



# **Desk research about learning outcomes for prior learning recognition to see recent situation**

## **Toolkit for RPL**

### **Task A1 – IO1: Learning Outcomes Report in structured matrixes**

#### **Report – Turkey**

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EQF oriented assessment tools for prior learning in adult education  
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## Main characteristics of the adult education and training system

In recent years, each and every country has had to set a national priority to review its own education and employment policies and reform its own qualifications systems having regard to the individual developments, community expectations and international practices associated with “lifelong learning”. In this context, “National Qualifications Frameworks”, which will provide significant contribution to the formulation and operation of national education and employment systems, are developed with various architectures and contents. National qualifications frameworks constitute the most up-to-date approach used by the countries first to describe, classify and compare qualifications in a given country; and then to restructure, integrate and coordinate qualifications systems. According to research studies conducted by various international organizations, almost 150 countries around the world have either developed or are in the process of developing their national qualifications frameworks. In Europe, the Recommendation on “European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning” was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of Europe in 2008. 36 participating countries, which are either EU Member States or Candidate Countries, have developed or are in the process of developing their national qualifications frameworks. Having a national qualifications system that enhances the quality of education and training and strengthens the link between education and employment is among the priority needs for Turkey. Therefore, Turkey is committed to providing the Turkish Qualifications Framework which will be in harmony with the European Qualifications Framework and also will meet the education and training needs of all individuals through lifelong learning support and ensure the development of qualifications required by the labour market. With the Turkish Qualifications Framework, the goal is to integrate qualifications available in the Turkish system in an overarching framework, to improve the quality of qualifications, to promote and provide systematic support to lifelong learning, maximize national and international transparency as well as recognition and to provide opportunities to all individuals of the community. In this respect, the Turkish Qualifications Framework will offer a holistic approach under which links among all qualifications achieved either at a school, university, training centre, research centre, other organisations offering education and training such as work places or through informal learning will be enabled and participation rate in

lifelong learning will be increased. Turkish Qualifications Framework has been prepared, under the coordination of the Vocational Qualifications Authority, by the National Qualifications Framework Preparation Commission which comprises of representatives from the Ministry of National Education, the Council of Higher Education and Vocational Qualifications Authority and technical working groups also including social parties. The Framework has been finalised after consulting all relevant bodies and institutions as well as national and international experts.

## **Adult Education in Turkey**

Turkish Education System is structured in two main areas, formal and non-formal education. Non-formal education includes arrangements and activities to meet the educational needs of all individuals - young and adult, at any age. Continuity of education and training policies anywhere in the Fundamental Law of Education was provided with basic individual training rights law in Turkey (1982). According to Article 42 of the Law, no one shall be deprived of the right of education. Thus, adult education in Turkey is a right for individuals and a responsibility for the state.

**Non-formal Education institutions that have** organizational structure all over Turkey offer the opportunity for learning outside of the school in different subjects for personal development. In many different fields, technical, and cultural trainings are offered to young people, schoolers, drop out students and adults in these centres. Courses are available free of charge.

## **Non-formal Education Fields in Public Education Centers**

- Literacy courses
- Vocational-technical courses
- Social-cultural courses
- Social-cultural practices
- Educational club studies

## **Vocational-Technical Courses**

Have two objectives: Skill Development and Job Creation

**Skill Development** - To prepare vocational and technical education for those who have not had the opportunity to receive education, to prepare them for the profession, to make them gain work habits, to make them an active producer from passive consumerism, to work in a workplace and to have the knowledge and skills to establish their own business.

**Profession Gaining** - Courses are organized to train those who have a profession or who wants to have a profession, to prepare them for innovations, and to train them as qualified employees as required by the labour market.

### **Social & Cultural Courses**

To raise the cultural level of society, to support the social and cultural development of people; gain knowledge, skills; to teach literacy; to prepare for higher education examinations, to protect and broaden our cultural values. These courses can include pre-school students if needed.

