.

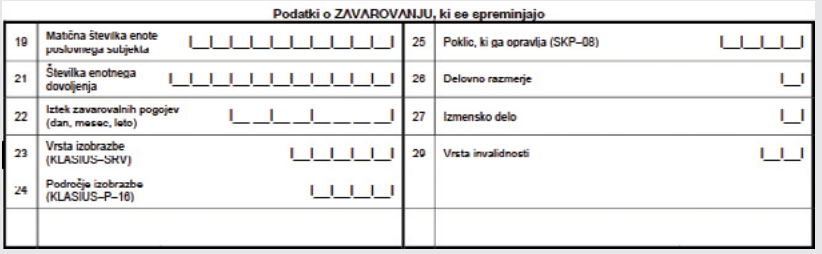
Figure 17: Example of the M-1 form without the use of the SQF



Podatki o ZAVAROVANJU

15	Datum pričetka zavarovanja (dan, mesec, leto)	I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I	23	Vrsta izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV)	I__I__I__I__I__I
16	Podlaga za zavarovanje	I__I__I__I	24	Področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16)	I__I__I__I__I
17	Delovni / zavarovalni čas zavarovanca (ur na teden)	I__I__I	25	Poklic, ki ga opravlja (SKP-08)	I__I__I__I__I
18	Polni delovni / zavarovalni čas zaposlenca (ur na teden)	I__I__I	26	Delovno razmerje	I__I
19	Matična številka enote poslovnega subjekta	I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I	27	Izmensko delo	I__I
20	Reg. št. prijave prostega delovnega mesta oz. vrste dela	I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I	28	Posian v državo	I__I__I__I
21	Številka enotnega dovoljenja	I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I	29	Vrsta invalidnosti	I__I__I
22	Iztek zavarovalnih pogojev (dan, mesec, leto)	I__I__I__I__I__I__I__I	30	Prostovoljno pokojninsko zavarovanje	I__I__I__I

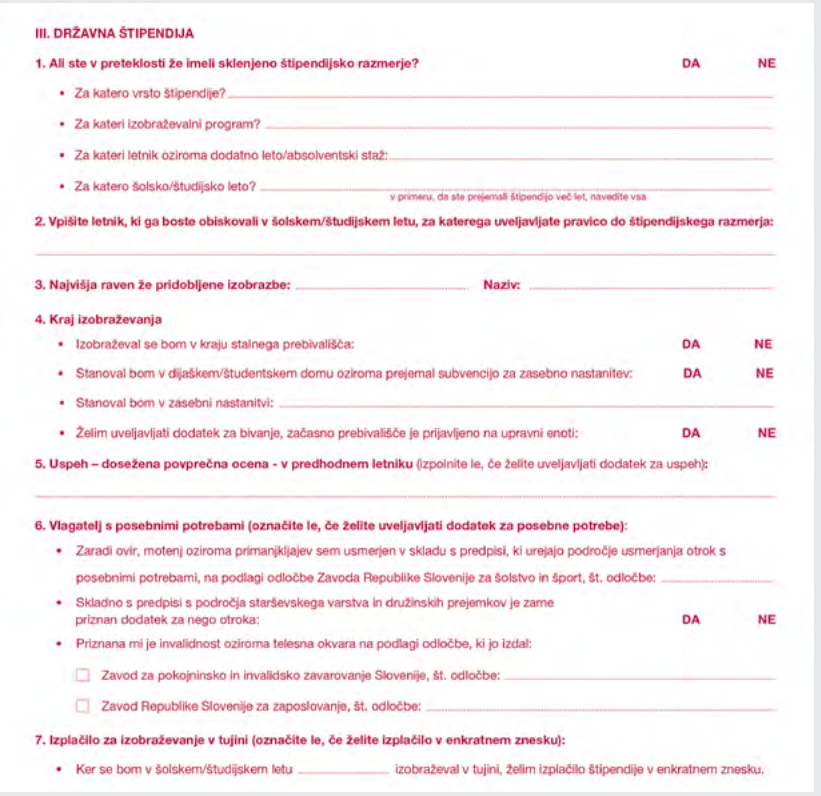
Figure 18: Example of the M-3 form without the use of the SQF



Podatki o ZAVAROVANJU, ki se spreminjajo					
19	Matična številka enote poslovnega subjekta	|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|	25	Poklic, ki ga opravlja (SKP-08)	|_|_|_|_|
21	Številka enotnega dovoljenja	|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|	26	Delovno razmerje	|_|
22	Iztek zavarovalnih pogojev (dan, mesec, leto)	|__|__|____|	27	Izmensko delo	|_|
23	Vrsta izobrazbe (KLASIUS-SRV)	|_|_|_|_|_|	29	Vrsta invalidnosti	|_|_|
24	Področje izobrazbe (KLASIUS-P-16)	|_|_|_|_|			

In the case of an application for a state scholarship for high-school and higher education students, under section III, item 3, the requirement to complete the highest level of education and title is also found. The fact that there is no help on which scale to use, the help for the whole section is omitted, may be prominent in this respect. This leaves the filler alone with how he will indicate his level of education.

Figure 19: Applying for a State Scholarship for High-School and Higher Education Students



III. DRŽAVNA ŠTIPENDIJA

1. Ali ste v preteklosti že imeli sklenjeno štipendijsko razmerje? DA NE

- Za katero vrsto štipendije? _____
- Za kateri izobraževalni program? _____
- Za kateri letnik oziroma dodatno leto/absolventski staž: _____
- Za katero šolsko/študijsko leto? _____
  v primeru, da ste prejemali štipendijo več let, navedite vsa

2. Vpišite letnik, ki ga boste obiskovali v šolskem/študijskem letu, za katerega uveljavljate pravico do štipendijskega razmerja:

_____

3. Najvišja raven že pridobljene izobrazbe: _____ **Naziv:** _____

4. Kraj izobraževanja

- Izobraževal se bom v kraju stalnega prebivališča: DA NE
- Stanoval bom v dijaškem/študentskem domu oziroma prejemal subvencijo za zasebno nastanitev: DA NE
- Stanoval bom v zasebni nastanitvi: _____
- Želim uveljavljati dodatek za bivanje, začasno prebivališče je prijavljeno na upravni enoti: DA NE

5. Uspeh – dosežena povprečna ocena - v predhodnem letniku (izpolnite le, če želite uveljavljati dodatek za uspeh):

_____

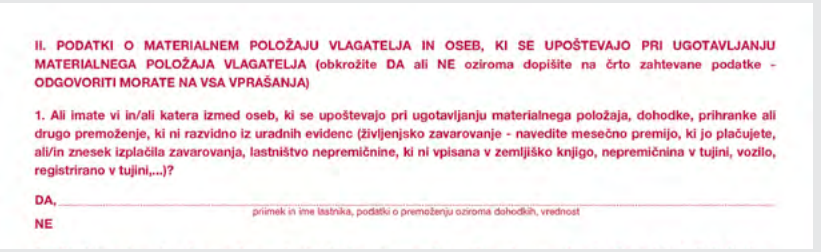
6. Vlagatelj s posebnimi potrebami (označite le, če želite uveljavljati dodatek za posebne potrebe):

- Zaradi ovir, motenj oziroma primanjkljajev sem usmerjen v skladu s predpisi, ki urejajo področje usmerjanja otrok s posebnimi potrebami, na podlagi odločbe Zavoda Republike Slovenije za šolstvo in šport, št. odločbe: _____
- Skladno s predpisi s področja starševskega varstva in družinskih prejemkov je zame priznan dodatek za nego otroka: DA NE
- Priznana mi je invalidnost oziroma telesna okvara na podlagi odločbe, ki jo izdal:
  - ☐ Zavod za pokojninsko in invalidsko zavarovanje Slovenije, št. odločbe: _____
  - ☐ Zavod Republike Slovenije za zaposlovanje, št. odločbe: _____

7. Izplačilo za izobraževanje v tujini (označite le, če želite izplačilo v enkratnem znesku):

- Ker se bom v šolskem/študijskem letu _____ izobraževal v tujini, želim izplačilo štipendije v enkratnem znesku.

Figure 20: Instructions to complete the Application form



II. PODATKI O MATERIALNEM POLOŽAJU VLAGATELJA IN OSEB, KI SE UPOŠTEVAJO PRI UGOTAVLJANJU MATERIALNEGA POLOŽAJA VLAGATELJA (obkrožite DA ali NE oziroma dopišite na črto zahtevane podatke - ODGOVORITI MORATE NA VSA VPRAŠANJA)

1. Ali imate vi in/ali katera izmed oseb, ki se upoštevajo pri ugotavljanju materialnega položaja, dohodke, prihranke ali drugo premoženje, ki ni razvidno iz uradnih evidenc (življenjsko zavarovanje - navedite mesečno premijo, ki jo plačujete, ali/in znesek izplačila zavarovanja, lastništvo nepremičnine, ki ni vpisana v zemljiško knjigo, nepremičnina v tujini, vozilo, registrirano v tujini,...)?

DA, _____
priimek in ime lastnika, podatki o premoženju oziroma dohodkih, vrednost

NE

III

FINAL REPORT: EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SQF REGISTER

Authors: PhD. Borut Mikulec and PhD. Klara Skubic Ermenc

9. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the level of recognition, use and understanding of the Qualifications Register (SQF Register) between the general and professional public in Slovenia.

The basic questions guiding this evaluation were as follows:

- How well known is the SQF Register to the public?
- How often is the SQF Register used by the general and professional public?
- What is the use value of the SQF Register among the general and professional public?
- For what purposes is the SQF Register used by the general and professional public?
- How are the basic components of the SQF Register understood by the professional public?
- To what extent does the SQF Register contribute to the transparency of the country's qualification system?
- What improvements does the SQF Register need?

