



ANNEX C1: Twinning Fiche¹

Project title: Further support to the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework

Beneficiary administration: Ministry of Education and Science

Twining Reference: MK IPA 17 SO 01 21

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EU funded project

TWINNING TOOL

List of Abbreviation

¹ In case of different language versions of the Twinning Fiche it must be clearly indicated which language version prevails.

AA	Association Agreement
AE	Adult Education
AQAHE	Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
BC	Beneficiary Country
BFUG	Bologna follow-up group
CP	Counterpart
EC	European Commission
EFQM	European Framework for Quality Management
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EQF NCP	EQF national coordination point
EQF AG	European Qualifications Framework Advisory Group
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESRP	Employment and Social Reform Programme
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
ESG - EHEA	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
HEIs	Higher Educational Institutions
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MAP REA	Multi-annual action plan for a regional economic area in the Western Balkans
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science
MS	Member State
NCEQE	National Centre for Educational Quality enhancement
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PAO	Programme Administration Office
PL	Project Leader
QA	Quality Assurance
RTA	Resident Twinning Adviser
STE	Short term Expert
S3	Smart Specialization Strategy
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VNFIL	Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning

1. Basic Information

1.1. Programme: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II)², IPA/2017/040-202 (EC) *Annual Action Programme for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the year 2017* - Objective 2, Action 4: “EU Support for Education, Employment and Social Policy”³

For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement⁴ on 1 February 2020 and in particular Articles 127(6), 137 and 138, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union and to goods originating from an eligible country, as defined under Regulation (EU) No 236/2014⁵ and Annex IV of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement⁶, are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in, and to goods originating from, the United Kingdom⁷. Those persons and goods are therefore eligible under this call.

1.2. Twinning Sector: Social Affairs and Employment

1.3. EU funded budget: EUR 1,500,000

1.4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): This project is contributing to SDG 4 - Quality of Education

2. Objectives

2.1. Overall Objective(s):

The overall objective is further strengthening and operationalization of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) aiming to increase the employability, mobility and social integration of workers and learners.

2.2. Specific objective:

The specific objective is to support the effectiveness of the NQF with the further development and implementation of:

Quality assurance (QA) process/procedures, transparency and governance of skills and qualifications in a lifelong learning perspective of general, Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher education improving quality and better adaptability of education and training in line with the requirements from labour market needs, and

Linking formal, non-formal and informal learning and support the validation of learning outcomes acquired in different settings.

²OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 11

³Commission Implementing Decision C(2017) 8047 final of 29.11.2017 adopting an Annual Action Programme on Education, Employment and Social Policy for the year 2017

⁴Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community

⁵Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures for the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action.

⁶Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, as revised by Decision 1/2014 of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers (OJ L196/40, 3.7.2014)

⁷Including the Overseas Countries and Territories having special relations with the United Kingdom, as laid down in Part Four and Annex II of the TFEU.

2.3. Contribution to key strategic documents

- **Comprehensive I Education Strategy 2018-2025- The NQF is an overarching element of the** Education Strategy of relevance and importance to all levels of education and training. The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia adopted the Education Strategy 2018-2025, together with a corresponding Action Plan⁸ (including indicators for all specific objectives, baselines and targets). It recognizes that the development of National Qualifications Framework (NQF) has served to improve education and training systems through implementation of the learning outcomes approach, facilitated access to learning and the overall level of qualifications of people in the country. However, a weakness in the system remains. The Education Strategy identifies that the further development and sustainability of NQF is of highest national priority. On-going interventions are related to: preparation and alignment of relevant legislation for further implementation of the National Qualifications Framework, strengthening the institutional capacities, as well as enhancing the establishment of a functional national system of qualifications through reforming the VET, the higher education and adult education. At present, qualifications are not sufficiently harmonized with the requirements of labour market and society or with the personal development needs of individuals. The development of standards for qualifications at higher education level has not started yet. The system of validation of non-formal and informal learning is at an early stage. Therefore, the support of this Twinning project will serve to progress and strengthen all these above mentioned elements which are currently lacking in the system.
- Adoption and implementation of the Roadmap for the National Qualifications Framework;
 - Strengthening the role of the National Board of the National Qualifications Framework;
 - Establishing Sectoral Committees for Qualifications;
 - Adoption and implementation of Guidelines and procedures for quality assurance (QA) in accordance with the recommendations of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
 - Introducing a NQF information management system;
 - Development of qualification standards based on learning outcomes, according to NQF;
 - Raising awareness of the stakeholders and users on the role and the significance of the NQF, through public events and campaigns;
 - Improvement of transparency of the learning outcomes achieved by VET graduates, through introduction of the certificate/diploma supplement, in line with the NQF and EU practice.