### **Social and Cultural Practices**

These activities are very important to transfer Life Long Learning services to large masses, to improve the talents of people in the fields of culture and art, to give them an opportunity to exhibit, to encourage social and cultural participation, to enable them to evaluate their leisure time with positive activities, to improve the exchange of culture and art at the local-regional-national level, promote our cultural values, transfer these to the younger generation. Competitions, shows, meetings, exhibitions, concerts, panels, conferences, symposiums, sports events are organized for this purpose.

### **Current Policy**

All courses, except literacy and craftwork are organized with minimum 12 people.

Courses are organized;

- Public Education Centers' own buildings and facilities
- Course locations provided in neighbourhoods and villages
- In training rooms
- In prisons

- In hospitals
- In public and private buildings
- Buildings for formal education
- Places provided by voluntary organizations

Anyone at any age, education, social status and cultural level can participate. Children under 18 can participate with the permission of the parents. Elementary school students can attend any course that they want in their free time outside the school hours. Foreign nationals may participate in activities with the permission of the governorship. When required, the specific age and level of education are sought according to the nature of the program to be implemented. This is announced by Public Education Centres.

In the twelve months of the year, applications can be made for registration at the Public Education Centres. For some specific courses, applications can be made only in specific periods. This is also announced by management. When there are enough applications, an invitation letter is sent to all applicants by the Public Education Centre.

There is requirement for attendance to the courses. The registration of those who are absent up to 1/5 of the duration of the course is deleted and no certificate is given. On weekends, the appropriate hours between 08:00 and 23:00 are selected for courses. If agreed by teachers and other participants, training can be continued in holidays.

Success assessment is compulsory. This evaluation is made according to the practices, written and oral exams and homework at the end of the teaching period. Those who pass the exams are given certificates.

Public Education Centres organize courses with a realistic approach, not emotionally, to those who require special education. With these courses; they aim at making them a producer, bringing them to society, acquiring knowledge and skills to facilitate their work, and participating in social activities.

Persons with disabilities are taken into consideration in these courses.

- Hearing impaired
- Speaking impaired
- Mentally impaired
- Hospitalised children

- Visually impaired
- People with disabilities

In order to evaluate the leisure time of the participants and to contribute to the family economy, courses for skill development are organized.

### **Specific studies on the survival of our cultural values**

Public Education Centres give priority to promoting our cultural values, to keep them alive. Compilation and research studies are carried out in our regions. These works are evaluated within the Head Office. It is presented to the benefit of all persons and organizations by taking the opinions of the experts in the universities and related institutions.

In consideration of the non-formal education fields in public education centres, the comparative results about participating in the public education centres in Turkey according to the level of educational attainment are presented below according to Eurostat data.

In the level 0-2, the percentage of participation in the public education centres is 70.6 in 2008 whereas it is 63.4% in 2017. It seems that there is a decrease in the participation in the public education centres in 2017 at this level.

In the level 3-4, the participation in the public education centres is 19.9% in 2008 while the percentage of participation is 20% in 2017. In the level 5-8, the percentage of participation in the public education centres is 9.5 in 2008 whereas it is 16.6 % in 2017. It seems that there is an increase in the participation in the public education centres in 2017 at this level.

To summarize, there has been a decrease in the participation in the public education centres at the low level of educational attainment over the years. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the participation in the public education centres at the high level of educational attainment over the years.

As stated in the section of "Current Policy", the courses are announced by the public education centres. The required number of the participants to arrange any courses is 12 at least. Attendance is obligatory in these courses. At the end of these courses, the documents of attendance are provided in some courses, and the exams are administered in some other courses. In the courses, which include the

stages of attainment, the exams are administered, and the documents of achievement are given according to the exam results.



## State-of-the-art of the recognition, validation and accreditation of prior learning

### What is previous learning?

Previous Learning refers to all kinds of formal, non-formal learning. It can be intentional or unintentional, at schools or out of schools.

