

National Qualifications Authority



Verification of Compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

November 2011

Self-certification Report

Verification of compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

Document for further consultation and implementation

November 2011

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Message

September 2011

Dr. Catalin Baba

Secretary of State

Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports

The Self-Certification Report concerning the verification of compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area is an important tool that facilitates the interaction between the higher education systems in Europe and brings its support to the development of a culture of mutual trust. The Report expresses Romania's answer to its 2005 commitment to design and implement a national qualifications framework for higher education which is fully compatible with the overarching Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area.

I am pleased that the National Qualifications Authority has taken the initiative to reference the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. This document is a testimony of Romania's strong commitment to fulfil the obligation assumed under the Bologna Process from its start in 1998. The Report reflects Romania's contribution to the development of the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area by its special focus on the development of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education as well and demonstrates its full compatibility with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The design and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education is a first step in the development of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework and in referencing the qualifications system of our country against the qualifications in other European states by means of the European Qualifications Framework.

The design and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education has been a lengthy process initiated in 2005 by ACPART and finalised in 2011 by the National Authority for Qualifications. It involved wide consultations with all the institutions and organizations interested in the national qualifications system: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, higher education institutions and their students and teaching staffs, quality assurance

agency in higher education, sectoral committees, other social partners (trade unions, employers' associations, non-governmental organizations and professional associations) as well as other regulatory authorities.

The 2011 National Education Law strengthens the legal and institutional framework that creates a coherent, transparent and flexible national framework and opens new perspectives for the development and recognition of this framework by all stakeholders.

Let me remember here some of the actions taken by the MERYS to reach this goal:

- The setting-up and the full support given to the National Qualifications Authority (NQA);
- Ensuring Romania's active participation in the European meetings related to the European Qualifications Framework and to the various European and regional thematic working groups in the field of education and training;
- Appointing the National Qualifications Authority as the National Coordination Point for the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework in Romania at national level;
- Supporting the initiatives and actions of NQA aiming at the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in all the Romanian universities and at the promotion of the National Qualifications Register for Higher Education;
- Promoting the enhancement of quality assurance in the Romanian higher education with a focus on the quality of learning outcomes.

The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports also supported the National Qualifications Authority in accomplishing the main objectives of the self certification process, as follows:

- To certify that Romania has developed and implemented a functional framework for qualifications in the higher education which is compatible with the similar frameworks put in place in other European countries and/or in other regions of the world, a framework which is recognized as such both at national and international level;
- To explain the compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area;
- To provide essential data and information on the conceptual and institutional foundation leading to the establishment of the national framework closely linked to the two European reference frameworks.

As a concluding remark, I may say that the self-certification process contributes to the development of a consistent qualifications culture in Romania built upon four principles: Quality, Transparency, Transferability and Progression.

Executive summary

This document is Romania's response to the obligation assumed with regards to the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and its preparation for the self-certification process to demonstrate the compatibility with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area by 2012.

The main goals of the Report are:

- To be a visit-card of the Romanian NQFHE;
- To be a marketing tool of the study programmes offered in the Romanian HE system;
- To be an easy understandable explanation of the Romanian NQFHE for all the stakeholders in the HE sector and society (employers, parents, professional associations, civil society) with a focus on the complexity and variety of the learning outcomes and their aims (professional and personal development goals, democratic citizenship etc.)
- To be an instrument explaining the compatibility of the Romanian NQFHE with the Bologna overarching QF for the EHEA (where appropriate, we will include also references to EQF in a LLL perspective).

In order to achieve the above stated goals the report was structured as follows:

- For a proper understanding of the compatibility references, the Romanian higher education system is shortly presented with a focus on the reforms implemented in European context;
- Another part of the Report describes the design, instruments and implementation of the NQFHE;
- Having clarified this information on the Romanian specificity in the implementation strategy of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education, the Report proceeds with operationalising the process of indicating the compatibility of the Romanian NQFHE with the EQF and the FQ-EHEA. This is the central part of the self-assessment process and the Report details the two crucial sets of referencing elements: the verification criteria (1-7) and the verification procedures (1-6).
- The chapter on conclusions and perspectives captures the main further steps of self-assessment endeavours.
- The annexes provide, on the one hand, the main legal provisions underpinning the setting-up of NAQ and the NQFHE implementation and, on the other hand, a comparative table facilitating understanding of the match and of the possible differences or particularities within the two European frameworks (EQF and QF-EHEA) and the national qualifications framework for higher education developed by Romania.

In September 2011, Romania successfully finalized all 11 steps recommended by the Council of Europe for the implementation of the framework for qualifications of higher education. A brief presentation of the step-by-step actions undertaken is presented below.

The development of the national qualifications framework for higher education started in Romania in 2005 with the **setting-up of the responsible institution** – the National Agency for Qualifications in Higher Education and Partnership with the Economic and Social Environment – ACPART (**STEP 1**). In 2011 the responsibilities of that implementation body were extended and the new official name given to the agency is National Qualifications Authority (NQA).

The responsible institution established its **strategy and agenda** for the development of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQFHE), which involved initiatives and activities both at national and international level (**STEP 2**). At national level, a Working Group was established in order to compare and analyse the Bologna documents (EHEA Framework) and the EQF documents, and to clarify the terminology and concepts. The aim was a common understanding by all stakeholders and the outcome was a *Glossary of the NQFHE* (**STEP 3**). The next stage was the development phase (2006-2009) which consisted in the design of the **NQFHE Methodology** (**STEP 4**) with details concerning the NQF objectives, definitions and key concepts, the necessary descriptors and assessment standards of the learning outcomes involved in the implementation of the NQFHE. The design of the Methodology was followed by the **piloting phase of the first version** (**STEP 5**) consisting in the full description of 45 qualifications at Bachelor and Master's level (first and second Bologna cycle). The final version of the **Methodology was officially enacted** by Order No. 4430 of the Minister of Education in June 2009 **and published** in the *Official Gazette of Romania*, No. 545/05.08.2009 (**STEP 6**).

The implementation phase (STEPS 7, 8 and 9) started in October 2009 with the support offered by a project co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Romanian Government (DOCIS – Development of an Operational System of Qualifications in Higher Education). This stage involved the standardized description of higher education qualifications provided by Romanian universities as follows: all 332 Bachelor degree qualifications (in compliance with Government decisions concerning accredited study programmes) and a sample of 179 Master's degree qualifications, covering all fields of studies. This was a dynamic, lucrative, open process of repeated consultations which involved final agreement by consensus of all participating stakeholders upon the descriptors and assessment standards of each qualification.

During the implementation process, ACPART (currently NQA) developed the **National Qualifications Register for Higher Education (RNCIS)** as an electronic platform for the registration, updating and management of the Romanian qualifications system. The Romanian version is already operational and can be accessed at www.rncis.ro (**STEP 11**). **The self-certification phase (STEP 10)** started on December 21st, 2010, when the **Working Group** met and agreed upon the action plan which is based on the *Terms of Reference for the development of the self-certification Report*. A **Steering Committee** was created as a special consultative body including representatives of the stakeholders and international

experts. Its mission was to review and approve the Self-Certification Report. On April 13th, 2011 the first meeting of the Steering Committee was held in Bucharest. The Self-Certification Report was **launched for public debate** during the **International Conference** organized by NQA in Sinaia on April 14-15, 2011 and was **uploaded** on www.acpart.ro and www.ncis.ro **for further consultation**. The members of the Steering Committee met again on September 5-6, 2011 for a second round of discussions. They agreed on the last improvements that could be brought to the report. The present version of the Self-Certification Report includes all the recommended improvements. It is a document which the National Qualifications Authority presents to all stakeholders for further consultation and implementation.

The compatibility of the NQFHE with the EQF and the QF-EHEA, to be demonstrated by the Working Group writing this Report, was verified against **the following criteria**:

- “1. The national framework for higher education qualifications and the body or bodies responsible for its development are designated by the national ministry with responsibility for higher education;
2. There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications in the national framework and the cycle qualification descriptors of the European framework;
3. The national framework and its qualifications are demonstrably based on learning outcomes and the qualifications are linked to ECTS or ECTS-compatible credits;
4. The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national framework are clear;
5. The national quality assurance systems for higher education refer to the national framework of qualifications and are consistent with the Berlin Communiqué and any subsequent communiqué agreed by ministers in the Bologna Process;
6. The national framework and any alignments with the European framework are referenced in all Diploma Supplements;
7. The responsibilities of the domestic parties to the national framework are clearly determined and published.”

and **procedures**:

- 1. The competent national body/bodies shall certify the compatibility of the national framework with the European framework;*
- 2. The self-certification process shall include the stated agreement of the quality assurance bodies in the country in question recognised through the Bologna Process;*
- 3. The self-certification process shall involve international experts;*
- 4. The self-certification and the evidence supporting it shall be published and shall address separately each of the criteria set out;*
- 5. The ENIC and NARIC networks shall maintain a public listing of States that have confirmed that they have completed the self-certification process;*

6. The completion of the self-certification process shall be noted on Diploma Supplements issued subsequently by showing the link between the national framework and the European framework.

Each criterion and procedure were analysed separately in the Report. The Working Group demonstrated that the Romanian NQFHE fully met all criteria for the verification of compatibility of the national framework with the EHEA framework as have been set according to the Bologna Working Group Report to the ministerial meeting held in Bergen in 2005.

Finally, the Report presents the road map used by NQA so that, after being implemented, the NQFHE should become one of the crucial instruments for the strategic coordination of all institutions in the Romanian education system. The public policies of the Ministry of Education, the implementation measures promoted by the agencies and commissions coordinated by the Ministry of Education, as well as the missions assumed by the higher education institutions will use the NQFHE to define the higher education provision in Romania according to the labour market needs, in order to enhance the quality of study programmes and the economic and social effectiveness of the higher education system.

Chapter I

Self-certification objectives and methodology

1.1. Objectives

This document is Romania's response to the obligation assumed with regards to the *implementation of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and its preparation for the self-certification process to demonstrate the compatibility with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area by 2012* (Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, 28-29 April 2009).

This self-certification report marks a new important step in the implementation of the Bologna strategy for quality assurance in higher education aiming to support the growth and development of a knowledge society, after the step achieved by the design of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQFHE), as indicated by the Bologna Working Group Report¹, adopted in Bergen, on May 2005 and the decisions stated by the 2007 Report 2007².

- A first objective of our Report is to certify that Romania created a functional framework for qualifications, which is fully comparable with the frameworks of other European countries and of other continents³, and which is recognised as such both at national and international level.
- Second, the Report aims at explaining and detailing the compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQFHE) with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) and represents a preliminary step in demonstrating its compatibility with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).
- The operational objective of the Report is to provide essential data on the conceptual and institutional basis leading to the establishment of the national framework closely linked with the two European reference frameworks.
- More precisely, the Self-certification Report focuses on the following goals:
 - To ensure the reader that the qualifications described in the framework documents are valuable learning experiences, useful for the social and professional integration of the beneficiaries;

¹ Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks Report, 2005: www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Maindoc/050218QFEHEA.pdf

² Report from Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks, 2007: www.dfes.gov.uk/londonbologna/uploads/documents/WGQF-raport-final2.pdf

³ Our working group has also capitalised on the valuable experience of education systems which are not part to the Bologna Process, such as New Zealand, South Africa, Australia etc.

- To certify that learning becomes an activity with no boundaries, no artificial limitations in terms of content or form and unburdened by excessive bureaucratic constraints, in order to foster mobility in the professional development and training process;
 - To demonstrate that the learner is at the core of this process, that they learn to learn and that lifelong learning skills are integrated in the curriculum;
 - To contribute to building awareness on quality and social responsibility in the provision of knowledge, skills and competences for the beneficiaries of the educational process, so that graduates' personal behaviour would become easily adaptable to the labour market requirements in a more and more dynamic, globalised and complex society.
- To summarise the objectives of the self-assessment process and of the Self-Certification Report we may state that they contribute to the development of a qualifications culture built upon the following principles: Quality – Transparency – Transferability – Progression.

1.2. Methodology

The self-certification report targets both domestic and foreign users – trainers, learners, employers, professional associations, trade union etc., and it intends to represent an official reference document, widely accepted, which highlights the educational strategies, and guides the beneficiaries' choices. This document points out both the common and the specific elements in the European/national relationship, but it also indicates areas where confusions or lack of clarity might occur.

Methodologically, the Self-Certification Report was designed as a landmark, a starting point in the evolution of a highly dynamic activity. Self-certification is the foundation of a process of revision, adjustment and development impacting both on the national and on the European qualifications frameworks, along with the overall developments in society.

In order to achieve the above stated objectives the report structure was designed to reflect adequately the conceptual and practical vision presented above. Thus, the Working Group agreed upon the following structure:

- For a proper understanding of the compatibility references, the Romanian higher education system is shortly presented with a focus on the reforms implemented in European context;
- Another part of the Report describes the design, instruments and implementation of the NQFHE;
- Having clarified this information on the Romanian specificity in the implementation strategy of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education, the Report proceeds with operationalising the process of indicating the compatibility of the NQFHE with the EQF and the FQ-EHEA. This is the central part of the self-assessment process and the Report details the two crucial sets of referencing elements: the verification criteria (1-7) and the verification procedures (1-6).

- The chapter on conclusions and perspectives captures the main the further steps of self-assessment endeavours.
- The annexes provide, on one hand, the main legal provisions underpinning the setting-up of NAQ and the NQFHE implementation and, on the other hand, a comparative table facilitating understanding of the match and of the possible differences or particularities within the two European frameworks (EQF and QF-EHEA) and the national qualifications framework from higher education developed by Romania.

1.3. The self-assessment process

The development of this draft report has involved very intense and focused work during a relatively short period of time.

- On December 21, 2010 the Working Group met and agreed on the action plan, based on the Terms of Reference for the development of the self-certification report.
- On January 6, 2011 the Working Group drafted a first outline of the Report, based on several individual proposals and agreed on a breakdown of tasks specifically allocated to sub-groups.
- At the end of January 2011 a first draft of the Self-certification Report was developed as a starting point for consultations with stakeholders.
- During February and April there were working meetings with representatives of stakeholders, both in Romania and abroad, including a study visit to discuss the draft report with representatives of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland)
- On April 13, 2011 the first meeting of the Steering Committee created to approve the self-certification of the compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area was held.
- The Self-Certification Report was launched for public debate during the National Conference organised in Sinaia, on April 14-15, 2011 and published on www.acpart.ro/docis and www.ncis.ro for further consultation.
- The Steering Committee met on September 5-6, 2011 for a second round of discussion and agreed on the last improvements that could be brought to the report. The following text includes all the recommended improvements.
- This Self-Certification Report is a document which the National Qualifications Authority presents to all the stakeholders for continuing further consultation and implementation.

1.4. Self-assessment criteria

The compatibility of the NQFHE with the EQF and the QF-EHEA, to be demonstrated by the Working Group writing this Report, was verified against the criteria proposed by the Bergen Report, 2005:

- “1. The national framework for higher education qualifications and the body or bodies responsible for its development are designated by the national ministry with responsibility for higher education;
2. There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications in the national framework and the cycle qualification descriptors of the European framework;
3. The national framework and its qualifications are demonstrably based on learning outcomes and the qualifications are linked to ECTS or ECTS-compatible credits;
4. The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national framework are clear;
5. The national quality assurance systems for higher education refer to the national framework of qualifications and are consistent with the Berlin Communiqué and any subsequent communiqué agreed by ministers in the Bologna Process;
6. The national framework and any alignments with the European framework are referenced in all Diploma Supplements;
7. The responsibilities of the domestic parties to the national framework are clearly determined and published.”