A combined quantitative and qualitative research approach was used for the evaluation purposes. For the needs of the former, we prepared a questionnaire for the general and professional public, for the needs of the letter we conducted a focus group and semi-structured interviews with the professional public.

1 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Methods and techniques for data collection

The data collection (survey) among members of the general public was carried out in two ways: an online questionnaire and a physical questionnaire. The physical survey questionnaire was offered to be filled in by the participants of various events, and an online survey was created for the visitors of the portal www.nok.si on the portal itself.

Data collection among the professional public was carried out with the help of an online questionnaire created with the online survey tool 1ka. The link to the online survey was sent by e-mail to the SCOS members (representatives of ministries), representatives of high-school students and student organizations, representatives of higher education institutions (rectors), faculties (student affairs offices) and career guidance centers (ZRSZ, career advisors of universities and independent higher education institutions). The e-mail addresses were obtained from the websites of organizations and faculties, and the SCOS members database was used for SCOS. The data collection took place from 11 February 2019 to 1 March 2019.

Description of instrumentation

In the quantitative part of the evaluation, two measuring instruments were used – questionnaires adapted to the respective target groups (a questionnaire for the general public and a questionnaire for the key stakeholders).

The questionnaire for the general public consists of three substantive sets of questions, namely a set of questions that check (1) socio-demographic data, followed by sections that check (2) the recognition and (3) understanding of the SQF Register.

The set of socio-demographic questions contains questions on gender, age and educational level, as well as on the role of the respondent. The second set, which examined the identity of the SQF Register, initially contains an elimination question about the knowledge of SQF Register, followed by a question about where the knowledge of the SQF Register comes from and a set of three claims about familiarity with the SQF Register. The third part of the questionnaire, which examined the use of the SQF Register in the general public, consists of three sets of questions, which relate to the evaluation of the usefulness of the SQF Register (8 points), the purpose of the use of the SQF Register (5 points) and the position on the priority of individual functions of the SQF Register for its further development (4 points). At the same time, the question of the frequency of use of the SQF Register was asked at the beginning of the last questionnaire set.

The questionnaire, intended for representatives of the professional public, consists of one content set of questions, which used to test the use of the SQF Register. This consists of four sets of questions, which relate to the evaluation of the usefulness of the SQF Register (8 points), the purpose of the use of the SQF Register (7 points) and the position on the priority of individual functions of the SQF Register for its further development (4 points). The last part of the questionnaire also included a question on the frequency of use of the SQF Register.

Respondents expressed their agreement with the statements made on the individual points of the questionnaire on a five-point approval scale, ranging from »disagree« (grade 1) to »fully agree« (grade 5), or they chose between three priority levels (low, medium and high priority). For each question where respondents expressed their opinion, they were given the opportunity to answer with »I do not know« or »I do not want to answer« in cases where they did not want to answer or knew what to say.

Description of data processing

The collected data was processed using quantitative analysis methods, and the results of the analysis are presented in graphical and tabular form. The data was analyzed using basic descriptive methods of statistical analysis (frequency distribution of the data and calculation of the average value).

Sample

270 respondents responded of the general public

- were included in the quantitative sample. More women (57.8%) than men (42.2%) were included and almost two thirds of the sample (63.7%) were aged between 19 and 25 years, while the other age groups were less represented in the sample. Two thirds of the sample is represented by students (62.2%) and high school students (4.1%), slightly less than a quarter of the respondents belong to the category of employees (23%). The sample also includes job seekers (5.6%), other respondents – adult learners (0.4%),

employers (1.1%), representatives of the lifelong learning center (0.4%), career advisers (0.4%) – were less represented.

- 50 respondents covered the expert public. The survey included the largest number of faculty representatives (44%), followed by high school representatives (18%) and career advisers (12%). The remaining categories – representatives of higher education student organizations (4.0%), ministries (2.0%), adult education (4.0%), colleges (4.0%) – are represented to a much lesser extent.

2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In the qualitative part of the evaluation we applied the focus group method with professional public and conducted 27 semi-structured interviews with professional public. As a research instrument for the focus group and semi-structured one-on-one interviews, we used a framework questionnaire with prepared questions, and specific questions were formed during the focus and one-on-one interviews based on the respondents' answers (prepared questions are available in Annexes 14.3 and 14.4). The focus group was held at the Center for Vocational Education and Training (CPI) on 1 February 2019 and it lasted approximately 2 hours. One-on-one interviews were conducted at the stakeholders premises between 6 March and 15 April 2019 and lasted approximately 30 minutes.

Data processing

Interviews and the focus group were recorded, transcribed and edited for further processing. Content analysis was inductive; it included open coding, category creation, and abstraction. Using the categories created, we have formulated a general description of the use and understanding of the SQF Register among the key stakeholders.

Sample

In the qualitative part of the evaluation, 27 respondents from the professional public – 10 representatives of faculties, 15 representatives of the CPI, 1 representative of the Institute of Education, 1 representative of the promoter of supplementary qualifications – were included in the sample, while the focus group included the following 6 stakeholders: two (2) representatives of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational and Technical Education, two (2) representatives of SQAA and two (2) representatives of the Expert Commission of the National Coordination Point (NCP) SQF-EQF. Representatives of the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education and representatives of the Expert Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Adult Education were also invited to the focus group, but the latter were not able to attend.

The stakeholders were selected according to their field of activity, in order to record the decisions of the decision-making body regarding the preparation of programs for different types of education or qualifications, from general, vocational to higher education, and vocational and advanced qualifications.

A summary of methodological characteristics of the survey is presented in Table 37.

Table 37: A summary of the methodological characteristics of the survey

Measuring instrument	Methodological data	
Semi-structured interview	Sample size	27 interviewees
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	Personal interview
	Method of data processing	Qualitative (coding of interviewees' answers, creation of categories)
Focus group	Sample size	1 group, a total of 6 respondents
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	Personal interview
		Qualitative (coding of interviewees' answers, creation of categories)
Questionnaire (general public)	Sample size	270 persons
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	A combination of an online survey and a physical questionnaire
	Method of data processing	Quantitative methods (basic descriptive methods)
Questionnaire (expert public)	Sample size	50 persons
	Type of sample	Non-randomized purpose sample
	Method of data collection	Online survey
	Method of data processing	Quantitative methods (basic descriptive methods)

10. KEY FINDINGS

This section summarizes the key findings of the evaluation regarding the recognition, use and understanding of the SQF Register by the general and professional public.

1 RECOGNITION OF THE SQF REGISTER BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Of the respondents who are familiar with the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (SQF) (65.9%), about two-thirds are also familiar with the SQF Register, which is one fifth (20.7%) of all respondents.

Of the respondents (n = 56) who are familiar with the SQF Register, more than half know the SQF Register from websites web pages, and just over a quarter got to know the SQF Register through a presentation at an event or someone told them about it.

Respondents who are familiar with the SQF Register are usually aware that the SQF Register is available on the SQF website (www.nok.si), but they are less aware of the benefits of the SQF Register as 30% of respondents are not aware of the benefits of the SQF Register.

The SQF Register is not yet sufficiently well known to the general public, only a good fifth (21.4%) of respondents attribute recognition to the Register, while a third of respondents are undecided (32.1%), but more than two-fifths of respondents (42.9%) do not attribute public recognition to the Register.

From the data obtained, it can be concluded that the level of awareness of the SQF Register among the studied general public is low five years after its establishment, as four-fifths of the Slovenian respondents are not yet familiar with it.

2 USE OF THE SQF REGISTER BY THE GENERAL AND PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC

General public

Of the respondents who are familiar with the SQF Register (n = 56), more than four- fifths also use the SQF Register: most frequently once or several times (34.5%), about a quarter annually, less than a fifth monthly, the fewest (3.6%) weekly.

Those who use the SQF Register usually attribute it easier access to information on education and training, as two thirds of respondents did. Similarly, respondents attribute clarity and transparency of the country's qualification system to the SQF Register. 62.2% of respondents believe that the descriptions of the individual qualifications in the SQF Register are presented in a clear and comprehensible manner. Respondents attributed to the same share the provision of relevant information on learning outcomes for each professional (vocational) field for the SQF Register. 64.4% of respondents believe that the types of qualifications in the SQF Register are presented in a clear and comprehensible manner. According to users, the SQF Register defines transparency and user-friendliness, which facilitates better understanding and comparison of Slovenian qualifications with foreign (EU) ones and quick search for desired qualifications, emphasizing that there are more than half of these users who have these characteristics, but they attribute them to the SQF Register.

Those respondents who use the SQF Register (users) use it for the following purposes: most frequently to provide information about their existing qualifications (80%), more than half use it for their work and for their own education and further training purposes, but least for mobility purposes (27.3%).

Those respondents who do not use the SQF Register (non-users) would use the SQF for the following purposes: more than half (52.2%) of respondents would use it to provide information on their existing qualifications, 43.9% for their own education and training purposes, 35.3% for their work and one third for mobility.

Respondents also gave their opinion on the priorities of individual functions of the SQF Register for its further development. The highest priority (59%) was attributed to the promotion of the SQF Register in order to be known to the widest possible public in Slovenia. More than half (52.4%) believe that the SQF Register plays an important supporting role in the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia. Less than half of the respondents (45%) attach high priority to the archiving of qualifications, i.e. to the monitoring of both existing qualifications and those that can no longer be acquired in current education and training programmes. With the lowest priority (38%), respondents agreed that the SQF Register should be separated for individual groups of end- users (high school students/higher education students, educational institutions, employers and human resources services).