### How is previous learning documented?

In Turkey, documenting of Prior Learning is basically done in two ways. One of these is the Vocational Training Centres affiliated to the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education of the Ministry of National Education and the other is the certification bodies authorized by the Vocational Qualification Authority.

### What are the admission requirements of .....?

The admission requirements depend on the course type. For example, in the courses which include the stages of attainment (e.g. computer courses, foreign language courses), it is required for the participants to get the certificates of the previous stages. Generally speaking, the essential and basic requirement is to be literate.

### Evaluation of Prior Learning in Vocational Training Centres

Recognition and prioritization procedures are carried out in 27 areas and 142 branches in Vocational Education Centres which are in the scope of Law No. 3308. According to evaluation based on documents a Certificate of Journeyman ship or Mastery is given. Those who have exercised a profession in the past but do not have any vocational training certificate related to the occupation are required to apply to the nearest Vocational Training Centre with the SSI insurance breakdowns and other required documents. According to the results of the evaluation to be made at the relevant centre, they can obtain a certificate in a short time if they are successful by entering directly into the Journeyman ship and Mastery exams. This process is carried out according to Recognition of Prior Learning, Equivalence and Measurement Procedures and Procedures Related to Assessment Procedures published the Ministry of National Education published on 02.10.2017.

The second way of evaluating and documenting previous learning is to enter the exam by applying to the Personnel Certification bodies authorized by the Vocational Qualification Authority. There are no prerequisites for obtaining documents in this way. According to this, candidates who wish to obtain a Professional Qualification Certificate apply to one of the authorized personnel certification bodies. As a result of measurement and evaluation by the authorized organization Professional Qualification Certificates are provided. Today, the number of the Personnel Certification bodies is 192. Also, the Vocational Qualification Authority specified 81 professions, and it is not allowed to work in these professions without getting certificates/documents of the profession. In addition, the Vocational Qualification Authority developed the standards for 280 professions, and these standards vary according to the professions.

### *What professions are included within the recognition of prior learning?*

In Vocational Training Centres, connected Ministry of education with law No. 3308, RPL can be done in 27 areas 142 branches every province of Turkey. These professions are determined by the 28th Vocational Education Board Decision.

The evaluation of previous learning by the Vocational Qualifications Authority is carried out in the professions where the national standard has been prepared and examinations conducted by the Authorized Personnel Certification Bodies.

## **Turkey Lifelong Learning Strategy Document and Action Plan (2014-2018)**

"The purpose of RPL system is to certificate learning level of individuals gained outside of the formal schools. In this context, within the LLL project carried out by the Ministry, a number of workshops were organized to train the counsellors and RPL instructors.

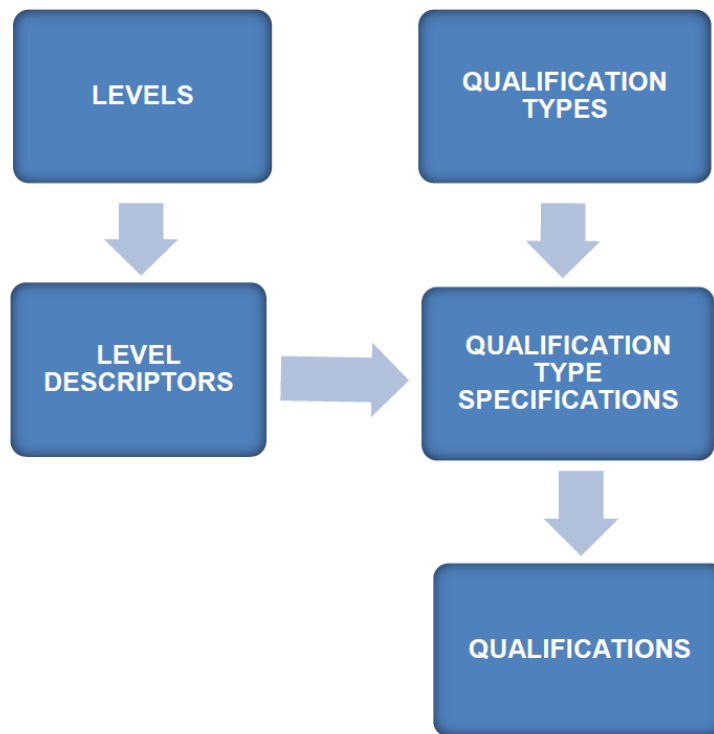
LLL are carried out in 43 cities in Turkey to raise awareness about Lifelong Learning, to motivate individuals from all walks of life to benefit from educational opportunities.