1.5. Self-assessment procedures

The procedures for the verification of compatibility of the national framework with the EHEA framework were also set according to the Bologna Working Group Report to the ministerial meeting held in Bergen in 2005, as follows:

1. The competent national body/bodies shall certify the compatibility of the national framework with the European framework;
2. *The self-certification process shall include the stated agreement of the quality assurance bodies in the country in question recognised through the Bologna Process;*
3. *The self-certification process shall involve international experts;*
4. The self-certification and the evidence supporting it shall be published and shall address separately each of the criteria set out;
5. The ENIC and NARIC networks shall maintain a public listing of States that have confirmed that they have completed the self-certification process ⁴ ;
6. The completion of the self-certification process shall be noted on Diploma Supplements issued subsequently by showing *the link between the national framework and the European framework.*

⁴ Cf. www.enic-naric.net

1.6. Steps followed by Romania in the design and implementation of the National Qualification Framework for Higher Education

In September 2011, Romania has successfully finalized all 11 steps recommended by the Council of Europe for the implementation of the framework for qualifications for higher education. A brief presentation of the step-by-step undertaken actions is presented in the following lines.

The development of the national qualifications framework for higher education started in Romania in 2005 with the setting-up of the responsible institution – the National Agency for Qualifications in Higher Education and Partnership with the Economic and Social Environment – ACPART (STEP 1). In 2011 the responsibilities of that implementation body were extended and the new official name given to the agency is National Qualifications Authority (NQA).

The responsible institution established its strategy and agenda for the development of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQFHE), which involved initiatives and activities both at national and international level (STEP 2).

At national level, the strategy covered:

- I. **The pre-development phase**, involving the establishment of a Working Group (**STEP 3**); comparative analysis of the Bologna documents (EHEA Framework) and the EQF related documents of the European Commission; clarification and explanation of the terminology and concepts aiming at a common understanding by all stakeholders; drafting a *Glossary of the NQFHE*.
- II. **The development phase** (2006-2009) consisted in the design of the **NQFHE Methodology (STEP 4)** with details concerning the NQF objectives, definitions and key concepts, the necessary descriptors and assessment standards of the learning outcomes involved in the implementation of the NQFHE. During the design, ACPART (currently NQA) acted as a coordinator and link between all the stakeholders involved in the development of NQFHE. Regional meetings were organized aiming at extensive consultations with higher education institutions, employers, trade unions, professional associations, sectoral committees, student associations, alumni, parents. The design of the Methodology was followed by the **piloting phase of the first version (STEP 5)** consisting in the full description of 45 qualifications at Bachelor and Master's level (first and second Bologna cycle). The piloting was facilitated by means of a multi-annual PHARE Programme.

At international level, ACPART and MERYs were continuously involved in exchange of ideas and good practices concerning the progress made in the design and implementation of the national frameworks of higher education qualifications.

The first version of the Methodology was reviewed based on the outcomes of the piloting exercise. The final version of the **Methodology was officially enacted** by Order No. 4430 of the Minister of Education in June 2009 **and published** in the *Official Gazette of Romania*, No. 545/05.08.2009 (**STEP 6**).

III. **The implementation phase (STEPS 7, 8 and 9)** started in October 2009 with the support offered by a project co-financed by the European Social Fund and the Romanian Government (DOCIS – Development of an Operational System of Qualifications in Higher Education). This stage involved the standardized description of higher education qualifications provided by Romanian universities as follows: all 332 Bachelor degree qualifications (in compliance with Government decisions concerning accredited study programmes) and a sample of 179 Master's degree qualifications, covering all fields of studies. This was a dynamic, lucrative, open process of repeated consultations and final agreement by consensus of all participating stakeholders upon the descriptors and assessment standards of each qualification. The process will continue as a “lifelong” process of up-grading and adjustment of qualifications in accordance with the continuing changes in the provision of higher education programmes and their adjustment to the needs and expectations of the graduate labour market.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education together with ACPART initiated the improvement of some of the **complementary regulatory documents** needed in the full implementation of the NQFHE: Government Decision No. 890/2008 on the *qualification titles and awards* granted by Romanian universities to graduates a Bachelor degree programmes; Minister Order No. 4151/2010 concerning the content and template of the *Master's degree diploma* and Minister Order No. 5803/2010 concerning the *Bachelor degree award, the architect diploma* and the respective *Diploma Supplements' models*.

During the implementation process, ACPART (currently NQA) has developed the **National Qualifications Register for Higher Education (RNCIS)** as an electronic platform for the registration updating and management of the Romanian qualifications' system.

RNCIS should be seen as a multi-actor and trans-national interest tool. It is a **multi-actor tool** as RNCIS represents the result of collaboration among different stakeholders. It is a **tool of trans-national interest** as RNCIS will be **available on-line both in Romanian and in English** aiming at ensuring national and international free access to information of all interested users. The Romanian version is already operational and can be accessed at www.rncis.ro (STEP 11).

The self-certification phase (STEP 10) started on December 21st, 2010, when the **Working Group** (see list of members below at 1.7) met and agreed upon the action plan which is based in the *Terms of Reference for the development of the self-certification Report*.

In the end of January 2011, a first draft of the Self-Certification Report as a start point for consultations with stakeholders. These consultations took place during February and March 2011. Also, a study-visit of a part of the members of the Working Group was organized in order to discuss the draft report with experts of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

A **Steering Committee** (see list of members below, at 1.8) was created as a special consultative body including representatives of the stakeholders and international experts. Its mission is to review and

approve the Self-Certification Report. On April 13th, 2011 the first meeting of the Steering Committee was held in Bucharest.

The Self-Certification Report was **launched for public debate** during the **International Conference** organized by NQA in Sinaia on April 14-15, 2011 and was **up-loaded** on www.acpart.ro and www.ncis.ro for **further consultation**.

The members of the Steering Committee met again on September 5-6, 2011 for a second round of discussion. They agreed on the last improvements that could be brought to the report.

This version of the Self-Certification Report includes all the recommended improvements. It is a document which the National Qualifications Authority presents to all the stakeholders for further consultation and implementation.

1.7. The Working Group

In December 2010 a Working Group was created at UECNCFPA level to develop the Self-certification Report. The members of this Working Group are as follows:

- Professor Sorin Eugen ZAHARIA, PhD, director general NQA, former UECNCFPA
- Professor Gheorghe BÂRLEA, PhD, “Ovidius” University of Constanța;
- Professor Mihai KORKA, PhD, Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest;
- Professor Mariana MOCANU, PhD, “Politehnica” University of Bucharest;
- Professor Bogdan MURGESCU, PhD, University of Bucharest;
- Professor Dan POTOLEA, PhD, University of Bucharest,
- Professor Steliana TOMA, PhD, Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest,
- Cătălina Gabriela HÎRCEAG, expert, NQA, former UECNCFPA,
- Margareta Simona IVAN expert, NQA, former UECNCFPA.

1.8. The Steering Committee

Chair: Cătălin BABA, Ministry of Education, Research and Sports

Members:

- Daniela ALEXE, National Association of Student Organisations in Romania;
- Gheorghe BARBU, National Council of Rectors;
- Mogens BERG, BFUG, Denmark;
- Alexandru BORCEA, Romanian Association for Electronic and Software Industry - ARIES;
- James CALLEJA, Malta Qualifications Council;
- Anne Marie CHARRAUD, National Commission for Qualifications in France;
- Romiță IUCU-BUMBU, Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education;
- Mircea MICLEA, President of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis and Development of Education and Research Policies;
- Valentin MOCANU, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection;
- Lewis PURSER, Irish Universities Association;
- Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX, Council of Europe;
- Sorin Eugen ZAHARIA, Romanian National Qualifications Authority.

The wide involvement of stakeholders and of international experts in drafting and finalizing the present Report helped the NQA to reflect all valuable opinions and suggestions to improve the document.

Chapter II

Romanian Higher Education System

2.1. Introduction

Similarly to the other Central and Eastern European Countries, during the past 20 years the Romanian higher education has witnessed an impressive expansion, diversification and transformation.

Higher education reform was accompanied by a significant increase in the number of higher education institutions, by booming student population and by the appearance of private universities, in the context of a high demand for university education and of the physical and financial lack of capacity of public universities to meet such demand. The mix of public and private elements in the Romanian higher education system is one of its peculiarities and it impacts on its strategic and operational management.

2.2. Overall developments of higher education in Romania (1990-2010)

Before 1989, just like in all other socialist countries, access to higher education was severely limited, the contents were highly politicized and the management of this sector was fully centralised. The post-revolution reform of the Romanian higher education may be analytically divided into several subsequent steps:

- ◆ **1990-1997** featured measures focusing on a depolitisation of the syllabi and contents, on re-introducing study programmes, faculties and higher education institutions which had been eliminated by the totalitarian regime. Besides the post-communist restoring measures, the system witnessed the beginnings of the massification of higher education with the emergence of numerous new study programmes providers both public and private, both local and foreign. As there was no regulation laying out the prerequisites for providers of tertiary education, there was a sudden, hectic development of the educational provision, with no guarantee on the quality of the teaching-learning process. These chaotic developments ended with the setting up of the National Council of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation – CNEAA, at the end of 1993. The Council imposed minimal standards for provisional authorisation and, subsequently, accreditation. Nevertheless, the quantitative growth of the higher education reached by the multiplication of public institutions and the emergence of private institutions has not had the expected effect of coping with the demand for tertiary education. Usually, the new institutions developed a parallel provision by adopting the curricula of the traditional public universities, by borrowing their teaching staff and imitating their operating mechanisms, although the *Accreditation Law*⁵ passed by the Romanian Parliament in 1993 specifically stipulated that the

⁵ *Law no 88/1993 on the accreditation of higher education institutions and diploma recognition*, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no 307 of 27.12.1993.

private higher education is an alternative to the public education. Moreover, there was a lack of concern for substantial change that would guarantee the autonomy of higher education institutions. Although the *Education Law*⁶ passed by the Romanian Parliament in 1995 provided for a series of transformations, its implementation was hesitant, torn between initiatives and repeated delays which left higher education at the end of this stage as a rigid, under-financed system, unresponsive to the actual demand for initial and continuing training, dependent on the central decisions (ministry), using egalitarian criteria for organisation and management, a system which would not promote study programmes diversification, performance, quality and competitiveness. It was a system which gradually re-opened to international cooperation, but was not able to initiate the necessary steps to ensure compatibility, so that partnership with foreign universities would be real, sustainable, with benefits and assumed responsibilities for each party.

- ◆ **1997-2004** meant the beginning of the systematic implementation of four fundamental objectives of the higher education system:
 - Gradual increase of access to higher education ; the strategic goal was to guarantee the civil right to tertiary initial and continuing education;
 - Improvement of higher education and university research quality, so that the degrees and certificated awarded upon completion of studies should open opportunities for a competitive professional activity in the domestic and international labour market;
 - *Decentralisation of academic and financial management of higher education* by strengthening university autonomy, and personal and institutional accountability at management level;
 - *Fostering active networking* between universities in Romania and abroad and developing partnerships between universities, companies and institutions at local and regional level so that higher education might become a source of sustainable civic and spiritual development of the Romanian society.

Moreover, on the 19th of June 1999 Romania signed the *Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education in Bologna*, and committed to the coordination of national higher education policies and to the implementation of the first actions leading to the gradual development of the European Higher Education Area.

- **2004-2010** was characterised both by further actions to achieve the four objectives indicated above and by strong concern for the compatibility of the Romanian higher education with the European recommendations and standards, for fostering individual and institutional performance and competitiveness. Among the recently adopted measures we may mention:

⁶ *Law no 88/1995 – The Education Law*, republished in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no 606 of December 10, 1999.

- Re-organisation of the Romanian higher education according to the recommendations *detailed the specificity of the three study cycles⁷ under the Bologna Process, generalisation of the implementation of the credit transfer system (ECTS) and of the Diploma Supplement*. The traditional long term higher education programmes (usually 5 years of study) were replaced by bachelor degree and master's degree programmes. The movement started in the academic year 2005/2006 and was accomplished in 2008/2009 in most of the study fields. The labour market is still not fully making a differentiation between a graduate holding a bachelor diploma after successful completion of a 3 or 4 year programme (180 or 240 ECTS) and the holder of a master's degree diploma which is awarded after another 1 or 2 years of studies (20 to 120 ECTS).

The involvement of employers, professional associations, sectoral committees and other stakeholders in the description of qualifications in higher education proved to be an effective means to disseminate the distinctive labour market value of the diplomas awarded after completion of first and second cycle studies.

The mission to further disseminate the information related to the differentiation of higher education qualifications is now strongly supported by the National Register of Qualifications in Higher Education – RNCIS – a electronic platform which offers for free comprehensive description of the learning outcomes for each study programme provided by Romanian universities. Its full compatibility with the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education generates a competitive advantage in the trans-national mobility of students and graduates and eases the quick insertion in the labour market.

- *Change in the quality assurance philosophy by complementing the accreditation mechanism with standards and procedures aiming at the development of a new quality culture at the level of each higher education institution. The mission of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education – ARACIS⁸ is not only to perform (on demand) the external evaluation of the study programmes and of the institutional capacity, but also to support the internal evaluation process, to advise higher education institutions and to disseminate good practices in the entire sector.⁹*
- The National Agency for Qualifications in Higher Education and Partnership with the Economic and Social Environment – ACPART¹⁰ was designated by the Ministry of Education

⁷ **Law no 288/2004 on the organisation of university studies**, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, nr. 614, July 7, 2004. Mention should be made of all secondary legislation provisions passed during 2005-2009 for the enforcement of this Law.

⁸ ARACIS replaced CNEAA, and took over the tasks of the entity which operated during 1993-2005.

⁹ Government Expedient Ordinance no 75/2005 on quality assurance in education, passed by the Romanian Parliament with amendments laid out by Law no 86/2006, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, nr. 350 of April 19, 2006. Also, all relevant regulations related to the organisation and operation of ARACIS, as well as to the external evaluation methodology, standards and performance indicators used by ARACIS in the external evaluation process.

¹⁰ ACPART is one of the entities under the subordination of the Ministry of Education which ensures operative interaction between the structures of the central administration and universities. ACPART was appointed as national agency responsible for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education at the end of 2005.

to develop and implement a National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQFHE) compatible with the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ EHEA)*. Through the Methodology applied, ACPART met this requirement and, at the same time, ensured compatibility with the principles, criteria and procedures for the description of qualifications for lifelong learning, as laid out by the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council*¹¹. These are developed in a distinct paragraph of this Self-certification Report.

- In order to promote attractiveness of higher education in Romania, as well as competitiveness of Romanian universities, the first legal provisions on the voluntary association of higher education institutions in university consortia¹², based on common interests and academic values, on mutual support in the competition for national and European research grants etc. were adopted during this stage.
- Other initiatives focused on fostering the partnerships between universities and industry, central and local administration, not-for-profit organisations, as well as on raising awareness on the role of universities in the lifelong learning.

Strategic projects have played a crucial role in promoting all these initiatives. Such projects focus on fundamental issues related to the Romanian higher education system, such as:

- A strategic vision on the Romanian higher education until 2025;
- Implementation of a methodology on the development of study programmes in terms of learning outcomes and an online register of university qualifications;
- Development of structured instruments for the differentiation and ranking of universities based on their assumed mission and on their research performance;
- Design and implementation of the National Student Enrolment Registry;
- Enhancement of quality and efficiency of doctoral studies and advanced post-doctoral research internships;
- Updating the study programme external and internal evaluation methodologies, with a focus on the educational effectiveness and on the competitiveness of learning outcomes in the labour market.