From the data obtained, it can be concluded that the level of awareness of the SQF Register among the studied general public is relatively low. Nevertheless, respondents using the SQF Register indicate that it generally facilitates access to information on education and training, provides a clear and transparent overview of the country's qualifications system, provides relevant information on the learning outcomes of qualifications and clearly presents the types of qualifications.

The SQF Register is primarily used to provide information on existing qualifications, for the needs of one's own education and training and for the needs of work practise and, to a lesser extent, for mobility purposes.

In the further development of the SQF Register, priority should be given to its promotion and use in the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia.

Professional public

The majority of respondents, 82.5%, use the SQF Register, while the percentage of key stakeholders interviewed is lower, at 59.3%. The differences in the answers can be attributed to the method of interviewing, which was mostly conducted online for the general public. The most frequent use of the SQF Register by the stakeholders is annually (30%) or once or several times (27.5%), a good fifth use it monthly and very rarely (2.5%) weekly.

Respondents who have used the SQF Register at least once often attribute it to transparency and ease of use as well as to easier access to information on education and training. More than 70% of users attribute it to a clear and transparent presentation of the qualification system in the country and to the clarity and comprehensibility of the description of the individual qualifications. More than 60% of users indicate that they can quickly find the qualifications they are looking for in the SQF Register (and that the user has a good user experience), that the types of qualifications are presented in a clear and understandable way and that the qualifications in the SQF Register provide relevant information on learning outcomes for each professional (vocational) field. More than half of the users also believe that the SQF Register allowss a better understanding and comparison of Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications.

Those respondents who use the SQF Register (users) use it for the following purposes: most frequently to provide information on existing qualifications, to gain an insight into the qualification structure in a specific professional field and to carry out their work (e.g. issuing publicly valid documents, preparing diploma annexes) The first step is to draw up an opinion on supplementary qualifications, enter the qualification in the Register), followed by the application for the needs of career counseling and professional development, and the application for the needs of mobility. The SQF Register is used less frequently for the design of its own education and training programs. qualifications, for the comparability of qualifications (programmes and their components) and for the renewal of qualifications (training programmes).

On the other hand, the SQF Register is not used for the mobility of high- school students, higher education students or workers going abroad, nor for the rec-

ognition of foreign national qualifications in Slovenia or Slovenian qualifications abroad. According to the respondents, there are two reasons for this: (a) the international mobility of students is regulated by previous inter-institutional agreements with foreign institutions, which makes the use of the SQF Register for mobility purposes unnecessary, and (b) an education or study programme is used for the recognition of qualifications of foreign citizens in Slovenia, which contains more information than the description of a qualification in the SQF Register.

Respondents also gave their opinion on the priorities of individual functions of the SQF Register for its further development, with the highest priority being given to all functions. The highest priority (64.9%) was given to the recognition function, and therefore the SQF Register could be used to a greater extent to support the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia. This is followed by a function for archiving qualifications (51.4%), which refers to the need to monitor both existing qualifications and qualifications that can no longer be acquired in current education and training programmes.[14] Less than half of the respondents (45.9%) attach high priority to promoting the SQF Register, and 43.2% consider that the SQF Register should be separated for individual end-user groups (high-school students/ higher education students, educational institutions, employers and human resources services).

In order to improve the functionality of the SQF Register and remove the barriers faced by users, 10 (37.0%) respondents suggested the following Register improvements and additions:

- two recommendations are most frequently made: (a) the SQF Register should allow keyword searches, not only for professional or scientific titles; (b) it is necessary to keep the data up to date as some of the qualification data are inaccurate, outdated and therefore misleading.
- Advanced search in the SQF Register replaces basic (advanced search as "default"), enables the selection (and display of qualifications) of several qualification levels at once, enables the selection of several performers of a specific qualification at once, enables the search for "old" qualifications and processes the printing of forms and certificates for supplementary qualifications.

From the data obtained, it can be summarized that the use of the SQF Register is widespread among the professional public, but is rare, as it is most frequently used by the latter only once a year or several times a year. Stakeholders using the SQF Register indicate that the overwhelming majority of them provide a clear and transparent presentation of the qualification system in the country, a clear and comprehensible presentation of the descriptions of individual qualifications, a quick search for desired qualifications, relevant information on the learning outcomes of qualifications and a better understanding and comparison of Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications.

14 The function of archiving qualifications of the SQF register does not include pre-Bologna and older programs.

From the data obtained, it can be summarized that the use of the SQF Register is widespread among the professional public, but is rare, as it is most frequently used by the latter only once a year or several times a year. Stakeholders using the SQF Register indicate that the overwhelming majority of them provide a clear and transparent presentation of the qualification system in the country, a clear and comprehensible presentation of the descriptions of individual qualifications, a quick search for desired qualifications, relevant information on the learning outcomes of qualifications and a better understanding and comparison of Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications.

3 UNDERSTANDING OF THE SQF REGISTER BY THE PROFESSIONAL PUBLIC

Respondents using the SQF Register generally rated the user experience as good. They attach great importance to the Register, a good user experience and a pleasant overall design of the website. In relation to the SQF Register, one respondent warns that users are driven by the same learning outcomes behind some of the different qualification titles, which is not a problem for the SQF Register, but for the description of learning outcomes in education and study programs leading to qualifications, and for the qualifications system itself.

Respondents consider the SQF Register to be transparent. Two respondents point to a transparent and useful fan, the third stresses that no major changes to the SQF Register are needed and the fourth stresses the need for greater exposure to national vocational qualifications (NVQ), particularly because of the terminology which is difficult for users to understand.

Compulsory elements for the description of qualifications in the SQF Register are in most cases not relevant; they are relevant and understandable. Only two respondents expressed some concerns: that the class and type of qualification are very similar and difficult to distinguish and that educational pathways should be better identified.

Respondents express little criticism of the recording of learning outcomes in the SQF Register and they generally welcome them. However, they expressed some individual opinions and described some obstacles:

- It is necessary to harmonize terminology or to prepare a terminology dictionary;
- In some cases it is hindered by the inconsistency of learning outcomes and occupational standards;
- It would be good to harmonize the number of competences listed in the description of qualifications;
- Periodic updating of descriptions is required.

Two suggestions were made for improving the understanding of the SQF Register: (1) The advanced search engine of the SQF Register should contain a

reference to the classification of qualifications in the ISCED classification; (2) information on the contractor should be added at the beginning of the qualification description.

From the obtained data we can conclude that the understanding of the SQF Register among the professional public is good: The SQF Register is assessed as a transparent system, the components of the description of qualifications are generally well understood and the descriptions of learning outcomes are usually sufficient to represent the qualification.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the evaluation, we can summarize the following recommendations for the SQF Register management:

1 Over the next five years, more efforts should be made to inform and promote the SQF Register, both among professional and general public.

2 The website www.nok.si should highlight the opportunities and benefits that the SQF Register offers to the general and professional public:

- General public:
  - The SQF Register can play an important supporting role in providing information on existing qualifications in the country;
  - The SQF Register can play an important supporting role in making decisions on continuing education and training;
  - The SQF Register plays an important supporting role in the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia;
  - The SQF Register plays an important supporting role in decisions on the mobility of high-school students, higher education students or employees going abroad.
- Professional public:
  - The SQF Register can play an important supporting role in designing new or updating existing education and training programs or training programs or qualifications;
  - The SQF Register can play an important supporting role in comparability and renewal of qualifications;
  - The SQF Register can play an important supporting role in career counseling and professional development of employees.

3 Some functionalities of the SQF Register should be improved:

- possibility of searching by keywords, not only by the name of the qualification (professional or scientific title);
- there is an urgent need to update the data (at a fixed time interval) in

order not to make the qualification data inaccurate and outdated and thus misleading (the SQF Register should connect to existing electronic databases in the field of education, e.g. eVŠ, NRP, MIZŠ);

- the creation of an »archive« of qualifications: in addition to monitoring existing qualifications, it is also necessary to monitor qualifications that can no longer be acquired in current education and training programmes;
- an indication of the placement of qualifications into the ISCED classification.
- a terminological dictionary of all terms covered by the SQF Register should be published on the www.nok.si website.

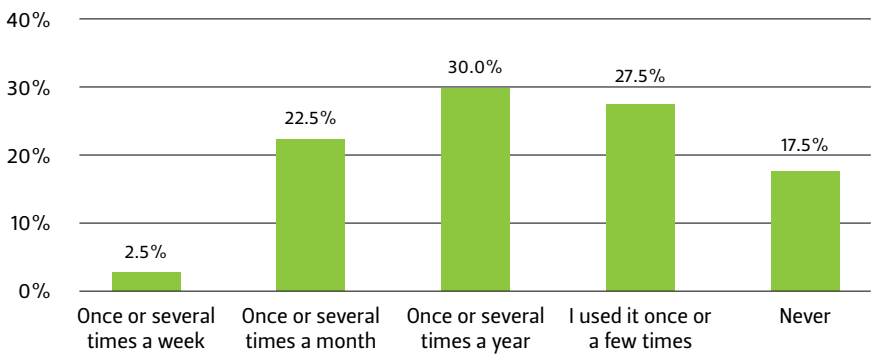
12. PRESENTATION OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

12.1. Professional public

USE OF THE SQF REGISTER

Most respondents (82.5%) use the SQF Register (Figure 1), most frequently annually (30%) or have used it once or several times (27.5%). Respondents who use the register monthly (once or more than once a month) account for 22.5%, and rarely (2.5%) do respondents use it weekly (once or more than once a week).

Graph 1: Frequency distribution of answers to the question "How often do you use the SQF Register?" (n = 40)



Respondents who have used the SQF Register at least once often attribute it to transparency and ease of use (M=3.81) as well as to easier access to information on education and training (M=3,77). More than 70% of users of the SQF Register attribute it to a clear and transparent presentation of the qualification system in the country (3.68%) and to the clarity and comprehensibility of the description of the individual qualifications (3.52%).