## Description of the recognition, validation and accreditation of prior learning process

Turkish Qualifications Framework (TQF) has been designed as a single integrated structure allowing for the classification of Turkish qualifications to accommodate all quality assured qualifications achieved at all education and training programmes including primary, secondary and higher education, as well as those achieved through other means of learning. TQF primarily includes qualifications awarded under the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) mandate, qualifications under the Vocational Qualifications Authority (VQA) mandate, higher education qualifications awarded under the coordination and supervision of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE); in time, it will include other qualifications awarded under the mandate of certain responsible bodies. Many vocational qualifications which are available and will be required in the Turkish labour market will be covered by TQF. The TQF consists of the qualifications systems of MoNE and VQA as well as the Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQFHE).

Figure 1

Main Instruments of Turkish Qualifications Framework Structure



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

Qualification types represent groups of qualifications at the same level of TQF that are similar in terms of their functions, learning outcomes, credit values or general, vocational and academic orientations. Qualification types are not associated with a specific field of learning. Qualification types help to distinguish among qualifications which are at the same level but differ significantly in terms of their functions, learning outcomes, credit values and/or orientations. Examples of qualification types are: Associate Degree and Level 5 Vocational Qualification Certificate, both at level 5; Vocational and Technical High School Diploma and Skilled Worker Certificate, both at level 4. Table 1 shows the main TQF qualification types and levels.

Table 1. Main TQF Qualification Types and Levels

Draft TQF Levels	Qualification Types	Responsible Bodies
1	Pre-School Participation Certificate	MoNE
2	Primary Education Certificate	MoNE
	Level 2 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
3	Lower Secondary Education Certificate <sup>23</sup>	MoNE
	Semi-Skilled Worker Certificate	MoNE
	Level 3 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
4	Skilled Worker Certificate	MoNE
	Vocational and Technical High School Diploma	MoNE
	High School Diploma	MoNE
	Level 4 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
5	Associate Degree (Academic) <sup>24</sup>	CoHE
	Associate Degree (Vocational) <sup>25</sup>	CoHE
	Level 5 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
6	Bachelor's Degree	CoHE
	Level 6 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
7	Master Degree (with Thesis)	CoHE
	Master Degree (without Thesis)	CoHE
	Level 7 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA
8	Doctoral Degree (PhD, Proficiency in Arts, Specialty in Medicine)	CoHE
	Level 8 Vocational Qualification Certificate	VQA

The core function of the TQF is to describe qualifications via the learning outcomes and compare a qualification with another one. One of the systems which can be used in order to compare and classify the

qualifications is the workload-based credit system. For that reason, it is important to determine the workload and credit values of the learning outcomes relevant to each qualification type. However, it is extremely difficult to identify an instrument or a method to directly measure the workload required to achieve the learning outcomes of the qualifications, especially the ones acquired through informal learning. Therefore, it is proposed that an evaluation and credit system associated with the workload be used in the TQF. Credit rating of qualifications based on the workload will allow credit accumulation and transfer.

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

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

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

Evaluation of knowledge/skills and experiences gained through common and free learning will be provided.

Awareness of individuals to become active and participatory citizens will be increased.

Formal and informal vocational education programs will be updated continuously according to professional standards.