2.3. Snapshot of the Romanian higher education system in the academic year 2009-2010

During the past two decades, the higher education registered an important quantitative growth: the number of public universities increased and there private higher education developed at a fast pace. The

¹¹ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 23, 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2008 C 111/1).

¹² Law no 287/2004 on university consortia, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, nr. 614, of July 7, 2004

distribution of active higher education institutions in the academic year 2009-2010 according to longevity indicates, on the one hand that university education has historical traditions in Romania and, on the other hand, that the system has witnessed significant expansion during the past 20 years. Of the total higher education institutions in Romania:

- 18% are over 100 years old;
- 23% are between 51 - 100 years old;
- 7% are between 21 - 50 years old;
- 52% are 20 years old at the most.

During the academic year 2009-2010, there were 109 active higher education institutions in Romania. Of these 109, 56 are accredited public institutions (49 civil higher education institutions and 7 military higher education institutions), 29 are private higher education institutions, and other 24 private higher education institutions operate on provisional authorisation or are under accreditation.

All these higher education institutions provide about 330 first cycle programmes (Bachelor) within 74 study fields, according to data provided by the Ministry of Education. All accredited institutions also provide second cycle (Master) programmes, estimated to a number of 2570 study programmes of 3-4 semesters (90 to 120 ECTS). In order to provide third cycle programmes (doctoral studies), public and private accredited universities must apply with the National Council for the Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates – CNATDCU, which together with ARACIS perform an evaluation of the institutional capacity and of the scientific performance before granting the right to organise doctoral studies. During the 2009-2010 academic year, 57 universities and the Romania Academy were granted the right to develop doctoral study programmes. Admission to a higher education programme is based on competition open to all successful graduates of the previous educational cycle, according to the graduation diploma awarded by a legally recognised public or private institution.

Higher education in Romania is delivered in universities, academies, institutes, higher education schools and other similar institutions¹³ Nevertheless, beyond this list of official categories of higher education institutions there is a wide variety from the study field perspective: some universities have a more general profile and group a bigger or smaller number of study fields, while others have a specialised profile (medicine and pharmacy, technical universities, architecture and urban planning, agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, music etc.). There is high diversity as well when considering the number of students enrolled: there are big universities with over 50,000 students, medium-sized universities with 20,000-25,000 students, but also small universities (less than 20,000 students), while some specialise institutes barely reach several hundreds of students.

¹³ Art. 114 (2) of the National Education Law no 1/2011, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, nr. 18 of January 10, 2011 (hereinafter quoted as NEL 1/2011). This text reproduces the list already stipulated by the 1995 Education Law.

Despite the impressive number of higher education institutions and the four-time increase of the student population during the past 20 years, in 2009 Romania rated 414 students in 10 000 inhabitants (according to the statistics annual).

2.4. Qualification levels in Higher Education

The higher education system in Romania has a three-cycle structure, complying with the Bologna system: Bachelor, Master and Doctorate. The three study cycles of the higher education are also legally mapped against levels 6, 7 and 8 of the European Qualifications Framework, as indicated below:

Table 1: Qualifications of the 3 cycle in the Romanian higher education from a European perspective

	National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Romania	Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area	Romania's National Qualifications Framework	European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning
Higher Education	Doctorate	Third cycle	Level 8	Level 8
	Master	Second cycle	Level 7	Level 7
	Bachelor	First cycle	Level 6	Level 6

Besides the three study cycles, *the National Education Law* in force since February 2011 provides for the post-university continuing training and personal development studies which do not lead to qualifications, but to certification of specific professional competences acquired by trainees during the respective study programme¹⁴.

2.5. Types of diplomas and awards

The qualifications acquired by the graduates of higher education study programmes in Romania are attested by 3 types of diplomas: Bachelor/engineer/medical doctor, urban planner diploma, Master diploma and PhD diploma. Competences acquired through post-university continuing training and personal development programmes are attested by certificates and other documents. All these diplomas, certificates and documents may be issued only by accredited higher education institutions and only for accredited study programmes and modes; they are similar for the same study programme, irrespective of the study mode. Moreover, all these diplomas and certificates are issued upon graduation of a study cycle, which means that the learning outcomes they attest correspond to the level of qualification indicated by the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

¹⁴ NEL 1/2011, art.173.

The **Bachelor** study programmes¹⁵ may be provided as full-time, part-time or distance learning education. They usually cover a work load corresponding to a minimum of 180 ECTS (3 years study programmes), may reach in some fields of study a maximum of 240 ECTS (4 years of study programme), correspond to first cycle programmes in the QF/EHEA and can be referenced to EQF/NQF level 6.

The legislation provides for exceptions in case of study programmes leading to qualifications corresponding to EU regulated professions. Thus, in the field of pharmacy studies the workload corresponds to 300 ECTS and the duration of a full study programme is of five years, while for medicine, dental medicine and veterinary medicine the workload is of 360 ECTS and the duration of Bachelor degree studies is of six academic years.

The qualification titles and awards granted after successful completion of a first cycle study programme are the following ones: “*diploma de licenta*” (bachelor diploma), “*diploma de inginer*” (engineer diploma), “diploma de licenta de doctor medic” (medical doctor diploma) or “diploma de urbanist” (urban planner diploma) and specifies the respective field of study. These diplomas offer the necessary data and information that describe the study programme, including the learning mode and the degree level. Moreover, the diplomas are issued free of charge with Diploma Supplements for all graduates who successfully passed the final examination. The Diploma Supplement is drafted in Romanian and in English.

The **Master’s degree** study programmes¹⁶ may be provided as full-time or part-time, have 1 or 2 years duration, cover a workload of minimum 60 and maximum 120 ECTS and can be referenced to the QF/EHEA as offering second cycle qualifications and to the EQF/NQF as level 7 qualifications.

The diploma awarded upon successful completion of a Master’s study programme and presentation of dissertation is the Master’s diploma and it comprises all necessary information to describe the study programme, including the learning mode; diplomas are issued with a Diploma Supplement, free of charge, drafted in Romanian and an international language.

For professions regulated by European legislation, recommendations or good practices, the first and second cycles of higher education may be provided within one study programme with 5-6 year duration, full-time mode. In this case, the graduation diplomas are equivalent to the Master’s degree ones.

Doctoral studies¹⁷ may be provided only as full-time programmes by accredited doctoral schools. There are two types of doctorate: the scientific doctorate and the professional doctorate (in the fields of arts and sport). The successful completion of doctoral studies leads to a PhD diploma or a third cycle diploma in the QF/EHEA corresponding to a level 8 qualification in the EQF/NQF. The diploma certifying the award of the doctoral degree indicates specifically the disciplinary or the inter-disciplinary field for the scientific doctorate or the professional field for the professional doctorate.

¹⁵ NEL 1/2011, art.150-152.

¹⁶ NEL 1/2011, art.153-157.

¹⁷ NEL 1/2011, art.158, 168-169.

2.6. National Education Law and perspectives for the evolution of higher education in Romania

Raising education level of the population is a national priority in the knowledge-based economy. This assumption led to the conclusion that a new legal framework is needed. The new National Education Law was designed to reflect and foster the coherence and dynamism of the components of the education system.

After all Parliament Parties agreed in 2008 upon a National Education Pact, the National Education Law was enacted in the end of 2010 and published in the Official Gazette as Law no 1/2011. Its provisions are in force since early February 2011, 30 days after the day of publication.

2.6.1. Overall provisions on higher education

According to the National Education Law, higher education in Romania builds upon a set of principles¹⁸, which combine university autonomy and academic freedom with public accountability of higher education institutions.

Thus, if **university autonomy** entitles the university community to define its own mission, institutional strategy, structure, activities, organisation and operation, as well as to decide on the management of the physical and human resources, **public accountability** means that any higher education institution, public or private, is under the obligation to comply with the legislation in force, its Charter and with the national and European policies in the field of higher education, to apply regulations in force on quality assurance and evaluation in higher education, to observe equity and university ethics policies, to ensure management efficiency and efficient use of public funds, to ensure transparency of all decisions and activities, to observe the academic freedom of the teaching staff, the auxiliary teaching and research staff, as well as the rights and liberties of students.

Other important principles underpinning the organisation of higher education in Romania are the principle of independence of ideologies, religions and political doctrines, the principle of national and international free movement of students, teaching staff and researchers, the principle of consultation of social partners in the decision-making process, and the principle of student-centred education.

2.6.2. Institutional provisions

The National Education Law indicates that higher education institutions in Romania may be public, private or denominational, all being not-for-profit legal entities; the law also stipulates that all types of higher education in Romania are of public interest and apolitical¹⁹. On these grounds, the law opens opportunities for the private higher education institutions to benefit from additional funding from public sources, just like public institutions, in order to stimulate high performance of institutions and study programmes.

The Law also provides that the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport relies on the support of national advisory bodies, which are based on professional and moral prestige: National Council of

¹⁸ NEL 1/2011, art.118, 123-124..

¹⁹ NEL 1/2011, art.114.

Statistics and Forecast for Higher Education (CNSPIS), National Council for the Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU), National Council of Scientific Research (CNCS), Advisory Board for Research, Development and Innovation (CCCDI), National Council of Higher Education Funding (CNFIS), National Council of University Libraries (CNBU), University Ethics and Management Board (CEMU) and National Council of Ethics for Research, Technological Development and Innovation (CNECSDTI)²⁰.

The National Education Law provides²¹ for strengthening the quality assurance in higher education and research. Moreover it indicates study programmes ranking and classification of universities in three categories: (a) Universities focused on education; (b) Universities focused on education and scientific research, or universities focused on education and artistic creation; (c) Universities focused on advanced research and education.

The Law also stipulates that evaluation for the ranking of study programmes and classification of universities is performed by a consortium made of: ARACIS, including representatives of students, CNCS, CNATDCU and an international specialist body selected on competition basis; as an exception, the first assessment after enacting this law may only be performed by an international body with competences in the higher education institution ranking and classification or by a foreign quality assurance agency registered with EQAR.

The ranking of study programmes and the classification of universities aim at facilitating convergence of resources, strengthening of highly performing institutions and raising of the overall level of higher education and university scientific research in Romania.

2.6.3. The National Qualifications Authority and its responsibilities with regard to the lifelong learning

The National Education Law highlights the importance of lifelong learning²² and the idea that it comprises in an integrative whole all levels and types of education, including higher education. By stipulating that the mission of higher education in Romania includes generation and transfer of knowledge towards society through university initial and continuing training, in order to foster the individual's personal development and employability and to meet the labour market competence needs²³, the National Education Law provides for setting up the National Authority for Qualifications, with the following roles : to develop the National Qualifications Framework based on the European Qualifications Framework, to manage the National Qualifications Register and the National Adult Training Providers Register and to ensure the compatibility of the national qualifications system with the other existing European and international qualifications systems²⁴. According to the law, the National Qualifications Framework is an instrument for the classification of qualifications against a set of criteria related to specific learning levels and at integrating and

²⁰ NEL 1/2011, art.217.

²¹ NEL 1/2011, art.193.

²² NEL 1/2011, art.1-3.

²³ NEL 1/2011, art.117.

²⁴ NEL 1/2011, art.340-342.

coordinating all national qualifications sub-systems from a lifelong learning perspective, may they be general secondary education, technical and vocational education, continuing vocational training, apprenticeship or higher education, formal, informal and non-formal learning etc.

With specific reference to higher education qualifications, already integrated in the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education prior to the National Education Law, the latter provides that each study programme should be consistent with a qualification profile defined by NQF, and the correlation between the curriculum and the qualification provided is a compulsory criterion in the evaluation of the respective study programme and of the higher education institution providing it²⁵.

²⁵ NEL 1/2011, art.137.

Chapter III

Romanian National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education – Identity and Development

3.1. NQFHE - overview

The Romanian NQFHE refers to the description of qualifications in higher education. The Romanian NQFHE is fully compatible with the overall framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. It also takes into consideration the European Commission's documents on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF).

The main purpose of the NQFHE is to contribute to the development, validation and promotion of qualifications and study programmes provided by higher education institutions, to their transparent correlation with the dynamics of the labour market needs.

The Romanian NQFHE has several significant **functions** in the higher education system:

- It defines the structure of the Romanian higher education qualifications;
- It ensures transparency and coherence of qualifications and degrees awarded by universities;
- It sets the standards and procedures for the analysis, evaluation and inclusion of qualifications in NQRHE;
- It structures and regulates the university curriculum according to the study cycles of the Bologna process, fields of study, curricula and disciplines;
- It provides a vast database to be capitalised on at national and international level;
- It includes references to all qualifications provided by higher education institutions;
- It allows for an appraisal of the compatibility of Romanian qualifications with the EU qualifications system;
- It facilitates trans-national recognition and professional mobility of graduates.

NQFHE is a constituent part of the National Qualifications Framework in Romania. In compliance with the provisions of the 2011 National Education Law, the National Qualifications Framework structures all the qualifications into 8 levels of formal, non-formal and informal education and training: level 8 – doctoral studies, level 7- Master's studies, level 6 – Bachelor studies; levels 5 to 1 are currently under development at the National Qualifications Authority and refer to qualifications in the non-university education and training

3.1.1. Key concepts

The key concepts used in defining the NQFHE are: **qualification, learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and competence.**

Qualification means a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards²⁶. Thus, the qualification is the formal acknowledgement of the value of the individual learning outcomes for the labour market, as well as for the continuing education and training, by means of a study document (diploma, certificate or attestation) awarding the legal right to practice a profession/trade. Each qualification in the NQFHE is defined in terms of **learning outcomes** and is centred on the concept of **competence** (Figure 3.1).

Learning outcomes means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on successful completion of a learning process. Learning outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence²⁷. Thus, the learning outcomes are a set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and competences a person has acquired or is able to demonstrate upon completion of the learning process during a certain educational cycle.

Knowledge means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual²⁸.

Skill means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)²⁹. Skills include certain types of operating structures, from dexterity to interpretation and problem-solving capacities.

Competence means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy³⁰. Competences can be classified in two categories (Figure 3.1.):

- a) Professional competences;
- b) Transversal competences.

By **professional competence** we understand the proven capacity to select, combine and use adequately knowledge, skills and other attainments (such as values and attitudes) which are specific to a

²⁶ "Recommendation of the European parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning" in the Official Journal of the European Union, C 111 of 6.05.2008 (2008/C 111/01), Annex 1 – Definitions, p. 4.

²⁷ Ibidem;

²⁸ Ibidem;

²⁹ Ibidem;

³⁰ Ibidem;

professional activity in order to solve successfully problem situations related to the respective profession, effectively and efficiently.

Transversal competences are those capacities that transcend a certain field or study programme, having a transdisciplinary nature: teamwork skills, oral and written communication in mother tongue/foreign language, use of ICT, problem solving and decision making, recognition of and respect for diversity and multiculturalism, learning autonomy, initiative and entrepreneurship, openness to lifelong learning, respecting and improving professional values and ethics etc.

These key concepts serve to the description of a **learning outcomes based qualification**.

A pre-requisite for referencing a national qualification framework against the European meta-frameworks of qualifications consists in the use of learning outcomes in the description of qualifications by applying the level descriptors.

The level descriptors are neutral reference definitions that are applicable to all forms of qualifications obtained in the end of a formal, informal or non-formal education or training and/or to all sectoral qualifications. In other words, level descriptors represent qualifications' criteria or standards that facilitate the understanding of the progression of a graduate's qualification from a study cycle to another.