More than 60% of respondents state that they can quickly find the qualifications they are looking for in the SQF Register (M = 3.50), that the types of qualifications in the SQF Register are presented in a clear and understandable way (M = 3.48) and that the qualifications in the SQF Register provide relevant information on knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (vocational) field (M = 3.42).

Very few respondents (M = 3.26) attribute the SQF Register the possibility of better understanding Slovenian qualifications and comparing them with foreign (EU) qualifications, but more than half (54.8%) of the respondents using the SQF register agree with the above.

Table 38: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring usability of the SQF Register

	N	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF Register is transparent and easy to use.	31	**3.81**	0.0%	0.0%	22.6%	41.9%	29.0%	6.5%
The SQF Register provides easier access to information on education and training.	31	**3.77**	3.2%	0.0%	12.9%	35.5%	38.7%	9.7%
The SQF Register provides a clear and transparent view of the country's qualifications system.	31	**3.68**	3.2%	3.2%	12.9%	35.5%	35.5%	9.7%
The types of qualifications are clearly and understandably presented in the SQF Register.	31	**3.48**	3.2%	0.0%	19.4%	51.6%	16.1 %	9.7%
The descriptions of each qualification are clearly and understandably presented.	31	**3.52**	3.2%	0.0%	6.5%	58.1%	19.4%	12.9%
I quickly find the qualifications I am searching for in the SQF Register.	30	**3.50**	3.3%	0.0%	23.3%	40.0%	23.3%	10.0%
Qualifications in the SQF Register, in my opinion, provide relevant information on the knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (technical) field.	31	**3.42**	3.2%	3.2%	22.6%	41.9%	19.4%	9.7%
The SQF Register enables me to better understand and compare Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications (EU).	31	**3.26**	3.2%	9.7%	22.6%	38.7%	16.1 %	9.7%

The answers to the questions relating to the purposes of using the SQF Register were offered to all respondents, representatives of the key stakeholders. Respondents who had previously indicated that they used the SQF Register (at

least once) (users) were asked about the purposes for which they use the SQF Register (Table 39); respondents who had previously indicated that they do not use the register (non-users) were asked about the purposes for which they would use the SQF Register.[15] [1]

The users the most commonly use the SQF Register are to inform them about their existing qualifications (M = 3.74), while almost one third (61.3%) use the register for their work (M = 3.55). This is followed by users who use the SQF Register for career counseling and professional development purposes (M = 3.06), and to a lesser extent (for a good third of the respondents), the SQF Qualifications Register is used for mobility needs (M = 2.74). The SQF Register is used less frequently for designing one's own education and training programmes (M = 2.55), as only a quarter of the respondents (25.8%) use it for this purpose. The SQF Register is least frequently used by key stakeholders for the needs of their own education and training (M = 2.19).

Table 39: Frequency distribution of responses and average approval rate among the SQF users for points related to the purpose of using the SQF Register

	N	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I use the SQF Register at my work.	31	**3.55**	9.7%	9.7%	16.1 %	29.0%	32.3%	3.2%
I use the SQF Register for my own education and training purposes.	31	**2.19**	32.3%	29.0%	19.4%	9.7%	6.5%	3.2%
I use the SQF Register to be informed about existing qualifications.	31	**3.74**	6.5%	6.5%	12.9%	38.7%	32.3%	3.2%
I use the SQF Register for mobility needs.	31	**2.74**	16.1 %	19.4%	22.6%	25.8%	9.7%	6.5%
I use the SQF Register for career counseling and professional development.	31	**3.06**	16.1 %	12.9%	22.6%	29.0%	16.1 %	3.2%
The SQF Register helps me to design my own education and training programme or qualifications	31	**2.55**	25.8%	22.6%	22.6%	12.9%	12.9%	3.2%

Among other purposes for using the Register, respondents noted:

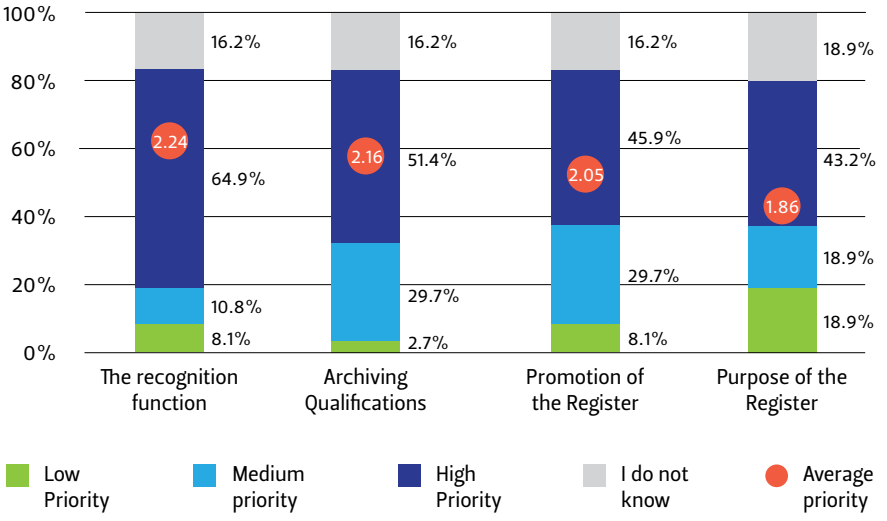
- in issuing publicly valid documents,
- in issuing certificates,
- in comparing qualifications with those gained abroad,
- in preparation of the Diploma Supplements,
- in advising and informing to other natural and legal persons, and
- for the work needs in the professional development of the participants.

15 Due to the small number of respondents who did not use the SQF Register who answered the question about the purpose of using the SQF Register, the interpretation of the results is not meaningful and is therefore not presented.

We also asked the respondents about the priority of individual functions of the SQF Register for its further development. Respondents assigned a priority to each of these functions on a 3-step scale, choosing between low, medium, or high priority options, or choosing the answer "I do not know" if they did not have enough information to assign a specific function to a particular function (Graph 2).

As can be seen from Graph 2, the respondents most often attributed high priority to all functions and rarely considered the functions of the Register to be low priority. Responders have given the highest priority (2.24%) to the recognition function, and therefore the SQF Register could be used to a greater extent to support the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia, namely 64.9% of respondents attributed high priority to this function. This is followed by a function of archiving qualifications, which refers to the need to monitor both existing qualifications and those that are no longer available in current education and training programs (M = 2.16) and the need for archiving was given high priority by more than half of the respondents (51.4%). Less than half of the respondents (45.9%) ascribe a high priority to the promotion of the SQF Register (M = 2.05), in the sense that more importance should be given to the promotion of the SQF Register in order to be known by the widest Slovenian public, slightly less than for a third of the respondents (29.7%), the promotion of the SQF Register is of medium priority. On average, the lowest priority is attributed to the purpose of the SQF Register (M = 1.86), with 43.2% of respondents attributing high priority to the view that the SQF Register should be separated for individual groups of end-users – students, educational institutions, employers and human resources; just under one-fifth (18.9%) attribute medium priority to this function and an equally high percentage (18.9%) attribute low priority to it.

Graph 2: Frequency distribution of responses and average rate of the priority of each SQF function for its further development (n=37)



12.2. General public

RECOGNITION OF THE SQF REGISTER

Of those respondents who have already heard of the SQF (n = 85), about two thirds of those who had previously stated that they were familiar with the SQF (65.9%) or one fifth (20.7%) of all respondents answered the question "Are you familiar with the SQF Register?". Of the respondents (n = 56) who state that they are familiar with the SQF, more than half (55.4%) know the SQF from the Internet, slightly more than a quarter (26.8%) have heard about the SQF through presentations at an event and an equal proportion (26.8%) have learned about the SQF Register through another person. Social networks do not play a significant role as a source of recognition for the SQF Register, as the respondents who found out about it in this way are in the minority (5.4%). Other ways to familiarize oneself with the SQF register are mentioned by respondents as the type of work the respondent does (3.6%) and the ENIC-NARIC centre (1.8%), but other sources, such as social networks, are not an important source of familiarizing with the SQF Register (Table 6).

Table 40: Frequency distribution of answers to the question "Where do you know the SQF Register from?" (n = 56)

Sources of recognition of the sqf register	f	%
online	31	55.4%
someone told me about it	15	26.8%
presentation at an event	15	26.8%
social networks	3	5.4%
other sources:	*2*	*3.6%*
occupation	2	3.6%
ENIC-NARIC centre	1	1.8%

Respondents who are familiar with the SQF Register (n = 56) usually know that the SQF Register can be found on the Slovenian Qualifications Framework website www.nok.si (M = 4.11) and they are less familiar with the advantages of the SQF Register (M = 3.13), as 43% of respondents said that they know the advantages of the SQF Register, while 30% do not know the advantages. A low level of agreement exists in the view that the SQF Register is not yet sufficiently well known to the general public (M=2.63), only a good fifth (21.4%) of respondents attribute recognition to the Register, while a third of respondents are undecided (32.1%), but more than two-fifths of respondents (42.9%) do not attribute public recognition to the Register (Table 41).