National and international cooperation will be increased in lifelong learning.

Awareness of the role of lifelong learning culture will be increased.

Formal education, informal education and free learning are the process of recognizing the learning gains achieved in the framework to a certain standard.

## **RECOGNITION OF PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE**

It will also provide an opportunity for individuals who have knowledge and skills in any field but cannot certify it and wish to have any qualification of formal degree, in order to advance their professions or to change their professions.

## **EXPECTED BENEFITS OF RPL**

- Benefit from the competencies of the population.
- addressing deficiencies of qualified employees
- improve the employment opportunities, standard of living and self-confidence of individuals
- Creation of demand for education.

## **Establishing a Culture and Awareness in Lifelong Learning in Society**

The knowledge and skills gained through non-formal and free learning will be evaluated. The awareness of individuals to be active and participatory citizens will be increased.

Formal and non-formal vocational education programs will be continuously updated according to occupational standards.

Within the scope of lifelong learning, national and international cooperation will be increased.

## **Accreditation of Learning**

Responsible bodies are responsible for the legislation, procedures and coordination required for the determination, description and provision of qualifications to be included in the education and training system. Responsible bodies ensure that qualifications required by the business world and society are described based on a “learning outcomes” approach achieved by the learners according to specific criteria. Responsible bodies primarily comprise of MoNE, Presidency of CoHE, higher education institutions and VQA; however, the legislation

provides for other responsible bodies as well. If the individual succeeds in achieving the learning outcomes of the qualifications following assessment and evaluation, education institutions and awarding bodies authorized by the responsible bodies take over responsibility for the certification of the qualification. Training institutions primarily comprise of education and training providers and schools under the MoNE, higher education institutions (universities, higher vocational schools and institutes etc.), while awarding bodies primarily comprise of VQA-authorized awarding bodies according to TS EN ISO/IEC 17024 accreditation. However, there are some other education institutions and awarding bodies in Turkey and TQF implementation will include dedicated studies to determine such bodies.

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

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

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

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

Vocational and technical secondary education diploma is offered to reflect various programmes of education as well as programmes of vocational specialization. Diplomas are also provided upon completing secondary education programmes offering both general and vocational education.

Depending on the programme completed, various types of certificates are provided at the end of non-formal education and training.

## Conclusions

The overall goal of Turkish Qualification Framework (TQF) is to provide an integrated structure which describes and classifies all qualifications available in Turkey, allowing for links such as transfer and progression among qualifications to be determined. Principal objectives of TQF have been set as a result of; meetings that were held with stakeholders, consultation processes, series of reviews that are conducted on the various TQF-related policy and strategy papers, characteristics and requirements that are determined pertaining to the education and training system and labour market and undertaken comprehensive work to review international NQF development experiences:

- a) to provide a clear and consistent means of describing, classifying and comparing qualifications
- b) to provide one integrated framework including all quality assured qualifications, (achieved in general, vocational and academic education and training programmes and in other learning environments).
- c) to continuously improve Turkish qualifications system so that it can provide appropriate recognition of qualifications achieved in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.
- d) to contribute to the training of individuals who are employable and equipped with defined and measurable qualifications, and thus to the reduction of unemployment.
- e) to strengthen institutional cooperation among all parties, which primarily include awarding bodies, the industry and social partners.
- f) to provide a benchmark for the recognition in Turkey of foreign qualifications and for the recognition of Turkish qualifications abroad, and serve as an instrument of comparison.

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

In Turkey the main institutions for RPL are:

1. Ministry of Education
2. Vocational Qualification Authority (VQA) (Law number: 5544; Started date: 21/9/2006)



3. Universities
4. NGOs (i.e., The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB))

Recognition of Previous Learning and the development of policies and programs are in progress. Nowadays, there are 280 vocational qualifications determined and only 81 sectors do not allow to work without certificate. The recognition processes are developing increasingly in all sectors.