The Romanian NQFHE is learning outcomes based and the **level descriptors** involved in its design **are more detailed** than those used for defining the QF/EHEA or the EQF. On the other hand, the Romanian level descriptors fully comply with the content and coherence of the system of Dublin Descriptors as tables 2-4 show.

In the same time, the NQFHE construction is taking into consideration the various missions of higher education, i.e.: education, personal development, citizenship, knowledge production, employability.

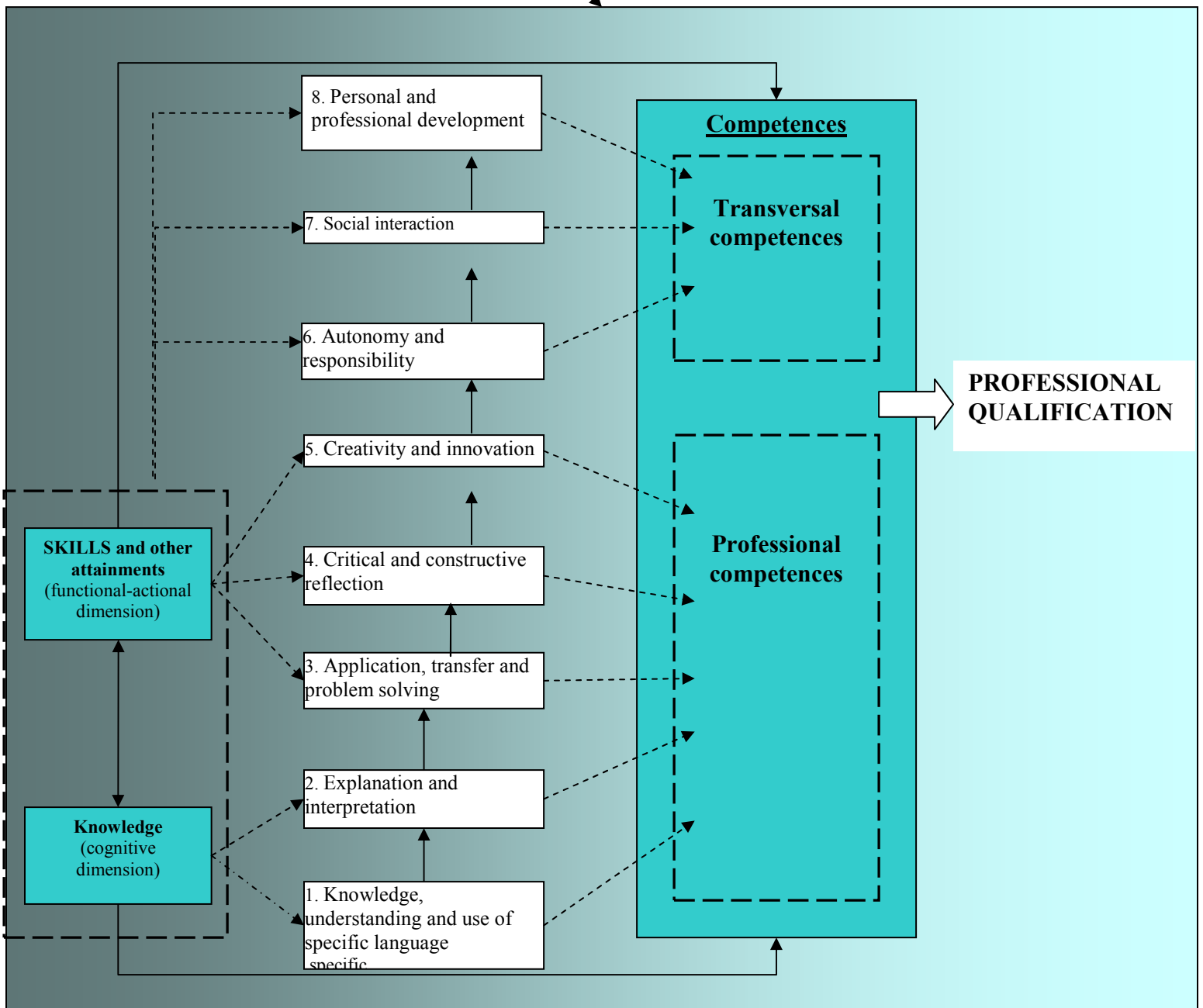


Figure 3.1 Learning outcomes

3.1.2. Descriptors of a higher education qualification

Professional competences are the integrated and dynamic unit of knowledge and skills:

Knowledge, as cognitive dimension and structural element of the competence, is expressed in terms of the following descriptors:

- (1) Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language;
- (2) Explanation and interpretation;

Skills, as functional-actional dimension and structural element of the competence, are expressed in terms of the following descriptors:

- (3) Application, transfer and problem solving;
- (4) Critical and constructive reflection;
- (5) Creative-innovative conduct;

Transversal competences are values and attitudes that transcend a certain study programme/field and are expressed in terms of the following descriptors:

- (6) Autonomy and responsibility;
- (7) Social interaction;
- (8) Personal and professional development.

3.1.3. Conceptual-methodological model for describing a higher education qualification

The conceptual-methodological model is a reference framework developed for the analysis, description and interpretation of qualifications in higher education.

The structure and contents of the model capitalize on descriptors of the overarching framework for qualifications for the European Higher Education Area as well as on content elements of models that already enjoy the positive appreciation of European experts (the British, French, Irish, Maltese models etc).

At the same time, the Romanian model has its own identity; it integrates categories and types of competences, qualification levels and specific descriptors while following consistently the conceptual design presented in the above paragraphs. The essential elements of this model are the NQFHE Matrix (Figure 3.2.) and two complementary instruments, included in the Appendix to this report, namely: Grid 1, representing a learning Outcomes based description of a HE qualification (Annex 1) and Grid 2, representing curriculum to support the learning outcomes and correlation with the number ECTS credits (Annex 2).

3.1.4. National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Matrix

The **NQFHE Matrix** includes: qualification levels, learning outcomes expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competences as well as the level descriptors for qualifications in higher education.

The **generic descriptors** introduced in the matrix in the first column indicate (in a vertical bottom listing) allow for the **description** of qualifications and, at the same time, formulate the necessary landmarks for the **assessment** of the competence level. The **level descriptors** for each type of learning outcomes detail *on a horizontal perspective* the generic descriptors for each qualification level: Bachelor, Master's, and Doctorate for each type of competence.

From a structural point of view, the **NQFHE Matrix** integrates professional and transversal competences, each of the two categories of competences having its legitimacy and importance in practising a profession. They form a solide couple that expresses the professional efficiency and effectiveness of a graduate that successfully finished a higher education programme.

Professional competences are expressed in terms of knowledge and skills which cover comprehensively the professional expertise for any qualification, while **transversal competences** are structured as: role competences and personal and professional development competences. These take into account the social and group context of practising a profession, as well as the awareness of the continuing training need.

The matrix is an integrative approach of higher education qualifications and it provides two perspectives for the analysis of these qualifications: vertical and horizontal.

The vertical analysis indicates the progress in professional competences from the level of *knowledge and understanding* (generic descriptor 1), the basic level of a learning outcome, to the *creative and innovative level* (generic descriptor 5), the highest level of training. Thus, professional competences are analysed and described in light of the generic descriptors (1 to 5).

The horizontal analysis presents a generic descriptor against the three university cycles: Bachelor, Master's and Doctorate. In this case, the descriptors highlight the competence development and the increase in the professional qualification level. One can notice that the model targets another type of progress, suggesting an increase in the *added value* for each type of learning outcome with the progress from one university qualification level to another.

The vertical perspective emphasizes that a certain level of competence can be reached only if the subordinated levels have been achieved and consolidated.

The horizontal perspective demonstrates that each level of competence related to the three study cycles must integrate the previous levels. As a result, each level of a given competence has a relative autonomy, being conditioned by prior attainments, both horizontally and vertically (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2
NQFHE Matrix

		DOCTORATE					
		MASTER'S					
		BACHELOR					
Transversal competences	Personal and professional development competences	8. Personal and professional development	Awareness of the need for continuing training; efficient use of learning techniques and resources for personal and professional development	Self-control of the learning process, diagnosis of training needs, reflective analysis on own professional activity	Development of creativity-centred projects as the basis for self-accomplishment		
	Role competences	7. Social interaction	Familiarisation with the teamwork-specific roles and activities and with task allocation for subordinated levels	Assuming management roles/functions for the activities within professional groups or institutions	Assuming responsibility and capacity to organise and lead the activities of professional groups, scientific research groups or institutions		
		6. Autonomy and responsibility	Responsible performance of professional tasks in an autonomous manner, with qualified assistance	Undertaking complex professional tasks under autonomy and professional independence conditions	Innovative initiation and development of complex theoretical and practical projects		
		5. Creativity and innovation	Development of professional projects by using well-known principles and methods within the field	Development of professional and/or research projects using a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods in an innovative manner	Design and undertake original research, based on advanced methods leading to the development of scientific and technological knowledge and/or of the research methodologies		
	Functional-actional dimension	4. Critical and constructive reflection	Adequate use of standard assessment criteria and methods to appraise the quality, merits and limitations of processes, programmes, projects, concepts, methods and theories	Pertinent and appropriate use of assessment criteria and methods to formulate judgements and fundament constructive decisions	Critical-constructive assessment of projects and scientific research results, appraisal of the stage of theoretical and methodological knowledge; identification of knowledge and applicative priorities within the field		
		3. Application, transfer and problem solving	Use of basic principles and methods for solving well defined problems/situations that are typical to the field, with qualified assistance	Integrated use of the conceptual and methodological apparatus in incompletely defined situations in order to solve new theoretical and practical problems	Selection and use of advanced principles, theories and methods of knowledge, transfer of methods from one field to another, interdisciplinary approaches to solve new and complex theoretical and practical problems		
		Professional competences	2. Explanation and interpretation	Use of basic knowledge to explain and interpret various types of concepts, situations, processes, projects etc. that are related to the field	Use of specialised knowledge in order to explain and interpret new situations, in wider contexts associated to the respective field	Use of advanced principles and methods to explain and interpret, from multiple perspectives, new and complex theoretical and practical situations/problems that are specific to the respective field	
	1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language		Knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, theories and methods within the field and the specialisation area; their adequate use in professional communication	In-depth knowledge of a specialisation area and, within it, of the programme specific theoretical, methodological and practical developments; appropriate use of specific language in communication with different professional environments	Systematic, advanced knowledge of concepts, research methods, controversies and new hypothesis specific to the field; communication with specialists from related fields		
	Learning outcomes	Generic descriptors				Level descriptors	

3.2. NQFHE – components

The identity of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education is shaped by 10 components, structured on 3 levels:

- A. Determining factors and processes for qualifications development (components 1,2,3, 4 and 5);
- B. Description and recognition of qualifications (components 6, 7 and 8);
- C. Impact on the training process, on the one hand, and on social development and innovation, and on the quality of life, on the other hand (components 9 and 10).
- D. The 10 components create a unitary whole where each component builds upon the value and functions of the others (Fig.3.3).

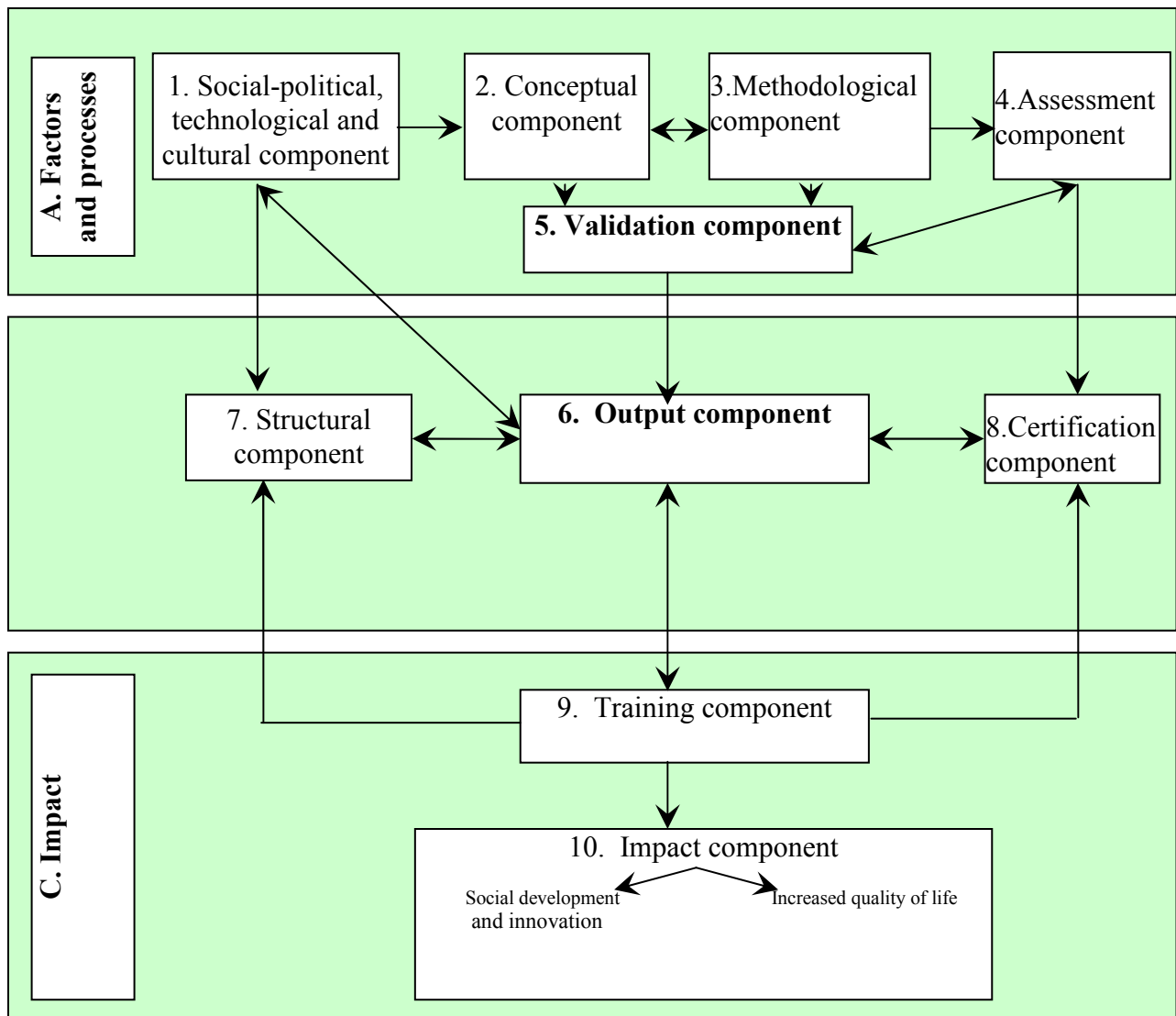


Figure 3.3. The ten components of the Romanian NQFHE and their interlinkages

1 The social-political, technological and cultural component

The NQFHE design and implementation involve links with social development projects, meeting the requirements of the knowledge society, lifelong learning and labour market. In the development of the NQFHE there was a focus on ensuring compliance with the European and national policies on qualifications description. NQFHE in Romania was developed so that it does not only allow for adaptation to the dynamics of existing professions, but also for the anticipation or forecasting of new ones.

2 **The conceptual component** includes the concepts and principles underlying the NQFHE design and implementation. They provide the theoretical basis for another component, namely the methodological-instrumental component.