Table 41: Frequency distribution of responses and average agreement rate for points measuring general knowledge of the SQF Register (n = 56)

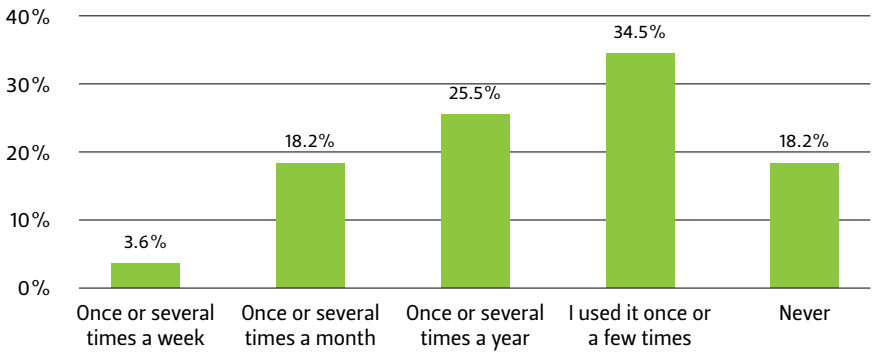
	M	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF Register is, in my opinion, recognized by the public.	**2.63**	16.1 %	26.8%	32.1%	19.6%	1.8%	3.6%
I am well aware of the advantages of the SQF Register.	**3.13**	7.1%	23.2 %	25.0%	35.7%	7.1%	1.8%
I am aware that the SQF Register is available from the Slovenian Qualifications Framework website at www.nok.si	**4.11**	5.4%	0.0%	8.9%	48.2%	35.7%	1.8%

USE OF THE SQF REGISTER

Questions on the use of the SQF Register were answered by respondents who had previously indicated that they were familiar with the SQF Register (n = 56).

Of those respondents who are familiar with the SQF Register, about four fifths (81.8%) actually use the Register. The most frequent use of the SQF Register is one or more times (34.5%), and about a quarter (25.5%) use the Register on an annual basis (once or more times per year). Respondents who would use the Register on a monthly basis (once or several times a month) are represented in less than a fifth (18.2%), and rarely (3.6%) do respondents use it on a weekly basis (once or several times a week) (Graph 3).

Graph 3: Frequency distribution of answers to the question "How often do you use the SQF Register?" (n = 55)



Respondents who stated that they use the SQF Register at least annually (n = 45 or 81.8% of those who are familiar with the SQF Register) were also asked about the usefulness of the usefulness of the SQF, expressed on a 5-point Likert agreement scale, where a rating of 1 means that they strongly disagree with that statement, and a rating of 5 means that they completely agree with the statement.

Table 42 shows the frequency distribution of responses for individual points to measure the usefulness of the SQF Register, and Graph 4 shows the individual SQF Register rankings according to the degree to which respondents assign them to the SQF Register.

Thus, Graph 4 shows that respondents using the SQF Register attribute to it the most readily available information on education and training (M = 3.8). Two-thirds of the respondents using the Register state that the SQF Register facilitates their access to information on education and training. Similarly, respondents attribute clarity and transparency of the country's qualification system to the SQF Register (M=3.8). Fewer respondents believe that the descriptions of the individual qualifications are presented clearly and comprehensibly in the SQF Register (M = 3.7), but there is still a high proportion of those who attribute the clarity and comprehensibility of the presentation of the description of the individual qualifications to the Register (62.2%). Respondents attributed to the same share the provision of relevant information on knowledge, competencies and learning outcomes for each professional (vocational) field for the SQF Register (M=3.7). Although slightly more respondents (64.4%) think that the types of qualifications are clearly and intelligently presented in the SQF Register, however, more respondents disagree (13.3%). According to some users (M=3.6), the SQF Register defines transparency and user-friendliness, which facilitates better understanding and comparison of Slovenian qualifications with foreign (EU) ones and quick search for desired qualifications, emphasizing that there are more than half of these users who have these characteristics, but they attribute them to the SQF Register.

Graph 4: Frequency distribution of positive responses measuring usability of the SQF Register (n = 45)

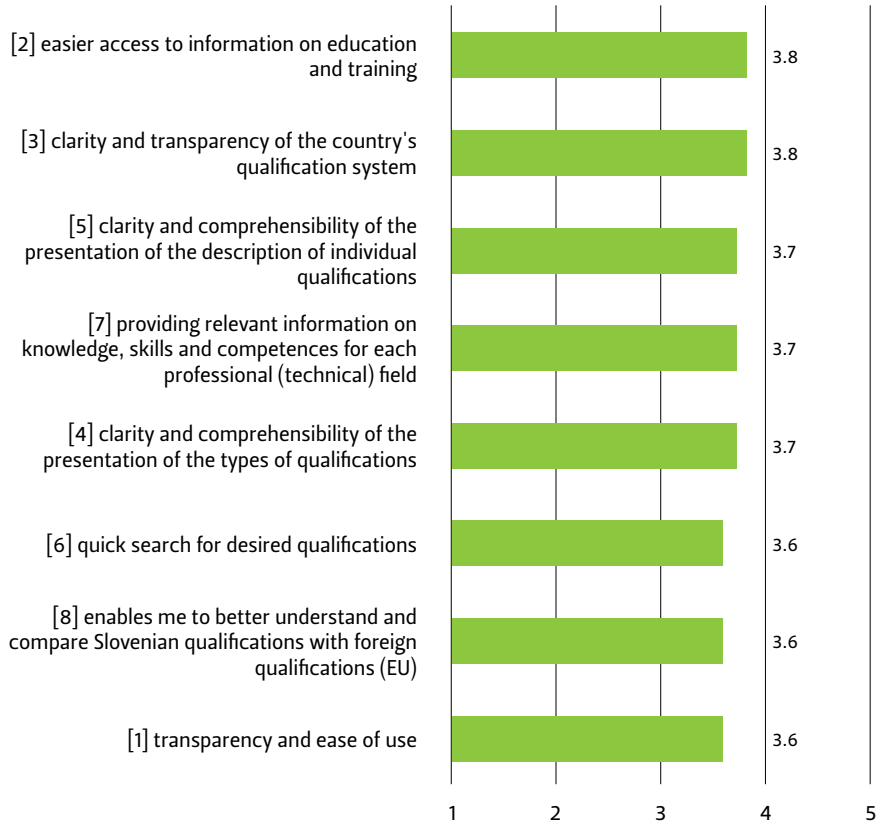


Table 42: Frequency distribution of responses for points measuring usability of the SQF Register (n = 45)

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
[1] The SQF Register is transparent and easy to use.	2.2%	8.9%	24.4%	44.4%	8.9%	11.1%
[2] The SQF Register provides easier access to information on education and training.	0.0%	6.7%	17.8%	51.1%	15.6%	8.9%
[3] The SQF Register provides a clear and transparent view of the country's qualifications system.	0.0%	6.7%	22.2%	48.9%	15.6%	6.7%
[4] The types of qualifications are clearly and understandably presented in the SQF Register.	0.0%	13.3%	15.6%	53.3%	11.1%	6.7%
[5] The descriptions of each qualification are clearly and understandably presented.	0.0%	6.7%	22.2%	51.1%	11.1%	8.9%
[6] I quickly find the qualifications I am searching for in the SQF Register.	0.0%	13.3%	17.8%	53.3%	8.9%	6.7%
[7] Qualifications in the SQF Register, in my opinion, provide relevant information on the knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (technical) field.	0.0%	11.1%	15.6%	53.3%	8.9%	11.1%
[8] The SQF Register enables me to better understand and compare Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications (EU).	0.0%	11.4%	22.7 %	47.7%	9.1%	9.1%

The answers to the questions relating to the purposes of using the SQF Register were offered to all respondents, representatives of the general public (n=271). Respondents who had previously indicated that they used the SQF Register (at least once) (users) were asked about the purposes for which they use the SQF Register; respondents who had previously indicated that they do not know or do not use the register (non-users) were asked about the purposes for which they would use the SQF Register.

Existing users of the SQF Register use it most frequently to obtain information on existing qualifications (80%) and more than half of the existing users (56.8%) use the Register in their work. These are followed by users who use the Register for their own education and training needs (54.5%). The SQF Register is used at least for mobility purposes, with only a quarter of the users (27.3%) using the Register for this purpose (Table 43).

Non-users of the SQF Register are most likely to recognize its potential if they are informed about existing qualifications, as more than half (52.2%) of respondents who do not use the SQF state that they would use the Register for this purpose. These are followed by users who would use the Register for their own education and training needs (43.9%). To a lesser extent, non-users of the SQF Register recognize its potential for use in their work (35.3%) and for mobility needs (33.9%).

It is noteworthy that there is a high proportion of non-users of the SQF Register who do not have sufficient information on the content of the question to give their consent.

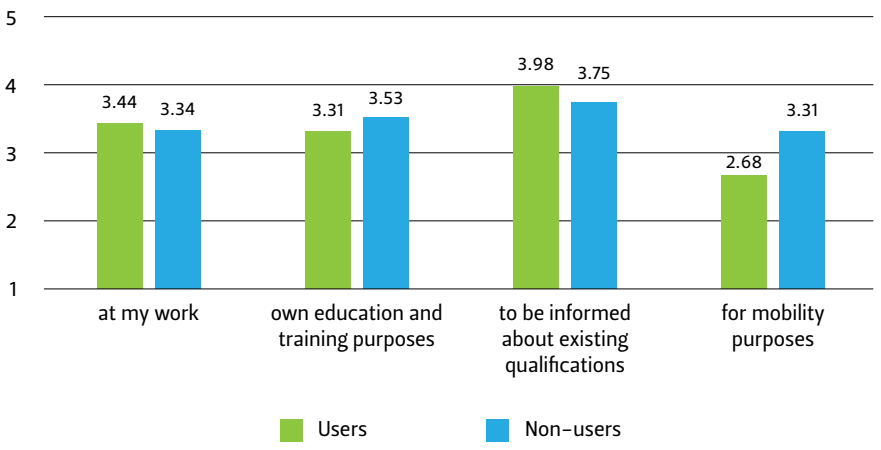
Table 43: Frequency distribution of answers for points related to the purposes of using the SQF Register (n = 269)

I use/would use the SQF Register for:	N	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
at my work							
users	44	6.8%	15.9%	13.6%	43.2%	13.6%	6.8%
non-users	224	3.1%	9.4%	20.5%	31.7%	3.6%	31.7%
own education and training purposes							
users	44	4.5%	22.7 %	13.6%	47.7%	6.8%	4.5%
non-users	224	3.1%	7.1%	17.9%	35.7%	8.0%	28.1%
to be informed about existing qualifications							
users	45	0.0%	2.2%	13.3%	64.4%	15.6%	4.4%
non-users	224	2.7%	4.0%	13.8%	40.6%	11.6%	27.2%
for mobility purposes							
users	44	15.9%	29.5%	18.2%	22.7 %	4.5%	9.1%
non-users	224	4.5%	10.7%	18.3%	27.2%	6.7%	32.6%

users - respondents who have previously indicated that they have used the SQF Register at least once; non-users - respondents who do not know or do not use the SQF Register.