- 3 **The methodological component** includes the conceptual matrix, the tools used to analyze and describe qualifications.
- 4 **The assessment component** encompasses the system of assessment types and procedures used for higher education qualifications. The minimum performance standards provided to demonstrate each competence defining the respective qualification are of outmost interest.
- 5 **The validation component** means that the designed NQFHE is subject to various subsequent analyses and evaluations.
- 6 **The output component** is illustrated by the types of qualifications and their correlations according to fields and to the three levels of qualification indicated above.
- 7 **The structural component**, in line with the Bologna process, focuses on three of the eight levels of qualification, namely: Bachelor university studies, corresponding to EQF level 6, Master's university studies, corresponding to EQF level 7, and doctoral university studies, corresponding to EQF level 8.
- 8 **The certification component** includes four categories of procedures:
 - Development of relevant documents for validation of a university qualification, by the university study programmes providers;
 - Qualification evaluation and accreditation procedures – by relevant bodies;
 - Registration and updating procedures for the National Qualifications Register for Higher Education (NQRHE).
 - Ensuring compatibility with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area as well as with the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (Annex 3)
- 9 **The training component** is based on the qualifications descriptions and the related curriculum documents (educational plans, curricula, discipline plans) and it relies on principles and strategies allowing the specification of competences defining each qualification.
- 10 **The impact component** evaluates qualifications designed and developed. The evaluation of impact takes into account both the contribution of qualifications to the social development and innovation and the effects on personal development and on the improvement of quality of life.

Figure 3.2 highlights the relationships between the ten components. The output component (6) holds a core position as the types of qualifications are developed, on the one hand, based on the social, political, technological and cultural component (1), on the conceptual-theoretical component (2), on the methodological-instrumental component (3), on the assessment component (4) and on the validation component (5) and, on the other hand, on the qualification levels provided by the structural component (7): level 6-Bachelor, level 7-Master's and level 8-Doctorate. Component 8 (certification) aims at the social/national/international recognition of a qualification.

This system of components was put in place through the Methodology on the development and implementation of NQFHE in Romania, approved as Ministerial Order no 4430/2009.

3.3. NQFHE Relevance

The current version of the NQFHE model is the result of various argumentations, analyses and evaluations. All these actions led to a review of the initial version, in order to improve and validate the current structure.

The arguments to support the relevance and consistence of the current NQFHE model are as follows:

- Compatibility of the NQFHE design and structure with the principles of the Bologna process and with the EU documents concerning academic and professional qualifications;
- Use of valuable advanced and recognised experience of EU countries in the development of qualifications systems;
- Critical assimilation and use, according to Romania's own needs, of theories and research on career development and progression (types of competences, assessment criteria, development stages);
- Development of marketing studies on the university educational provision and the labour market demand for diagnostic and forecasting purposes as well as for the quality check of the referenced NQFHE;
- Illustration of the underpinning NQFHE concept (principles, key concepts) by means of a set of methodological instruments (matrix, grids etc.) to ensure the internal coherence of the model;
- Organisation of workshops attended by representatives of universities, employers, professional associations, students and graduates to analyse and improve the quality of the NQFHE model and of the methodological instruments designed;
- Piloting by teams of specialists in various fields to analyse and assess the implementation of the NQFHE model;
- Development and recognition of the qualifications system within a field, based on the NQFHE model. Most of these activities were undertaken under Phare projects, as well as with the financial support of the European Social Fund and of the Romanian Government under SOPHRD 2007-2013.

The way the Romanian NQFHE descriptors were formulated reflects the specificity of our higher education system and the profession's culture of Romania. At the same time, can be substantially referenced to the QF/EHEA level descriptors and to the EQF specific level descriptors as it is demonstrated in Annex 3.

This verification process contributes to trust and confidence building among all the Romanian stakeholders as well as among all the participating states in the Bologna framework. Compatibility with the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education and transparency of criteria and procedures involved in the description of the qualifications in the Romanian higher education are defining components of this process.

The following three tables highlight the compatibility of the level descriptors used in the Romanian NQFHE with the Dublin Descriptors applied in order to make visible the differentiation between the Bologna study cycles as well as the progression of knowledge, skills and other learning outcomes from the first cycle to the second one and, eventually to the third cycle of higher education.

Table 2. Level descriptors for the First Cycle (Bachelor's degree) of the Romanian Higher Education compared to the Dublin Descriptors involved in the design of QF/EHEA

Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education		1 st Cycle Dublin Descriptors for the Bologna structure of HE
Generic Descriptors	First Cycle Descriptors	
1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language	Knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, theories and methods within the field and the specialisation area; their adequate use in professional communication.	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study; +
2. Explanation and interpretation	Use of basic knowledge to explain and interpret various types of concepts, situations, processes, projects etc. that are related to the field.	Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and nonspecialist audiences;
3. Application, transfer and problem solving	Use of basic principles and methods for solving well defined problems/situations that are typical to the field, with partial qualified assistance.	Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;
4. Critical and constructive reflection	Adequate use of standard assessment criteria and methods to appraise the quality, merits and limitations of processes, programmes, projects, concepts, methods and theories.	Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;
5. Creativity and innovation	Development of professional projects on unpredictable problems by using principles and methods within the field	

	in a creative or innovative manner.	
6. Autonomy and responsibility	Responsible performance of professional tasks in an autonomous manner, with qualified assistance.	Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and nonspecialist audiences;
7. Social interaction	Familiarisation with the teamwork-specific roles and activities and with task allocation for subordinated levels.	
8. Personal and professional development	Awareness of the need for continuing training; efficient use of learning techniques and resources for personal and professional development.	
Number of ECTS	Typically include 180-240 ECTS credits. Study programmes referring to academic qualifications for EU regulated professions might reach 300-360 ECTS credits.	Typically include 180-240 ECTS credits.

The Dublin Descriptors concerning communication skills (“can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and nonspecialist audiences”) is mentioned twice in the last column of Table 2 as these skills help the graduate of a bachelor’s degree programme to demonstrate “knowledge and understanding”, to take over responsibilities and to interact with others.

Table 3. Level descriptors for the Second Cycle (Master’s degree) of the Romanian Higher Education compared to the Dublin Descriptors involved in the design of QF/EHEA

Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education		2 nd Cycle Dublin Descriptors for the Bologna structure of HE
Generic Descriptors	Second Cycle Descriptors	
1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language	In-depth knowledge of a specialisation area and, within it, of the programme specific theoretical, methodological and practical developments; appropriate use of specific language in communication with different professional environments.	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;
2. Explanation and interpretation	Use of specialised knowledge in order	+

	to explain and interpret new situations, in wider contexts associated to the respective field.	Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;
3. Application, transfer and problem solving	Integrated use of the conceptual and methodological apparatus in incompletely defined situations in order to solve new theoretical and practical problems.	Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;
4. Critical and constructive reflection	Pertinent and appropriate use of assessment criteria and methods to formulate judgements and fundamental constructive decisions.	Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;
5. Creativity and innovation	Development of professional and/ or research projects using a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods in an innovative manner.	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;
6. Autonomy and responsibility	Undertaking complex professional tasks under autonomy and professional independence conditions.	Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;
7. Social interaction	Assuming management roles/ functions for the activities within professional groups or institutions.	
8. Personal and professional development	Self-control of the learning process, diagnosis of training needs, reflective analysis on own professional activity.	Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely selfdirected or autonomous.

Number of ECTS	Typically include 60-120 ECTS credits at the second cycle level.	Normally carry 90-120 ECTS credits – minimum 60 ECTS credits at the second cycle level.
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As mentioned above, the Dublin Descriptor concerning communication skills (“can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously”) is mentioned twice in the last column of Table 3 as these skills help a graduate of a master’s degree programme to demonstrate “knowledge of a specialisation area”, to undertake complex professional tasks and to assume roles and function within professional groups or institutions.

Table 4. Level descriptors for the Third Cycle (Doctorate) of the Romanian Higher Education compared to the Dublin Descriptors involved in the design of QF/EHEA

Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education		3 rd Cycle Dublin Descriptors for the Bologna structure of HE
Generic Descriptors	Third Cycle Descriptors	
1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language	Systematic, advanced knowledge of concepts, research methods, controversies and new hypothesis specific to the field; communication with specialists from related fields.	Have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field; +
2. Explanation and interpretation	Use of advanced principles and methods to explain and interpret, from multiple perspectives, new and complex theoretical and practical situations/problems that are specific to the respective field.	Can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
3. Application, transfer and problem solving	Selection and use of advanced principles, theories and methods of knowledge, transfer of methods from one field to another, interdisciplinary approaches to solve new and complex theoretical and practical problems.	Have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;
4. Critical and constructive reflection	Critical-constructive assessment of projects and scientific research results, appraisal of the stage of theoretical and methodological knowledge; identification of knowledge and applicative priorities within the field.	Are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas.

5. Creativity and innovation	Design and undertake original research, based on advanced methods leading to the development of scientific and technological knowledge and/or of the research methodologies.	Have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;
6. Autonomy and responsibility	Innovative initiation and development of complex theoretical and practical projects.	Can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise; +
7. Social interaction	Assuming responsibility and capacity to organise and lead the activities of professional groups, scientific research groups or institutions.	Can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technologi-cal,
8. Personal and professional development	Development of creativity-centred projects as the basis for self-accomplishment.	social or cultural advance-ment in a knowledge based society.

As seen, the communication skills are again more detailed in the Romanian NQFHE aiming at making aware universities and research institutes to focus on those skills which enable a holder of a PhD diploma to become a pro-active actor in the organization and in the society ay large.

3.4. NQFHE Implementation in Romania

The NQFHE methodology indicates clear and detailed procedures for the registration of a new qualification, or for the amendment or removal of an existing qualification. Before the implementation of NQFHE and of the National Register for Qualifications in Higher Education (NQRHE), the study programmes were approved by Government decision and managed by the Ministry of Education. For example, under the ESF-funded DOCIS project, implementation of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education started based on the study programmes included in the Government Decision No. 635/2008. Qualifications related to these study programmes were developed and validated in *consortia*, then registered with NQRHE.

The implementation agency – ACPART, currently NQA – organized a series of preparatory meetings with representatives of both public and private universities with a clear training goal of the local experts which were later involved in the learning outcomes based description of the qualifications. In all these meetings, besides **professors and students, stakeholders** were also invited to have an active involvement.

The 73 consortia and numerous dissemination activities represented other opportunities for the implementation agency to bring together higher education institutions and stakeholders for in-depth discussion on the description of qualifications.

Another series of regional meetings was dedicated to the training of university representatives empowered by their respective institutions to access the electronic platform of the Register in order to add detailed information concerning the provided study programmes.

To sum-up, ACPART adopted a pro-active strategy in a continuing enlargement of those involved in the design, implementation and use of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

The validation of a new qualification and its registration in NQRHE involve the following stages:

Stage I: Preparation and submission of the application dossier for validating a qualification.

The applicant submits to ACPART, currently NQA a validation dossier for the university or post-university qualification proposed to be attested by a diploma or certificate that is recognised on the labour market and within the academic division of qualifications. This dossier is filled in distinctly for each type of qualification and includes the following documents: Application form for the new qualification ; Copies of the documents that grant the applicant – according to the Romanian legislation in force – the legal right to issue diplomas and/or certificates recognised by the labour market; Grid 1; Grid 2; Curriculum and discipline sheets (syllabi); Summary of the qualification description to be up-loaded in NQRHE after validation; Payment receipt of the evaluation fee.

Stage II: Qualification Evaluation and Validation

ACPART analyses and evaluates the dossier against the following criteria:

- Provider's eligibility to be granted the right to issue diplomas and/or certificates attesting university and/or post-university qualifications.
- Novelty as well as the match with the labour market needs
- Academic and professional relevance of the proposed qualification from the perspective of the academic division of knowledge.
- Consistency of the proposed qualification – the qualification covers the professional and transversal competences necessary upon programme graduation;
- Compliance with NRQHE registration rules, considering the level and field of study, according to the professional and transversal competences obtained after successful graduation of the study programme.

This stage involves a verification of both **administrative compliance** (verification of all components of the dossier) and **methodological compliance** (analysis and evaluation of dossiers), according to the procedures indicated in the Methodology. Following this verification and analysis, the qualification may be validated, delayed or rejected.

Stage III – ACPART issues a **Recommendation** based on the evaluation and validation of the qualification, which is one of the compulsory documents of the application dossier forwarded by universities to ARACIS – the Quality Assurance Agency in order to get the accreditation.

Stage IV - Registration with the National Register of Qualifications in Higher Education and information dissemination

3.5. National Register of Qualifications in Higher Education (NQRHE)

3.5.1 National and international context

Due to the growing dispersion of the information sources and to the increasing number of universities providing similar or own qualifications, the need to structure educational provision became increasingly stronger.

The concern for a systematic and structured classification of qualifications at international level is currently enhanced by the growing interest in a unitary presentation, ensuring visibility of educational provision at national or regional level and access to it for as many as possible. Wide access to such information facilitates the recognition of qualifications acquired in a country or another and to more opportunities for graduates of higher education institutions in the labour market.

Currently, the information source which meets most adequately these objectives is an IT application, a portal which allows unrestricted access at international level. In Romania, the National Qualifications Register was developed under a strategic ESF-funded project, as an instrument of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education, a portal using the most advanced IT technologies currently available. The information and data security mechanisms of the database management system provide secure access to information.

3.5.2 What is the NQRHE?

NQRHE is a link between universities, current and future students and employers and a tool for the identification, registration, permanent consultation and updating of qualifications. In order to facilitate communication and access to information at international level as well, the website is available both in Romanian and in English.

The NQRHE portal centralises descriptions of **all** higher education qualifications accredited by the national authority for the accreditation of higher education institutions (ARACIS). Thus, the users know that upon graduation of a higher education institution registered in the portal their degree is recognised at national and European level.

The NQRHE allows for **searching** qualifications registered in the system, it optimises the qualifications **management**, it increases the **visibility** of higher education institutions, it supports career

guidance for students and it assists **employers** to **select** the employees with the right qualifications from potential candidates. Thus, the NQRHE portal targets several categories of users.

- Higher education graduates and their parents have available a unitary description of the study programmes provided by universities, indicating the competences graduates acquire upon successful completion of studies.
- Potential and current students have available a clear overview on the **occupations** they may practise after graduation.
- Graduates and students of higher education institutions will benefit from an easier recognition of diplomas reflecting the competences they acquired, especially for the lifelong learning process, in national or foreign higher education institutions.
- Employers can better select their future employees, based on the description of competences and the on-the-job training needs after employment will decrease. Moreover, once familiar with the educational provision, companies may actively participate in the improvement of the educational provision, by providing internship opportunities and involvement in the teaching process.
- For universities/faculties, the NQRHE is first of all an information and dissemination instrument for their own provision. Based on the NQRHE information, universities can compare their own provision with what other institutions offer and to adjust to better cope with the competition.
 - Besides public information, the Ministry of Education has access to reports indicating the dynamics of qualifications registration with the NQFHE and may request more detailed analyses.

The information included in the NQRHE is structured according to the NQFHE Methodology. The search mechanisms allow for filtering the information according to the user's interests: the search option can filter by qualification, by degree awarded after graduation, by possible occupations, by geographic area, by study duration, by study level, etc. Each user may choose the level of detail in their search – from general information (e.g. competences acquired or list of faculties providing a certain qualification) to detailed information (e.g. detailed descriptors of competences or educational plans of faculties).

The portal includes a public section registering information on the accredited qualifications and a section dedicated to own provision of universities/faculties. Thus, the university autonomy in the implementation of study programmes is encouraged. Universities/faculties are solely responsible for the information they register in their own section.

The portal allows public access, without authentication, for all types of users to read the information stored. In order to introduce new information or to ensure portal administration, access requires authentication based on user name and password. The information is fully protected by information security mechanisms.

3.5.3 NQRHE – information tool

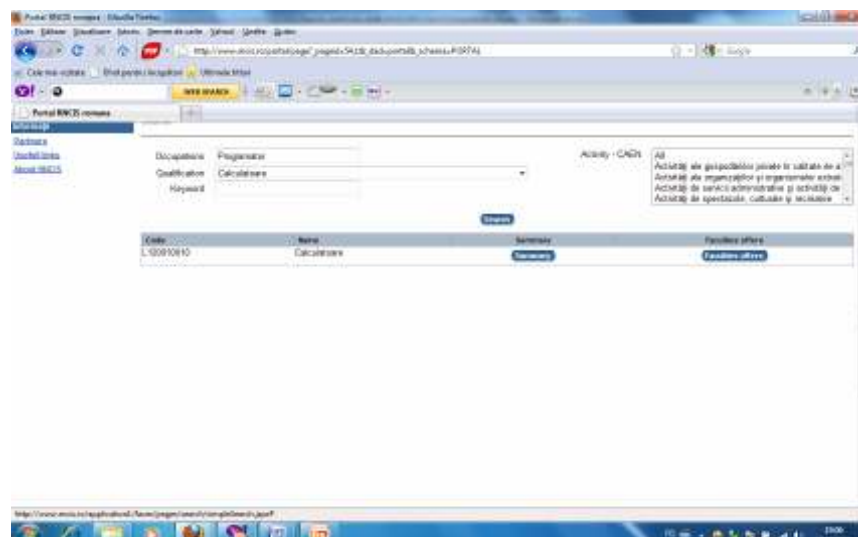
The NQRHE is a portal built upon an Oracle database allowing (in the public section, which requires no authentication) simple and advanced search and provides overall information on the DOCIS project partners and on the NQRHE.

The portal provides access to information by means of useful links. The simple search can be filtered by occupation, qualification, key words or NACE activities (Fig. 3.4).



Figure 3.4 Simple search in NQRHE

Following the search, the list of qualifications matching the search criterion will be posted. In the next step the user may search for a more detailed description of the qualification or for the list of universities/faculties providing that qualification (Fig. 3.5).



In order to facilitate precise information, the advanced search allows for the combination of several search criteria, such as: learning mode, fundamental or study field, type of programme, programme duration, geographical area, entry requirements, teaching language etc. (Fig. 3.6).



Figure 3.6 Advanced search criteria

Following the search, the list of qualifications matching the criteria will be posted on the screen. Detailed information, presented in compliance with the NQFHE Methodology may be obtained. The summary of the qualification and the description of competences may be printed (Fig. 3.7).



Figure 3.7 Qualification detailed description

Faculties may introduce their own educational provision: additional competences provided, grid 2 with the related educational plan and the link to the faculty/university website.

For better visibility of the higher education system, the portal allows for posting previous versions of qualifications, correlated with a current qualification. This can assist in tracing the qualification evolution (Fig.3.8).



Figure 3.8 Search for previous qualifications

3.5.4 NQRHE – working instrument for faculties / universities

One of the important functions of the NQRHE is the support it provides for NQFHE management. More precisely, it ensures:

- **Verification of qualifications.** Upon registration, it checks whether the qualification was validated by the appropriate validation and that there is a sole registration.
- **Verification of educational provision** of universities/faculties. In order to be uploaded in the educational provision, the study programmes must be validated by ARACIS. Thus, the portal guarantees that upon graduation of a study programme published in the national register that degree is recognised at national/European level.
- **Archives of previous qualifications.** All changes made and validate are saved to archive. The qualifications which are not provided anymore are not removed from the system, their description can still be posted, and there is a mention that it is not valid anymore. Thus, the portal traces the qualifications evolution.
- **History of qualifications.** Due to the significant changes in the higher education field in the past half-century, there is a need to identify possible correspondence between the current qualifications and those awarded before the implementation of the Bologna Process. The portal includes a database which may be interrogated by graduation year, for 1965-2010.

- **Comparison of various faculty provisions.** Following the search based on different criteria, we get the list of all faculties providing a certain qualification and their educational provision so that we can compare.
- **The diagnosis of the higher education system** and opportunities to correct issues identified. Using the advanced search we may notice overlapping in the provision, mismatches between the competences declared and the syllabi or between the syllabi and the study duration.

The NQRHE portal can also be accessed at <http://www.ncis.ro> (Fig. 3.9).

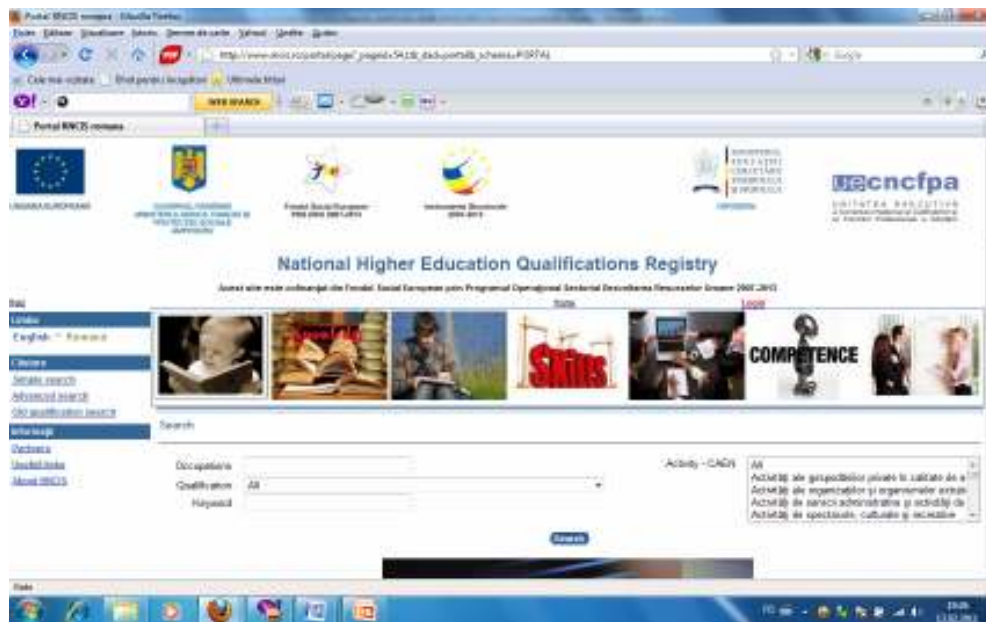


Figure 3.9 NQRHE Homepage

Chapter IV

Compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications

Framework for Higher Education with the Framework

for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

4.1 Compatibility Criteria

Criterion 1

The Bergen Communiqué (2005) stated:

„The national framework for higher education qualifications and the body or bodies responsible for its development are designated by the national ministry with responsibility for higher education.”

The development of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Romania (NQFHE) was initiated in 2005, and NQFHE was designed as a sole fundamental instrument to determine the qualifications structure and ensure national recognition as well as international comparability and compatibility of qualifications acquired within the higher education system. The purpose of the NQFHE is to recognise, measure and relate all learning outcomes acquired in the higher education system (BMD) and ensure coherence of qualifications and degrees.

During the whole period, the implementation agency was systematically supported by the Ministry of Education in its endeavour, this support being an expression of the strong commitment of the Romanian authorities to implement all the Bologna framework agreements.

The development of the NQFHE included 3 stages: the institutional development stage, conceptual-methodological stage and the implementation stage.

1.1 The institutional development stage

By Government Decision no 1357/2005, the Romanian Government appointed the National Agency for Qualifications in Higher Education and Partnership with the Economic and Social Environment - ACPART

public legal entity, specialised body subordinated to the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport with the role of national authority for higher education qualifications.

ACPART ensured permanent cooperation with the Council of Europe for the implementation of the national qualifications framework in line with the Overall Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA, as the director of ACPART was nominated as national representative for the consultation process organised at European level.

In June 2010, ACPART merged³¹ with an institution having similar tasks in the pre-university and adult training sectors, under the name of the Executive Unit of the National Qualifications and Adult Training Council (UECNCFPFA).

UECNCFPFA is a public legal entity specialised body subordinated to the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport. In October 2010, UECNCFPFA became the National Coordination Point for the Qualifications Framework in Romania.

The National Education Law stipulates that the institution responsible for the management of the entire national qualifications framework is the National Authority for Qualification (ANC), set up by re-organisation of UECNCFPFA, under the coordination of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport³².

1.2 Conceptual-methodological stage

During 2006-2009, in its capacity as national authority for higher education qualifications, ACPART developed the NQFHE Methodology³³ and acted as coordinator and link between all stakeholders involved in the development of the NQFHE: higher education institutions, employers, trade unions, employers' associations, sectoral committees, students, parents. The Methodology design involved thorough consultation with all categories of stakeholders during regional meetings. The initial version of the Methodology was followed by a piloting exercise: 45 qualifications concerning first and second cycle study programmes were described according to the provisions of the initial Version of the Methodology in order to observe its applicability in the context of Romanian higher education institutions. A series of corrections and improvement resulted during these exercises. The piloting actions were funded from PHARE Programmes.

The final version of the *Methodology on the development of the NQFHE* was officially approved by the Ministry of Education and Research by Ministerial Order No 4430/29.06.2009. The legal provisions

³¹ GEO no 74/2010 as amended by GEO no 132/ 2010

³² *National Education Law no1/05.01.2011*, published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, Year 179 (XXIII), number 18 of January 10, 2011, art. 340, al. (1) – (4) and art. 342, al. (1) – (4).

³³ The authors of the Methodology are: Sorin Eugen ZAHARIA (coordinator), Gheorghe BARBU, Gheorghe BÂRLEA, Toma Leonida DRAGOMIR, Mihail KORCA, Mariana Ionela MOCANU, Bogdan Costin MURGESCU, Ioan NEACȘU, Dan POTOLEA, Steliana TOMA, Margareta Simona IVAN, Iuliana Marinela TRĂȘCĂ

include the *Matrix of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education*, the working tools/grids for the description of qualifications and the *Implementation Guide*³⁴.

The Methodology was implemented without amendments by ACPART, currently NAQ, and its main provisions were included in the National Education Law no 1/2011, art. 341, al. (1) – (4)³⁵.

The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport – MERYS is the official structure coordinating NAQ – the agency with specific responsibilities in the development of the national qualifications framework, including higher education qualifications.

1.3. The implementation stage

Implementation commenced in October 2008, under the ESF-funded project “Development of an operational system of qualifications in higher education – DOCIS” no 2/1.2/S/2, funded under the SOPHRD 2007-2013, by the European Social Fund and the Romanian Government. This stage involved the description of all higher education qualifications provided by universities in compliance with the GD no 635/2008, GD no 749/2009 and GD no 634/2010.

In order to facilitate the process, the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport together with ACPART initiated and promoted the necessary documents for the NQFHE implementation: *Government Decision no 890/* on the titles of qualifications and awards granted to graduates of Bachelor higher education studies³⁶, as well as other documents on the use of Diploma Supplement for higher education: *Minister Order no 5289/September 9, 2008 on the Bachelor diploma and diploma supplement*, *Order no 4151/2010* on the Master diploma and the Diploma Supplement and *Minister Order no 5803/2010* on the approval of the Bachelor diploma, architect diploma and Diploma supplements models.

Therefore,

Criterion 1 has been met and is fully compliant with requirements stated by the Bergen Report.

³⁴ *The Order of the minister of education, research and youth on the use of the national qualifications framework* no 4430/29.06. was published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, no 545 of 05.08.2009

³⁵ *National Education Law*, no 1/2011, published in the *Official Gazette*, Part I, no 18 of 10.01.2011.

³⁶ *Government Decision no 890/2008* on the titles of qualifications and awards granted to graduates of Bachelor higher education studies, published in the *Official Gazette*, Part I, no 269-29.08.2008.

Criterion 2

There is a clear and demonstrable link between the qualifications Levels in the national qualifications Framework or system and the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.

2.1. Context

The National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (NQFHE) was developed simultaneously with the implementation of other priorities of the Romanian higher education system: the continuing enhancement of quality assurance in universities, the improvement of dialogue and interaction among universities and the main stakeholders of their host region/country, the self certification of the compatibility of the NQFHE with the two reference tools at continental level:

- 1 The overarching **Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area (QF/EHEA)**³⁷ adopted in 2005 by European Ministers of Education on the proposal of the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. In the context of the present Self-Certification Report, the main priority was to demonstrate the full compatibility of the Romanian NQFHE with QF/EHEA.
- 2 The **European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)** published in 2008 by the European Commission³⁸ represents a referencing goal which will be reached after the full development of the National Qualifications Framework, covering all the eight levels (under development).

The Dublin Descriptors – were circulated Europe wide starting with October 2004. They define a qualification obtained upon successful graduation of a study programme in terms of level of knowledge, professional skills and abilities as well as role attitudes which are recognized in the labour market as job requirements.

Romanian higher education institutions introduced in their Mission Statement the concern for preparing the graduates to enter the current labour market, and by now are engaged in their first attempts to describe academic qualifications in specific terms of the labour market were marked.

The overarching European framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a meta-reference, which “supports better understanding of *how qualifications systems of the various states in the area are related to each other*”. *The framework for qualifications of the EHEA does not replace national frameworks. It augments them by providing a series of reference points whereby they can demonstrate their mutual compatibility*”.³⁹ International transparency of the learning outcomes, international

³⁷ **A Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area**. Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Published by the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Copenhagen, February 2005.

³⁸ **The European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)**. European Commission, DG Education and Culture, Brussels, 2008.

³⁹ **A Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area**. Copenhagen, February 2005, pp. 57-58.

recognition of qualifications and international mobility of learners and graduates are the three main purposes aimed when developing a national qualifications framework compatible with QF-EHEA.

The Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve 2009 Conference Communiqué underpins the consent of European Ministers responsible for Higher Education to have implemented the national qualifications frameworks by 2012 and to have prepared for self-certification against the overarching Qualifications Framework for the EHEA. Ministers recognize that this objective requires continued coordination at the level of EHEA with the other reference – the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.⁴⁰

It promotes “both lifelong learning and equal opportunities in the knowledge-based society, as well as the further integration of the European labour market, while respecting the rich diversity of national education systems”.⁴¹

By 2012, all new qualification certificates diplomas and “Europass” documents issued by the competent national authorities contain a clear reference to the appropriate EQF level. At that moment, “The EQF will relate different countries’ national qualifications systems and frameworks together around a common European reference – its eight reference levels.

2.2. Comparative Analysis of EHEA, EQF and NQFHE of Romania

Under the circumstances created by the European reference documents indicated above, Romania has revised its national legal framework to develop transparent and easily applicable links between the two meta-references (see Table 1, page 25).

Between the Romanian NQFHE and the FQ/EHEA there are consistent similarities with regard to: key concepts, goals, qualifications’ levels, study programmes’ duration, sequencing of higher education and learning outcomes for each study cycle.

On the other hand, the Romanian NQFHE and the EQF: have been designed for a common goal; have the same definition of the qualification; are based on the learning outcomes concept, allowing users to compare various specific aspects like level of knowledge, variety of skills and competences; have the same architecture. Moreover, The Romanian qualifications’ levels 6, 7, and 8 correspond to the EQF qualifications’ levels 6, 7, and 8.