The comparison of the average approval ratings (excluding respondents who were not able to answer – "I do not know") shows that there are some differences between the group of users and non-users of the SQF Register (Graph 5). Namely, that existing users use the Register get familiar with the existing qualifications (M = 3.98) to a greater extent than the non-users indicate that they would use it (M = 3.75). Likewise, the potential of using the Register for non-users in their work (M = 3.34) is recognized to a lesser extent than the actual use of the Register for this purpose (M = 3.44). On the other hand, non-users (M = 3.31) recognize the potential to use the SQF Register for mobility needs to a far greater extent than the actual use of the Register by existing users for this purpose (M = 2.68). There are also differences in the use of the SQF Register for the needs of their own education and training, with existing users using the SQF Register to a lesser extent (M = 3.31) than the potential of its use (M = 3.53) is recognized by non-users).

Graph 5: Frequency distribution of answers for points related to the purposes of using the SQF Register between users and non-users (n = 269)

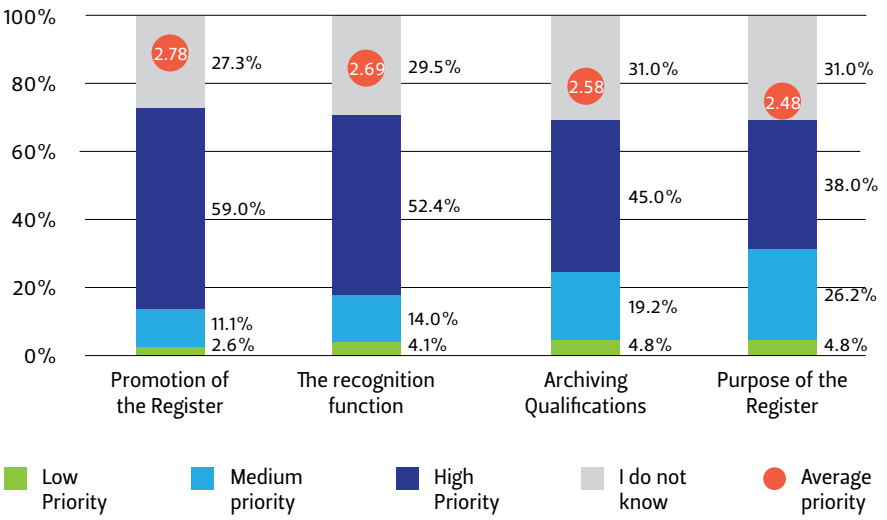


The respondents were asked whether they were familiar with the SQF Register on the priority of individual functions of the SQF Register for its further development. Respondents assigned a priority to each of these functions on a 3-step scale, choosing between low, medium, or high priority options, or choosing the answer "I do not know" if they did not have enough information to assign a specific function to a particular function (Graph 6).

As can be seen from Graph 6, the respondents most often attributed high priority to all functions and rarely considered the functions of the Register to be low priority. The relatively high proportion (approximately 30% for each of the functions considered) of respondents has insufficient information to determine the priority of each function.

The highest priority is given by respondents to the promotion of the Register (M = 2.78), so that more emphasis would have to be placed on promoting the SQF Register in order to make it known to a wider public, with 59% of respondents giving this function a high priority. This is followed by the recognition function (M = 2.69), with more than half (52.4%) of the respondents indicating that the SQF Register has a high priority in supporting the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia. Less than half of the respondents (45%) attribute the archiving of qualifications in the sense that both existing qualifications and qualifications that cannot be acquired in current education and training programs (traceability of all qualifications) should be monitored in the SQF Register as a priority, while a quarter of the respondents rate the qualification as medium (19.2%) or low priority (4.8%). On average, the lowest priority is attributed to the purpose of the SQF Register (M = 2.48), with 38% of respondents attributing high priority to the view that the SQF Register should be separated for individual groups of end-users – students, educational institutions, employers and human resources; just under one-fifth (26.2%) attribute medium priority to this function and an equally high percentage (4.8%) attribute low priority to it.

Graph 6: Frequency distribution of responses and average rate of the priority of each SQF function for its further development (n=271)



13. PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

13.1. Focus groups: understanding of the SQF Register

Eight respondents state that they are familiar with the Register. The SQF Register is generally well evaluated by the respondents. They attach great informative importance to the Register (2 respondents), a good user experience (4) and a pleasant overall design of the website (2). One respondent praises the good work of the Register's administrators, and the last respondent warns that users are driven by the same learning outcomes behind some of the different qualification titles, which is not a problem for the SQF Register, but of the qualifications system itself.

Table 44: Answer Analysis – Understanding of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Good user experience	Familiarity	*I am familiar with it.*	8
Information value	Good user experience Accessibility	*Great user experience.* *I can find what I am looking for.* *It is accessible.*	4
Good overall design	Information usefulness Clarity	*Information usefulness is great.* *I find it transparent and fine*	2
Good job of caretakers	Elegant web design	*I like the design of the Register... I like the good overall design of the website*	2
Different learning outcomes with the same titles	Good job of caretakers	*CPI is well maintained.*	1
Različni učni izidi z istimi nazivi	The user is shunned by the same learning outcomes behind different titles	*If you look at the electrician profile, for example, schooling lasts four years, but has the same learning outcomes as the three-year schooling.*	1

Respondents consider the Register to be transparent, two of them point to a transparent and useful network model, the third emphasizes that no major changes are needed. One respondent added: "This network model is used by everyone. For example, when deciding on scholarships, in tenders, in raising education levels, in a non-formal education and training projects. This makes it more transparent. We have noticed that it is used by staff at the employment process. Because the old structure exists and they can be positioned according to the SQF. "This network model together with the qualification table is a question of the frame itself and not of the Register, but such an answer is understandable as they are also the basis for the creation of the Register. However, the last respondent would like to see a greater focus on the NVQ, particularly because of the terminology which is difficult for users to understand.

Table 45: Answer Analysis – Understanding of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Transparency	Adequate transparency Network model transparent	*I think the transparency is adequate* *Network model is a good solution* *The table places transparently*	2
Usability	Network model useful Used by human resources	*This network model is used by everyone ... for example, when deciding on scholarships, in tenders, in raising education levels, in a non-formal education and training projects*	2
No changes are needed	Good register	*The Register seems good to me... there is no need for making big changes*	1
To clarify terminology	The lay public finds the terminology difficult to understand	*The technical terms must be well explained to the lay public... there is no increased exposure of the NVQ.*	1

The mandatory components for the description of qualifications do not give cause for concern, as only three respondents identified this problem. The first confirms that the class and type of qualification are very similar, which should be taken into account in the future. The second respondent judged the components of the parts to be appropriate, as did the third, who wanted better ways of education.

Table 46: Answer Analysis – Understanding of the SQF register

Kategorija	Kode	Primeri citatov	f
Category	Codes	*Examples of quotes*	1
Similarity between the class and the type of qualification	Class and type of qualification are very similar	*Class and type of qualification seem very similar*	1
Relevant components	Relevant components	*To me personally, they are relevant components for education.*	1
Pathways to education	Demonstrating how to get an education	*To be able to get the same education. Career path. A comprehensive insight.*	

Respondents express little criticism of the recording of learning outcomes in the SQF Register and they were generally welcomed. However, they expressed some individual opinions and described some obstacles:

- Employers are not interested in competencies; the learning outcomes are more comprehensible and useful to them (2);
- It is necessary to harmonize terminology or to prepare a terminology dictionary (2);
- Learning outcomes are useful in separating qualifications with similar titles (1);
- In some cases it is hindered by the inconsistency of learning outcomes and occupational standards (1);
- It would be good to harmonize the number of competences listed on forms (1);
- A more general description of learning outcomes has a more lasting value (1);
- Periodic updating of descriptions is required (1).

Table 47: Answer Analysis – Understanding of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Uniform terminology	Learning outcomes do not conform to the professional standard	*The learning outcomes in the register are not up to the professional standard … we have a competency-based document, there is no such thing in the learning outcomes.*	2
	The terminology is not uniform.	*The terminology is not uniform … it would be nice to have a glossary.*	
Learning outcomes are useful in separating qualifications with similar titles	Learning outcomes to assist advisers at the Employment Service of Slovenia to distinguish between qualifications with similar titles	*These are important learning outcomes so that they can distinguish qualifications from one another, because so many different titles exists at the moment*	1
Numerical unification	Quantitatively unified learning outcomes	*We should have a system… for example, a programme has 3 general and 5-7 specific outcomes…*	1
More understandable outcomes for employers	For employers, learning outcomes are more understandable than competencies	*The labor market does not understand competences… the learning outcomes are closer to them*	2
More lasting value of general records	Broader records are more durable in terms of programmes	*The training programme cannot respond directly to the needs of the labour market, so it is better if the descriptions are somewhat broader.*	1
Need for updating	Periodic review and updating required	*The learning outcomes in our country are well established… the methodology has to be reviewed and adjusted every once in a while.*	1

Only two respondents provided an additional opinion on the Register. One noted that the advanced search engine lacked an indication of the placement of qualifications into the ISCED classification. The other, however, expressed his wish that the contractor information should be provided at the beginning of the qualification description.