As a conclusion, the National Qualifications Framework in Romania (NQFHE-RO) is compatible in structure and content with the two European meta-frameworks.

Therefore,

Criterion 2 has been met and is fully compliant with the level descriptors of the European Qualifications Framework.

⁴⁰ See article 12 in the *Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Higher Education*, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009.

⁴¹ *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning*. Official Journal of the European Union C 111, 06.05.2008, p. 3.

Criterion 3

The national framework and its qualifications are demonstrably based on learning outcomes and the qualifications are linked to ECTS or ECTS compatible credits.

The NQFHE implementation is based on the *Methodology* providing clear advice on how learning outcomes are used in the design of a study programme and, implicitly, in the description of a qualification. The NQFHE matrix includes: qualification levels, learning outcomes expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competences as well as the level descriptors for qualifications in higher education.

The *level descriptors for each type of learning outcomes* detail the generic descriptors for each type of competence and for each qualification level: Bachelor, Master's, and Doctorate.

From a structural point of view, the NQFHE matrix integrates professional and transversal competences, each of the two categories of competences having its legitimacy and importance in practising a profession. They form a solid unity of learning outcomes that expresses the professional efficiency and effectiveness of a study programme graduate. See details concerning the analytical properties of the Matrix under paragraph 3.1.4 of this Report.

Romanian universities started using the ECTS system in mid-'90s, as a tool for stimulating the international mobility of the.

The use of ECTS became necessary within the practices promoted by the Bologna Process not only for facilitating the international practices, but also to ensure students of own faculties the right to choose between two study disciplines proposed as optional/elective. ECTS also became the ideal tool for managing transfers from one institution to another, at national. In other words, ECTS was not used merely as a transfer system, but also as means to highlight the credit accumulation by each student.

Under this context, a first order on the implementation of ECTS was issued by the Ministry of Education in 1998. The university senates were invited to use ECTS to define the student workload for each discipline in the curriculum. Starting with the academic year 1998/1999, most universities aligned to the requirement to equate the normal workload specific to a university study-year to 60 credits, based on an equivalent of 25-27 work hours for each credit point accumulated.

The Romanian Parliament adopted Law No 288/2004 on the organisation of university studies⁴². In order to create the basis of student-centred higher education together with the re-organisation of higher education studies according to the three cycles, there was a need for new legislation – Minister Order no 3617 of March 16, 2005 on the general use of the ECST in all Romanian universities. According to the provisions of this order, each university created its own Regulation on credit transfer between own faculties, as well as between domestic and foreign universities so that, on the one hand, to ensure the finality of each

⁴² Law 288/2004 on the organisation of university studies, published in the *Official Gazette of Romania*, Part I, no 614 of 07.07.2004.

university study cycle and, on the other hand, to help customise the study pathways by encouraging students' option for specialised and complementary disciplines.

The National Education Law⁴³ No 1/2011 re-iterates the regulation concerning the general use of ECTS in the Romanian higher education. Article 148 of the Law stipulates that 300 ECTS credits represent the cumulated credits obtainable in Bachelor and Master' degree studies, out of which 180 to 240 credits are allocated to the Bachelor cycle. Article 149 stipulates that the number of transferable credits is the reference element universities can use for:

- Recognition of studies of periods of studies undertaken previously in order to equvalate and transfer credits and possibly to continue studies within a programme provided by the higher education institution;
- Equivalation, continuing studies or completion of studies within the country or abroad.

ECTS is used in the *Methodology on the development and implementation of the NQFHE as well*. Grid 2 is used at the level of each qualification to determine the correlations between the professional and transversal competences, on the one hand, and the contents areas, study disciplines and credits allocated, on the other hand. Grid 2 is one of the tools developed for the NQFHE, but used mainly by ARACIS to evaluate the quality of similar study programmes within a fundamental knowledge field. The data included in this grid will enhance transparency of the study provision in each field, by ranking the study programmes provided by various universities.

Therefore,

Criterion 3 has been met, the national qualifications framework for higher education and each qualification building on the learning outcomes, which are correlated with the ECTS specific credits.

Criterion 4

The procedures for inclusion of qualifications in the national framework are clear.

The Methodology on the development and implementation of the NQFHE includes a chapter describing the procedures to include new qualifications in the national framework. Thus, *the Methodology* includes clear and detailed procedures for registering a new qualification, for amending or eliminating a qualification from the Romanian NQFHE (see paragraph 3.4 of this Self-certification Report). The inclusion of in the NQFHE fosters the transparency of the Romanian higher education provision, stimulates universities to

⁴³ *National Education Law no 1/2011*, published in the *Official Gazette of Romania*, Part I, no 18 of 10.01.2011.

continually improve the quality of their study programmes, and leads to fair competition between the various universities providing similar study programmes.

Procedures for including qualifications specific to study programmes are as follows:

- For Bachelor study programmes listed in the Government Decision No 635/2008, the qualification validation was performed through consensus of participants in national validation consortia. All universities providing study programmes in the respective field, as well as employers associations, students and graduates were invited to participate in these consortia which were organised under the DOCIS project – *Development of an operational system of qualifications in higher education in Romania*. After validation, the qualification was included in the NQFHE by the project management.
- For Bachelor and Master’s study programmes to be set up after 2010, Romanian universities were trained on higher education qualifications development under the DOCIS project and are assisted by ACPART/NQA experts to prepare and submit the application for the validation of the new qualification (Annex 5 to the Methodology).
- For the new Master’s programmes, ACPART/NQA experts working under the DOCIS project developed the description of professional and transversal competences specific to Master’s level qualifications for a number of projects amounting for about 8% of the total current provision registered by universities with ARACIS as authorised Master’s programmes. These were selected so that each study field will have at least one Master’s qualification described. The validation of these qualifications is performed by ACPART/NQA experts, following discussions on the qualification description grid in the faculties councils, with employers and professional associations.
- For the other Master’s programmes, universities are supported to develop them by ACPART/UECNCFPA experts who apply a methodological verification of the applications with a view to validation (Annex 5 to the *Methodology*).

On the other hand, the development of the National Qualifications Register for Higher Education in Romania – NQFHE (see paragraph 3.5 of this *Self-certification Report*) creates a modern tool for fast and free information not only for universities and employers in Romania and abroad, but also for students, future students and their families. Thus, full transparency of the higher education system is ensured from the perspective of learning outcomes and qualifications that may be awarded upon completion of studies.

There are several legal provisions stating the place and the role of the national qualifications framework within the Romanian education system, as well as its interface with the rest of the system.

The National Education Law No 1/2011 allocated a chapter for lifelong learning, providing for all institutional and operational aspects related to the development of the national qualifications framework, as well as the validation of qualifications acquired by learning.

Article 341 focuses on the integration of sub-systems within the national qualifications framework, emphasising the following: “*the national qualifications framework is a tool for the classification of qualifications against a set of criteria matching specific learning levels. The implementation of the national*

*qualifications framework targets qualifications acquired in general secondary education, in the technical and vocational education, in continuing vocational training, apprenticeship, **higher education**, as well as formal, informal and non-formal learning in a lifelong learning perspective”.*

As indicated in this Report, the Methodology on the development and implementation of the NQFHE was approved by Order of the Minister of Education in 2009, which allowed for coherent management by ACPART/NQA of inclusion of validated qualifications in the NQFHE as a sub-system of the national qualifications framework.

The Methodology can be consulted on the ACPART//NQA web page and on the web pages of higher education institutions.

The Romanian NQRHE became operational in January 2011. The Register allows users to visualise the documents regulating the inclusion of a qualification in the NQFHE (see paragraph 3.5 of this *Self-certification Report*).

Therefore,

Criterion 4 has been met, and the procedure for inclusion of qualifications in the national framework is clear and easy to explain.

Criterion 5

The national quality assurance systems for higher education refer to the national framework of qualifications and are consistent with the *Berlin Communiqué* and any subsequent communiqué agreed by ministers in the Bologna Process.

The National Qualifications Authority, former ACPART through its Higher Education Qualifications Directorate considers quality as one of the crucial values of the higher education system, a guarantee of the quality of learning outcomes, of the graduates' competitiveness in the labour market and of the personal satisfaction of diploma holders. This is the reason for a strong co-operative work with ARACIS – Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

Romania had an Accreditation Council – CNEAA (1993-2005) which was replaced in 2006 by the current Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in order to bring external evaluation procedures in accordance with ESG – European Standards and Guidelines of ENQA. After implementing a new evaluation methodology for the quality assessment of study programmes and for the quality management at university level, ARACIS became in 2009 a full member of European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education– ENQA, and was later on registered with EQAR – European Quality Assurance Register.

The National Qualifications Authority through its Higher Education Qualifications Directorate, together with the universities, ARACIS and with stakeholders interested in the higher education issues appraise quality as one of the fundamental values in the operation of the higher education system, a guarantee of the learning outcomes, of graduates satisfaction and competitiveness in the labour market. The implementation of this requirement proves to be a complex activity. It involves close interaction between universities and the economic and institutional environment where students find employment, as well as with professional associations which contribute actively in defining the quality standards of the profession.

The new higher education quality culture means the involvement of all stakeholders interested in quality, from students and teaching staff to department, university, and quality assurance agency, national authority for qualifications, employers and professional associations. This process has taken an important step ahead in raising awareness on this shared responsibility as a result of the organisation of validation consortia at national level for the Bachelor study programmes⁴⁴. Building on this model, each faculty develops dialogue with social partners on the qualifications acquired by Master's graduates. Each Romanian university developed a specialised department for dialogue with employers and one of the deputy rectors is responsible both for the quality of the teaching-learning process and for the qualifications acquired by the graduates of the study programmes. Universities are interested in attracting representative employers and professional associations to be involved in a regular review of the curriculum and of the syllabi, as efficient means of fast adaptation of the contents of tertiary training to the labour market requirements and expectations.

ARACIS is currently updating the methodology on external evaluation of the study programmes quality. The chapter on educational efficiency in the Quality Review Methodology includes now criteria, standards and performance indicators reflecting the learning outcomes in terms of the professional and transversal competences a graduate should demonstrate, as laid out by the *Methodology on the Development of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education*.

The higher education quality review process in Romania takes into consideration several principles:

- Ongoing internal evaluation of the quality of the learning and teaching process, involving the students and employers;
- Regular external evaluation of the quality of study programmes, considering the success rates of graduates both in terms of employment and in terms of further education to higher cycles or abroad. Professional associations and representative employers are systematically invited to participate in the evaluation.

⁴⁴ *DOCIS – Development of an operational qualifications system in higher education in Romania (2009-2011)* este un SOP HRD project no 2/1.2/S/2 funded by the European Social Fund and co-funded by the Romanian Government. The project included the organisation of 72 national consortia for validation of all Bachelor-level qualifications in Romania.

- Annual publication of a survey on the higher education in Romania, considering both academic management issues and students' and graduates' perceptions and the labour market requirements and expectations.
- Registration with the NQRHE functions as a quality check on the university management, as it involves peer review to indicate whether the quality and transparency measures adopted by each department and university to quality assure graduates' training have been observed.

This last principle summarises the links between the Romanian system for quality assurance in higher education and the national qualifications framework and the NQRHE.

Therefore,

Criterion 5 has been fully met and compliant with the requirements stated by the Berlin Communiqué (2003) of the higher education ministers.

Criterion 6

The national framework and any alignments with the European framework are referenced in all Diploma Supplements.

All universities in Romania issue a *Diploma Supplement* upon graduation of Bachelor⁴⁵ (first cycle) and Master's⁴⁶ (second cycle). The universities develop a customized document for each graduate, using a national template promoted by the Ministry of Education, compatible with the Recommendation of the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES.

The Diploma Supplement is drafted both in Romanian and in English and it indicates the competences acquired (according to the Methodology developed by ACPART and approved by the Ministry of Education). The document refers in its title to the level of the graduated studies (i.e. Diploma Supplement for Bachelor's degree studies and/or Diploma Supplement for Master's degree studies) and has a specific reference to the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. This supplement is issued free of charge for each student, at the same time with the graduation diploma.

⁴⁵ *Minister Order no 5289/September 9, 2008 on the Bachelor diploma and diploma supplement*, issued by the Ministry of Education and Research, published by the **Official Gazette**, Part I, no 655 of 17.09.2008.

⁴⁶ *Minister Order no 4151/15 June 2010 on the Master diploma and the Diploma Supplement*, issued by the Ministry of Education and Research, published by the **Official Gazette**, Part I, no 445/01.06.2010.

Therefore,

Thus, Criterion 6 has been fully met and compliant with the European Qualifications Framework.

Criterion 7

The responsibilities of the domestic parties to the national framework are clearly determined and published

The NQFHE Methodology indicates both the responsibilities higher education institutions have in the implementation of the national qualifications framework and the instruments they have available to this purpose: qualifications descriptions through grids 1bis and 2, registration with the NQRHE and the validation dossier for new qualifications. The same Methodology provides for the validation procedures in case of learning outcomes describing already existing qualifications: university-employers-social partners-students consortia, as well as commission of experts created for the validation of new qualifications.

The National Qualifications Authority is responsible for the maintenance, continuing up-grade and follow-up dissemination and for the local and international promotion of the Romanian National Register for Qualifications in Higher Education – RNCIS.

The NQF development and implementation Methodology also indicates the cooperation means and instruments between NQA/ACPART – ARACIS – the Ministry of Labour, as well as with all higher education institutions in order to fulfil their missions. All these institutions have had an important role in the design and development of the NQFHE in Romania.

The National Qualifications Authority, former ACPART collaborates with DG Education of the European Commission, in its capacity of National Coordination Point (NCP) for the implementation of EQF in Romania, as well as with the Council of Europe for the implementation of the Overall Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA, where the Director General of ACPART/NQA is national representative. Under the auspices of the Council of Europe, ACPART/NQA participates in consultations organised by the Regional Network of South-Eastern Europe on the national qualifications frameworks. The Director General of ACPART/NQA was appointed by the Ministry of Education as active member in the EQF Advisory Group, supported by DGEAC, European Commission.

NQA also maintains close cooperation with similar institutions from other countries (France, Ireland, Malta, Italy), by means of specific European projects aiming at the coherent and transparent design and implementation of the Framework for Qualifications, based on mutual trust.

Last but not least, mention should be made that NQA, former ACPART, is promoter or partner in various European projects focusing on the NQF in EU member states. Besides the previously mentioned institutions, NQA also cooperates with the national representatives under the Bologna Process.

In turn, universities include in the official graduation documents the NQFHE provisions (the description of the respective qualification in terms of learning outcomes), on the Diploma Supplement, as well as in their public provision posted on the NQRHE.

Both the National Education Law and the Charter of each university indicate clearly and publicly which are the responsibilities of the higher education institutions, as well as those of each stakeholder involved in the implementation of the national qualifications framework.

*Therefore ,
Criterion 7 has been met and is fully compliant with requirements stated by the
Bergen Report and all other relevant documents.*

4.2. Procedures for the verification of compatibility with the Bologna Framework

1. The competent national body/bodies shall self-certify the compatibility of the national framework with the European framework.

The Steering Committee of the self-certification process includes representatives nominated by the Ministry of Education, Research Youth and Sport, UENCNFPFA, ARACIS, Presidential Commission for Analysis and Development of Education and Research Policies in Romania; National Council of Rectors; Romanian Association for Electronic and Software Industry - ARIES; National Association of Student Organisations in Romania; Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection.

According to the National Education Law no 1/2011, art.340, the National Authority for Qualifications – ANC develops the national qualifications framework in Romania based on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

2. The self-certification process shall include the stated agreement of the quality assurance bodies in the country in question, as recognised through the Bologna Process.

ARACIS is the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. A representative of ARACIS was part of the Steering Committee responsible for the self-certification report. Two of the ARACIS permanent experts are members of the Working Group who developed this Self-certification Report.

According to art. 137 (3) of the National Education Law no 1/2011, „*the match between curriculum and the qualification provided by the university study programme is a mandatory quality assurance criterion*”.

In the new *Methodology on external evaluation of the study programmes quality*, ARACIS developed criteria, standards and performance indicators reflecting to appraise the match between the educational contents of various fields and the professional and transversal competences which describe the qualification obtained upon successful graduation of each university study programme.

In the final stage of the self-certification process, based on the recommendations of the Steering Committee, ARACIS stated its agreement on the referencing process concerning the compatibility of the NQFHE with the FQ/EHEA.

3. The self-certification process involved international experts.

The Steering Committee includes five international experts:

- Lewis Purser, IAU – Irish Universities Association, director for academic affairs;
- Anne-Marie Charraud, CNAM – National Conservatory for Arts and Trades of Paris, , counsellor in the Continuing Training Department, former rapporteur general of the National Commission for Qualifications, France;
- James Joachim Calleja – Malta Qualifications Council, Chief Executive and Secretary of State, Ministry of Education and Labour, Malta;
- Mogens BERG, BFUG, Denmark;
- Jean-Philippe RESTOUEIX, Higher Education and Research Division, Council of Europe.

The five international experts will play a key role in the self-certification process and in the Report review.

4. The self-certification and the evidence supporting it shall be published and shall address separately each of the criteria set out.

The Steering Committee submitted the final version of the Self-Certification Report both to the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport and to the National Qualifications Authority, to be published on the MERYYS website, as well as on the www.rncis.ro, portal hosting the electronic version of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Romania.

The report can be accessed on the webpage of the Bologna Secretariat - BFUG and on the ENIC-NARIC webpage of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, detailing each criterion described in the previous chapter of this Report.

5. The ENIC and NARIC networks maintain a public listing of States that have confirmed that they have completed the self-certification process [www.enic-naric.net].

Upon completion of the self-certification process the Steering Committee of the self-certification process informed the National Centre for Diploma Recognition and Validation, the ENIC-NARIC body in Romania, so that it will include Romania on the list of countries which finalised the self-certification process. The National Authority for Qualifications will inform the Bologna Secretariat on the completion of this process.

6. The completion of the self-certification process shall be noted on Diploma Supplements issued subsequently by showing the link between the national framework and the European framework.

Diploma Supplements are issued in Romania by accredited higher education institutions which use a standard templates regulated at national level at the initiative of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport.

After publication of this report, the National Qualifications Authority – NQA will initiate, and the Ministry of Education will issue a Ministerial Order concerning the newly improved standard template of the Diploma Supplements for the first two study cycles having inserted the mention on the completion of the self-certification process, as well as the **link between the Romanian National Qualifications Framework, QF/EHEA and the European Qualifications Framework**, indicating the European equivalent of each qualification level.

Chapter V

Further stages of the NQFHE implementation in Romania

In the forthcoming period there will be several activities aiming at the successful completion of the self-certification process:

Following this wide process of public consultation and debate, the final version of the Report, as approved by the Steering Committee for the validation of the self-certification process during the meeting on 5-6 September 2011, is now published both in Romanian and in English.

The final version of this report will be uploaded on the ERIC/NARIC website and on the Bologna Secretariat website.

After being implemented, the NQFHE becomes one of the crucial instruments for the strategic coordination of all institutions in the Romanian education system. The public policies of the Ministry of Education, the implementation measures promoted by the agencies and commissions coordinated by the Ministry of Education, as well as the missions assumed by the higher education institutions will use the NQFHE to define the higher education provision in Romania according to the labour market needs, in order to enhance the quality of study programmes and the economic and social effectiveness of the higher education system.

Currently, Romania has the NQFHE, the NQRHE and all necessary tools to proceed with the next step, namely their **use** aiming at strengthening the Bologna Process, and at fostering dialogue between universities and employers in order to engage all stakeholders interested in the modernisation of the university study provision according to the ever changing labour market requirements.

At the same time, these tools strongly support updated and consistent information provided to current and prospective students in order to guide them to make informed decisions when choosing a profession, qualification or career, based on their skills and aspirations, as well as on the European principle of lifelong learning.

For this phase, of using NQFHE and NQRHE, NQA has already designed an action plan for 2012-2015, so that all opportunities and benefits that their adequate and consistent use may bring to the Romanian higher education should become reality and be capitalised on. The main objectives of this action plan are:

- To introduce an online qualification assessment system, by extending the NQRHE functions;
- To implement a unitary competence assessment methodology to enhance the quality of the educational provision;

- To undertake sociological studies on regular basis in order to highlight the developments in the match between the university provision and the labour market requirements;
- To operationalise the “university-enterprise consortia” so that there should be a functional framework to ensure for each study field the permanent dialogue between universities, employers, professional associations, students and all stakeholders interested in a real cooperation between the academic world and the world of work.
- To create and introduce in Romania a portal to allow for connecting NQFHE with COR and NACE, which would be an answer to the European initiative on ESCO (European Skills, Competences and Occupations);
- To develop and implement methodologies for the recognition of learning outcomes acquired in non-formal and informal contexts at the level of higher education qualifications;
- To encourage universities to widen their training provision for non-traditional, especially mature learners;
- To promote national and European projects to meet both the aims of Europe 2020 and of the National Reform Plan.

ANNEXES

Grid 1B – Description of study programme/field by means of professional and transversal competences

Qualification Title.....	Possible Occupations						
Qualification Level: BACHELOR							
Level descriptors of structural elements of professional competences**	Professional competences *	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
KNOWLEDGE							
1. Knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, theories and methods in the field and the specialization area; their adequate use in professional communication	C1.1	C2.1	C3.1	C4.1	C5.1	C6.1	
2. Use of basic knowledge to explain and interpret various types of concepts, situations, processes, projects etc. related to the field	C1.2	C2.2	C3.2	C4.2	C5.2	C6.2	
SKILLS							
3. Application of basic principles and methods to solve well defined problems/situations that are typical to the field, with qualified assistance	C1.3	C2.3	C3.3	C4.3	C5.3	C6.3	
4. Adequate use of standard assessment criteria and methods to appraise the quality, merits and limitations of processes, programmes, projects, concepts, methods and theories	C1.4	C2.4	C3.4	C4.4	C5.4	C6.4	
5. Development of professional and/or research projects using well known principles and methods within the field	C1.5	C2.5	C3.5	C4.5	C5.5	C6.5	
Minimum performance standards for competence assessment:							

Transversal competences level descriptors	Transversal competences	Minimum performance standards for competence assessment
6. Responsible performance of professional tasks, with limited autonomy and qualified assistance		
7. Familiarisation with the teamwork-specific roles and activities and with task allocation for subordinated levels		
8. Awareness of the need for continuing training; effective use of learning techniques and resources for personal and professional development		

* Maximum 6 professional competences will be identified.

** The level descriptors indicated in the Matrix of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education (figure 3) shall be mentioned in the grid, according to the qualification level (Bachelor/Master's/Doctorate)

University: Faculty..... Qualification..... Study level.....

Fundamental field..... Study field..... Study programme.....

Grid 2, Determining the correlations between professional and transversal competences, contents areas, study disciplines and credits allocated



Professional competences	Competences detailed by level descriptors	Contents areas	Study disciplines	Credits	
				By discipline*	By competence
C1			D1		
			D2		
				
C2			D1		
			D2		
				
C3			D1		
			D2		
				
C4			D1		
			D2		
				
C5			D1		
			D2		
				
			D1		
			D2		
				

Transversal competences	Study disciplines	Credits	
		By discipline	By competence
CT1	D1		
	D2		
		
CT2	D1		
	D2		
		
CT3	D1		
	D2		
		

* Indicate the number of credits by which the respective discipline contributes to the development of competences, of the total number of credits allocated to the study discipline, according to the educational plan

ANNEX III

National Report

Regarding the compatibility of the Romanian Qualifications Framework (NQFHE) with the QF for EHEA (Dublin descriptors) and EQF

Table 1: Level Descriptors for Level 6

QF-EHEA - 1 st cycle (Dublin Descriptors)	NQFHE - Level 6		EQF- Level 6
	Generic descriptors	Level 6 descriptors	
Learning Outcomes: Knowledge			
Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;	1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language	Knowledge and understanding of basic concepts, theories and methods within the field and the specialisation area; their adequate use in professional communication.	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study involving a critical
		Professional competences	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and nonspecialist audiences; 	2. Explanation and interpretation	Use of basic knowledge to explain and interpret various types of concepts, situations, processes, projects etc. that are related to the field.		understanding of theories and principles;
Learning Outcomes: Skills				
Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;	3. Application, transfer and problem solving	Use of basic principles and methods for solving well defined problems/situations that are typical to the field, with partial qualified assistance.		Advanced skills demonstrating mastery and innovation required to solve complex and unpredictable
Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant and data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;	4. Critical and constructive reflection	Adequate use of standard assessment criteria and methods to appraise the quality, merits and limitations of processes, programmes, projects, concepts, methods and theories.		problems in a specialized field of work or study;

	5. Creativity and innovation	Development of professional projects on unpredictable problems by using principles and methods within the field in a creative or innovative manner.		
Learning outcomes: Competences				
Have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy	6. Autonomy and responsibility	Responsible performance of professional tasks in an autonomous manner, with qualified assistance.	Transversal competences	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; Take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups.
	7. Social interaction	Familiarisation with the teamwork-specific roles and activities and with task allocation for subordinated levels.		
Have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy	8. Personal and professional development	Awareness of the need for continuing training; efficient use of learning techniques and resources for personal and professional development.		

Table 2: Level Descriptors for Level 7

QF – EHEA 2 nd cycle (Dublin descriptors)	NQFHE– Level 7		EQF - Level 7
	Generic descriptors	Level 7 descriptors	
Learning Outcomes: Knowledge			
Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context; Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;	1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language	In-depth knowledge of a specialisation area and, within it, of the programme specific theoretical, methodological and practical developments; appropriate use of specific language in communication with different professional environments.	Professional competences
	2. Explanation and interpretation	Use of specialised knowledge in order to explain and interpret new situations, in wider contexts associated to the respective field.	
Learning Outcomes: Skills			

<p>Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;</p>	<p>3.Application, transfer and problem solving</p>	<p>Integrated use of the conceptual and methodological apparatus in incompletely defined situations in order to solve new theoretical and practical problems.</p>	<p>Specialized problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields;</p>
<p>Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge an judgements;</p>	<p>3. Critical and constructive reflection</p>	<p>Pertinent and appropriate use of assessment criteria and methods to formulate judgements and fundament constructive decisions.</p>	<p>Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields;</p>
<p>Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that isfounded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;</p>	<p>5. Creativity and innovation</p>	<p>Development of professional and/or research projects using a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods in an innovative manner.</p>	<p>Specialized problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields;</p>

Learning Outcomes: Competences				
	6. Autonomy and responsibility	Undertaking complex professional tasks under autonomy and professional independence conditions	Transversal competences	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches.
	7. Social interaction	Assuming management roles/functions for the activities within professional groups or institutions.		Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely selfdirected or autonomous	8. Personal and professional development	Self-control of the learning process, diagnosis of training needs, reflective analysis on own professional activity.		

Table 3: Level Descriptors for Level 8

QF – EHEA 3 rd cycle (Dublin descriptors)	NQFHE H-- Level 8		EQF - Level 8
	Generic descriptors	Level 8 descriptors	
Learning Outcomes: Knowledge			
Have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field; Can communicate with their	1. Knowledge, understanding and use of specific language	Systematic, advanced knowledge of concepts, research methods, controversies and new hypothesis specific to the field; communication with specialists from related fields.	Professional competences
			Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between

<p>peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;</p>	<p>2. Explanation and interpretation</p>	<p>Use of advanced principles and methods to explain and interpret, from multiple perspectives, new and complex theoretical and practical situations/problems that are specific to the respective field.</p>	<p>fields;</p>
<p>Learning Outcomes: Skills</p>			
<p>Have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;</p>	<p>3.Application, transfer and problem solving</p>	<p>Selection and use of advanced principles, theories and methods of knowledge, transfer of methods from one field to another, interdisciplinary approaches to solve new and complex theoretical and practical problems.</p>	<p>The ability to apply the most advanced and specialized skills and techniques including synthesis and evaluation to solve critical problems in</p>

<p>Are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas.</p>	<p>4. Critical and constructive reflection</p>	<p>Critical-constructive assessment of projects and scientific research results, appraisal of the stage of theoretical and methodological knowledge; identification of knowledge and applicative priorities within the field.</p>	<p>research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice;</p>
<p>Have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;</p>	<p>5. Creativity and innovation</p>	<p>Design and undertake original research, based on advanced methods leading to the development of scientific and technological knowledge and/or of the research methodologies.</p>	<p>Competence at the forefront in work or study including research contexts demonstrating substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly or professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes</p>

Learning outcomes: Competences				
Can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise; Can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge sed society.	6. Autonomy and responsibility	Innovative initiation and development of complex theoretical and practical projects.	Transversal competences	Competence at the forefront in work or study including research contexts demonstrating substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly or professional integrity and b sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes.
	7. Social interaction	Assuming responsibility and capacity to organise and lead the activities of professional groups, scientific research groups or institutions.		
	8. Personal and professional development	Development of creativity-centred projects as the basis for self- accomplishment.		

Annexe IV



AGENȚIA ROMÂNĂ DE ASIGURARE A CALITĂȚII ÎN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL SUPERIOR
THE ROMANIAN AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Membru cu drepturi depline în Asociația Europeană pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Superior - ENQA
 Înscrisă în Registrul European pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Superior - EQAR
 Strada Spiru Haret nr. 12, sector 1, București, România

Nr.: 8562
 Data: 05.09.2011

Autoritatea Națională pentru Calificări
 Intrare/ieșire: NR. 342
 ANUL 2011 LUNA 09 ZI 05

STATED AGREEMENT

On the verification of compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

The Council of ARACIS, in its capacity as joint leadership body of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), hereby agree on the verification of compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, based on the following:

- According to art. 137, paragraph 3 of the National Education Law no 1/2011, "consistency of curriculum with the qualification provided by the university study programme is a mandatory criterion in the evaluation on quality assurance";
- Through the *Methodology on the external evaluation of study programmes* ARACIS developed performance criteria, standards, and indicators to evaluate the consistency of the educational contents of the various subject areas with the professional and transversal competences related to the qualification acquired upon graduation of a university study programme, in compliance with the Order no 4430/2009 on the *Methodology on the use of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education*, issued by the Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sport.

We hereby confirm that a representative of the Council of ARACIS is a member of the Steering Committee created for the development of the Self-Certification Report and that two permanent experts of ARACIS were members of the Working Group who developed the Report of the verification of compatibility of the Romanian National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Therefore, we appreciate the manner in which the Steering Committee fulfilled their mission and we recommend that the Self-Certification Report be submitted to the Higher Education and Research Division of the Council of Europe.

President of ARACIS,
 Pyril Iosif CURTU



Adresa poștă: B-dul Ștefănescu nr. 1, București, tel. 021.206.76.00, fax 021.312.71.35