Table 48: Answer Analysis – Understanding of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
The advanced search engine is missing the ISCED listing	the advanced search engine is missing the ISCED listing	*The advanced search engine is missing the ISCED listing*	1
Contractor information to begin with	Contractor information to begin with	*To consider: should an information of the contractor be noted to start with?*	1

13.2. Interviews: use of the SQF Register

Out of 27 respondents, 16 of them use the SQF Register at work, while 11 do not use the SQF Register. Of those who use the SQF Register in their work, most use the register for various information purposes (8 answers) related to the inspection of the qualification structure, the search for qualifications and advising. Three respondents indicate that they use the Register for the comparability of qualifications (programmes and their components) and for the preparation of different forms (opinions on supplementary qualifications, training programmes, entry of a qualification in the Register). Two respondents use it to upgrade their qualifications and one to describe their learning outcomes.

Table 49: Answer Analysis – Use of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Information	Qualifications	*I use it to find qualifications.*	8
	Credibility of information	*I use it [the SQF Register] because I know it's a credible source of information.*	
	Insights into the vertical structure of qualifications	*I use the register to see the entire vertical of qualifications.*	
	Information	*Every now and then, we take a glimpse at the Register to see what's available.*	
	Advising	*[...] I use it for advising.*	
Comparability of qualifications	Comparability of enrollment conditions and competences	*When comparing enrollment terms, you can look at the competency relatedness to see where you are special.*	3
	Comparability of qualifications and their components	*That some study programmes and components of study programmes that someone else besides us is offering can be quickly compared.*	
Qualification renewal	Qualification changes	*When we make individual changes, then we use the register.*	2
	Updating qualifications	*When updating study programmes.*	
Form preparation	Preparation of opinions on qualification	*I use it when preparing opinions (supplementary qualifications, training programmes).*	3
	Qualification entry in the register	*First, I used it [...] when every new or revised qualification needed to be entered into the Register.*	
Descriptions of learning outcomes	Descriptions of competences or learning outcomes	*I use it to describe competences or learning outcomes.*	1
No use	Is not being used	*We do not use it.*	11

Most respondents (17 answers) appreciate that the SQF Register is transparent and easy to use or simple to operate and provides a good user experience where users can quickly find the qualifications they need. Similarly, most respondents suggesting that the Register should be supplemented consider it to be basically well prepared, while three respondents pointed out that the Register is an opaque and user-friendly portal to use.

In order to improve the functionality of the SQF Register and remove the barriers faced by users, 10 respondents suggested the following Register improvements and additions:

- Two recommendations are most frequently made: (a) the Register should allow keyword searches, not only for professional or scientific titles; (b) it is

necessary to keep the data up to date as some of the qualification data are inaccurate or misleading. The representatives of higher education suggest that the current data on higher education qualifications can be solved by importing the necessary data from the eVŠ database into the SQF Register, while the representative from the field of vocational and technical education points out the need to establish a credible system that provides up-to-date information on (new, previous) education programs and is connected to the SQF.

- Other suggestions, which are made individually, are: the advanced search in the qualifications register should replace the basic search (advanced search as "standard") and be included in the qualifications structure; the selection (and thus the display of qualifications) of several qualification levels at once (e.g. selection of qualifications at levels 7–10); the selection of several operators of a given qualification at the same time; the printing of forms and certificates for supplementary qualifications was initiated ("we had problems printing the certificates [...] because nowhere did it say that the certificate numbers changed, and each time it was opened, the certificate was given a new number"); the entry in the Register on the SQF website is visually more prominent.

Table 50: Answer Analysis – Use of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Good user experience	User friendly portal Good portal	*It is also a user friendly portal.* *Yes, the Register seemed really good to me.*	12
Transparency and simplicity	Transparent and easy to use	*No problem here, the information can be found quickly. Personally, it's easy for me to use.* *The Register is transparent, easy to use.*	5
Opacity	Complicated and opaque to use Design and technical opacity	*The search engine is very complicated and opaque to use.* *Design-technical things are awkwardly done.*	3
Search engine additions	Enable keyword search Replace basic search with advanced search Multiple qualification levels can be selected simultaneously Several contractors can be selected simultaneously Up-to-date data in the Register Edit Form Printing More prominent enter into the Register Edit advanced search for qualification structure	*[...] To search for keywords not only by exact name.* *[...] I would suggest that only advanced search is available.* *[...] To be able to select multiple skill levels simultaneously e.g. from 7-10 levels, excluding others.* *[...] It would also make sense for contractors to be able to choose more.* *[...] That people are not misled with misinformation* *I don't like the way I print, fonts are too large.* *I find the Register entry button very disguised.* *There is no advanced search in the Register tab that would show the qualification structure.*	10
No use	Is not being used	*I do not use it.*	2

Almost all respondents state that they do not use the SQF Register for the mobility of high-school students, higher education students or employees going abroad. In the field of higher education, two respondents pointed out that the SQF, through its link with the EQF, is used for the needs of international (Erasmus) student mobility, while the other respondents in the field of higher education consider that there is no need to use the SQF or the EQF for these purposes, as international (Erasmus) mobility is regulated by prior agreements, i.e. agreements with foreign institutions. At the level of vocational and secondary professional education and training, one respondent pointed out that they use the Register for guidance purposes (when users going abroad call and ask for information on the comparability of their qualifications).

Table 51: Answer Analysis – Use of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Erasmus student mobility	The Erasmus office uses it for student referral	*Used by the Erasmus office or international office to make it easier to refer our students or vice versa.*	2
Advising	Used for advising	*Only at advising, as far as people ask.*	1
No use	Is not being used	*We do not use it.*	24

Almost al respondents agree that they do not use the SQF Register for the purposes of recognizing qualifications of foreign nationals in Slovenia or Slovenian qualifications abroad. In the field of higher education, one of the respondents stressed that the SQF, in addition to the diploma, credit assessment and the scope and duration of studies, "is the basis for conversion". The reasons for this can be found in one of the interviewees respondents, because in these cases, "the study programme is used, but not the description of the qualification in the SQF, because this is not enough for us, we have to see what content is missing in the previous study program, but not only the competences listed in the SOK Register." A similar argument can be found at the level of vocational and secondary professional education and training where an educational programme rather than the SQF Register is used for the recognition of qualifications, as was highlighted by two respondents.

Table 52: Answer Analysis – Use of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
The SQF as a basis for recognition	The SQF as a basis for conversion with the Diploma supplement, credit valuation and duration	*In recognition, the diploma supplement, credit evaluation and study scope, duration are reviewed. The SQF is the basis for conversion.*	1
No use	Is not being used	*We do not use it.*	26

The respondents who gave an additional opinion on the Register, pointed out that the search engine of the Register should be enhanced with additional functions (the possibility to search for "old" qualifications should be added to allow comparison between the two qualifications); records of learning outcomes should be improved and applications for supplementary qualifications should be complemented by a qualification name.

Table 53: Answer Analysis – Use of the SQF register

Category	Codes	Examples of quotes	f
Better records of learning outcomes	Improve learning outcomes records	*[...] Learning outcome is a measurable thing. There [in the Register], however, is described more in terms of competence.*	2
Search for "old" qualifications	Include search for old qualifications to the Register	*To have old programs so that old qualifications can be compared with the new ones.*	1
Comparison between qualifications	Comparison between qualifications	*The Register should allow [...] the option to compare qualifications.*	1
Names on applications for supplementary qualifications	The name of the qualification on the application for supplementary qualification is added	*Just to advise on supplementary qualifications, we would add the name of the qualification to applications.*	1

14. ANNEXES: INSTRUMENT

14.1. Annex 1: Survey – general public

The questionnaire before you is a part of the evaluation study on the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter SQF). The SQF is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualification into levels with regard to learning outcomes. It consists of 10 levels.

The questions in the survey questionnaire mainly relate to the **recognition or use of the SQF Register**.

We kindly ask you to read and answer the following questions and statements carefully so that your evaluation reflects your view of the SQF Register.

The terms used to refer to persons and written in the masculine grammatical form are used as neutral for both the female and male gender.

The survey is anonymous, and it will take you about 5 minutes to complete. The data collected will be treated strictly confidential and analyzed in general (and by no means at the level of individual responses). They will be used exclusively for the purpose of the evaluation study.

3. Socio-demographic characteristics:

   Gender (circle as appropriate): M F

   Age (circle as appropriate):
   15–18 years

   19–25 years

   26–35 years

   36–50 years

   51–65 years

   over 65 years

4. **Highest obtained education** (circle the SQF level appropriately after the selected answer):

Non-completed primary education (certificate of completion of the 7th or 8th grade of elementary school) First-stage of basic education	SQF LEVEL 1
Basic education	SQF LEVEL 2
Short-term vocational education	SQF LEVEL 3
Vocational upper secondary education	SQF LEVEL 4
Technical upper secondary education General upper secondary education	SQF LEVEL 5
Higher vocational, short-term higher education	SQF LEVEL 6
Professional higher education/1st Bologna cycle Academic higher education/1st Bologna cycle Professional higher education (former, pre-Bologna) Specialization after short-term higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 7
Master's education/2nd Bologna cycle Specialization after professional higher education (former, pre-Bologna) Academic education (former, pre-Bologna) Professional higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 8
Master of Science/Art (former, pre-Bologna) Master of Science/Arts according to the Law on Vocational Education Specialization after academic higher education (former, pre-Bologna) Specialisaton after professional higher education according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 9
Doctorate of Science (3rd Bologna level) Doctorate of science (former, pre-Bologna) Doctorate of science according to the Law on Vocational Education	SQF LEVEL 10

3. What is your (current) role while answering the questionnaire? Please choose **ONLY ONE appropriate answer**.
   - ☐ High-school student
   - ☐ Student
   - ☐ Employee
   - ☐ Adult Education Participant
   - ☐ Employer
   - ☐ Representative of the University Career Center
   - ☐ Lifelong Learning Center Representative
   - ☐ NVQ candidate
   - ☐ Career Advisor (ZRSZ)
   - ☐ Job seeker
   - ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Part: recognition of the SQF Register

7. Are you familiar with the Register of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework? (encircle accordingly):
   YES (**complete all questions except 12 b**)
   NO (if your answer is NO**, complete only questions 12 b and 13**)

8. Where you know the SQF Register from (multiple answers are possible)?
   a Someone told me about it. b from the web c from social networks
   d from the presentation at the event. d Other media: _____

9. Please evaluate the extent to which you are familiar with the SQF Register by expressing your agreement with the statements below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do not know" if you do not have enough information to make up your mind.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF Register is, in my opinion, recognized by the public.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I am well aware of the advantages of the SQF Register.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I am aware that the SQF Register is available from the Slovenian Qualifications Framework website at www.nok.si	1	2	3	4	5	0

Part: use of the SQF Register

10. Please rate how often do you use the SQF Register:
    - Once or several times a week
    - Once or several times a month
    - Once or several times a year
    - I used it once or a few times
    - Never (**Complete only questions 12 b and 13**)

11. Please evaluate the usability of the SQF Register by agreeing to the following statements. Rate the claims below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do no know" if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF Register is transparent and easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register provides easier access to information on education and training.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register provides a clear and transparent view of the country's qualifications system.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The types of qualifications are clearly and understandably presented in the SQF Register.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The descriptions of each qualification are clearly and understandably presented.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I quickly find the qualifications I am searching for in the SQF Register.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Qualifications in the SQF Register, in my opinion, provide relevant information on the knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (technical) field.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register enables me to better understand and compare Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications (EU).	1	2	3	4	5	0

12.a Please indicate the purposes for which you are using the SQF Register by agreeing to the following statements. Rate the claims below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do no know" if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I use the SQF Register at my work.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for my own education and training purposes.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register to be informed about existing qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for mobility needs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for:	Other (please specify)					

12.b Please indicate the purposes for which you would use the SQF Register by agreeing to the following statements. Rate the claims below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do no know" if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I would use the SQF Register in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for my own education and training purposes.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register to be informed about existing qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for mobility needs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for:	Other (please specify)					

13. Please evaluate the priority given to each function of the SQF Register for its further development by agreeing to the priority level below. Please rate the priority on a scale of 1 (low priority) to 3 (high priority) respectively or use "I do not know" if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	Low Priority	Medium priority	High Priority	I do not know
Purpose of the Register – The SQF Register should be separated for individual groups of end users: high–school students/ higher education students, educational institutions, employers and human resources services.	1	2	3	0
Archiving Qualifications – Both the existing qualifications and qualifications that can no longer be obtained in current education and training programs (traceability of all qualifications) should be monitored in the SQF Register.	1	2	3	0
Promotion of the Register – more emphasis should be placed on promoting the SQF Register in order to make it known to the wider Slovenian public.	1	2	3	0
Function of recognition – The SQF Register could serve to a greater extent to support the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia.	1	2	3	0

Would you like to let us know anything else?

_____

_____

_____

14.2. Annex 2: Survey –professional public

The questionnaire before you is a part of the evaluation study on the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter SQF). The SQF is a unified system of qualifications in the Republic of Slovenia for the classification of qualification into levels with regard to learning outcomes. It consists of 10 levels.

The questions in the survey questionnaire mainly relate to the **recognition or use of the SQF Register**.

We kindly ask you to read and answer the following questions and statements carefully so that your evaluation reflects your view of the SQF Register.

The terms used to refer to persons and written in the masculine grammatical form are used as neutral for both the female and male gender.

The survey is anonymous, and it will take you about 5 minutes to complete. The data collected will be treated strictly confidential and analyzed in general (and by no means at the level of individual responses). They will be used exclusively for the purpose of the evaluation study.

We kindly ask you to read and answer the following questions and statements carefully so that your evaluation reflects your view of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter SQF) Register. The purpose of the research we are doing with this survey is to evaluate the recognition and use of the Slovenian Qualifications Framework. It will take you a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous.

7. What is your role while answering the questionnaire? Please select the appropriate answer.
   - ☐ Ministry Representative
   - ☐ High-school student organization representative
   - ☐ Higher education student organization representative
   - ☐ High School Representative
   - ☐ Faculty Representative
   - ☐ Representative of career advisers
   - ☐ Other (please specify):
8. Please rate how often do you use the SQF Register:
   - Once or several times a week
   - Once or several times a month
   - Once or several times a year
   - I used it once or a few times
   - Never (**Complete only questions 9b and 10**)

9. Please evaluate the usability of the SQF Register by agreeing to the following statements. Rate the claims below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do no know« if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
The SQF Register is transparent and easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register provides easier access to information on education and training.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register provides a clear and transparent view of the country's qualifications system.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The types of qualifications are clearly and understandably presented in the SQF Register.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The descriptions of each qualification are clearly and understandably presented.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I quickly find the qualifications I am searching for in the SQF Register.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Qualifications in the SQF Register, in my opinion, provide relevant information on the knowledge, skills and competences for each professional (technical) field.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register enables me to better understand and compare Slovenian qualifications with foreign qualifications (EU).	1	2	3	4	5	0

10.a Please indicate the purposes for which you are using the SQF Register by agreeing to the following statements. Rate the claims below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do no know« if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I use the SQF Register at my work.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for my own education and training purposes.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register to be informed about existing qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for mobility needs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for career counseling and professional development.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register helps me to design my own education and training programme or qualifications	1	2	3	4	5	0
I use the SQF Register for:			Other (please specify)			

9.b Please indicate the purposes for which you would use the SQF Register by agreeing to the following statements. Rate the claims below on a scale of 1 (disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), or select "I do no know« if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree	I do not know
I would use the SQF Register in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for my own education and training purposes.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register to be informed about existing qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for mobility needs.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for career counseling and professional development.	1	2	3	4	5	0
The SQF Register would help me to design my own education and training programme or qualifications	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would use the SQF Register for:			Other (please specify)			

10. Please evaluate the priority given to each function of the SQF Register for its further development by agreeing to the priority level below. Please rate the priority on a scale of 1 (low priority) to 3 (high priority) respectively or use »I do not know« if you do not have enough information to make your claim.

	Low Priority	Medium priority	High Priority	I do not know
Purpose of the Register – The SQF Register should be separated for individual groups of end users: high–school students/ higher education students, educational institutions, employers and human resources services.	1	2	3	0
Archiving Qualifications – Both the existing qualifications and qualifications that can no longer be obtained in current education and training programs (traceability of all qualifications) should be monitored in the SQF Register.	1	2	3	0
Promotion of the Register – more emphasis should be placed on promoting the SQF Register in order to make it known to the wider Slovenian public.	1	2	3	0
Function of recognition – The SQF Register could serve to a greater extent to support the recognition of Slovenian qualifications abroad and foreign qualifications in Slovenia.	1	2	3	0

Would you like to let us know anything else?

14.3. Annex 3: Focus group questions

Thematic set: Understanding the SQF Register

1. Do you know the SQF Register and have already used it in your work? If so, what was your user experience? Please clarify.
2. How do you understand the role of the SQF Register in presenting the qualification system in Slovenia? Is there anything missing to be more transparent?
3. How do you evaluate the mandatory components for describing qualifications in the SQF Register enforced by the Slovenian Qualifications Framework Act. Are these relevant and understandable to describe your qualifications? Please clarify.
4. What is your opinion on the recorded learning outcomes, i.e. statements about what is the level of knowledge of the holder of the document within the individual qualification in the SQF Register? How well does the latter present the qualification?
5. Would you add any other information, remark or (positive, negative) criticism of the SQF Register?

14.3. Annex 4: Interview questions

Thematic set: Use of the SQF Register

5. Do you know the SQF Register and have already used it in your work? If yes, for what purposes did you use it or how do you use it?
6. In your opinion, is the SQF Register transparent and easy to use? Did you quickly find the qualifications you needed with the existing search engine? If yes, why, if not, what were the obstacles?
7. How do you use the SQF Register for mobility needs (high-school students, higher education students, employees going abroad)?
8. How do you use the SQF Register for the purposes of recognizing qualifications (foreign nationals in Slovenia or Slovenian qualifications abroad)?
9. Would you add any other information or suggestion for use of the SQF Register?

IV

APPENDIX

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

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LIST OF USED ABBREVIATIONS

Catalogue – Catalogue of technical knowledge and skills

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

CPI – Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training

ESF – European Social Fund

EQF – European qualifications framework for lifelong learning

ISCED – International Standard Classification of Education

IWG NQF – Interdepartmental Working Group on the Preparation of the National Qualifications Framework

KLASIUS – Classification system of education and training

NCP – National Coordination Point for the European Qualifications Framework

NVQ – National vocational qualification

PS – Professional standards

QF–EHEA – European qualifications framework for lifelong learning Qualifications Framework

SCOS – Sectoral committees for occupational standards

SQ – supplementary qualification

SQAA – Slovenian quality assurance agency for higher education (NAKVIS)

SQF – Slovenian Qualifications Framework

ZRSŠ – National Education Institute Slovenia

ZRSZ – Employment Service of Slovenia

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