⁸ <http://mon.gov.mk/index.php/dokumenti/strateshki-plan>

- **The 2014-2020 Indicative Country Strategy Paper⁹ (CSP)** This Strategy Paper sets out the priorities for EU financial assistance for the period 2014-2020 to support the Beneficiary country on its path to accession. It translates the political priorities, set out in the enlargement policy framework, into key areas where financial assistance is most useful to meet the accession criteria. The CSP identifies the role of the NQF, referenced to the European Qualification Framework, in the delivery of the right skills for employment and increasing the efficiency and inclusiveness of the education and training system. Whilst recognizing the achievements made in the NQF system and the building of the NQF register the CSP refers to the ongoing need to focus more on educational standards, to reinforce the use of learning outcomes in standard-setting, curricula development and educational outcome assessment. The significant mismatch between demand and supply on the labour market, needs to be addressed, as does the fact that the Government still lacks systematic information on the skills needs. The CSP states that the link between training and employment should be further strengthened through promoting life-long learning, work-based learning, adult and continuing education. It states that the focus will be put on enhancing the cooperation between educational institutions, social partners and the private sector. The importance of informal and adult education should also be taken into account as well as support to a system for validation of informal learning. The CSP also refers to the crucial need to improve basic school education, and in light of this the need to further reform higher education in line with the Bologna process given that a higher quality education will benefit the country's overall education system, competitiveness and economic growth.

- **The ESRP 2022 – Employment and Social Reform Programme¹⁰** The preparation of the document, was envisaged by the European Commission as an inclusive and participatory strategic process that will follow and accompany the process of European integration of the candidate countries and will represent an important mechanism for mutual dialogue through setting and regular monitoring of priorities in the areas covered, and which will be structured following the model of the European Union Strategy "Europe 2020". One of the key challenges in the ESRP 2020 is mentioned in Section 2.2 Human Capital - Section 2.2.2 Implementation of the NQF – for Lifelong learning which provides the basis for ensuring quality in the system of education and training. The ESRP sets out the following: 3.2.2.1 Objective: Establishing a sustainable NQF system and strengthening human resources for its implementation. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a mandatory national standard that regulates the acquisition and use of qualifications in North Macedonia and a tool for establishing a system of acquired qualifications that provides the basis for visibility, access, passing through levels (mobility), acquisition and the quality of qualifications.

The new **Higher Education Law (2018)**¹¹ introduces a new approach to ensuring quality in education through establishment of new defined bodies in the system for quality assurance of higher education (HE) – with the detailed presentation of the new organizational structure, National Council for Higher Education and Science Research and the Agency for Quality in Higher Education including the Board for Accreditation and the Board for Evaluation established in January 2020 .

⁹Commission Decision C(2014)5861 of 19.8.2014 adopting the Indicative Strategy Paper for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the period 2014-2020

¹⁰<https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/espr-espr.nspix>

¹¹ <https://mon.gov.mk/stored/document/Zakon%20za%20visokoto%20obrazovanie%20NOV.pdf>

A new **Law on Primary Education**¹² has been adopted (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” No. 161/2019 of 5.8.2019). The law contains provisions that mean: improving the teaching process and way of organizing teaching, strengthening the fundamental constitutional values in the educational process, such as non-discrimination, the ban on humiliating treatment of students and school staff, establishing the principle of full inclusion of students with a disability through a comprehensive support system taking into account the individual needs of the student. The new law started to be implemented from the academic year 2019/2020. The drafting of bylaws arising from the new law is in progress.

The **Strategy for Adult education 2019- 2023**¹³- This Strategy with Action Plan postulates activities, results, policies and operations that need to be carried out to promote adult education in the country. The predicted results, which are given in detail, are performed directly from consultations with all relevant stakeholders in the country, from the state from the private sector. Hence, the strategy stems from research, policies and ambitions of educational actors in the country. The strategy gives directions for the road to promoting adult education with specific goals.

New **Law on Adult education (December 2019)**¹⁴ understanding of AE and widens the scope of AE policy by introducing procedure for validation of non-formal education and informal learning specifically emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning (LLL) principles.

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification:

Further implementation of the NQF will be built towards establishing a coordinated and more effective system of quality assurance in qualifications development, validation and accreditation process. This will enable the process of development and acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences. The IPA II programme support in this area will build on the ground work of the IPA I programme and will further strengthen the institutional structure of the NQF. It will support establishment and operationalization of the sector qualifications committees, where the employers have an active and direct role in identification of skills needs vital to the employability of young adults, and supporting the process of development of learning outcomes, as well as validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The main beneficiary of this project is the Ministry of Education and Science, the Unit for Implementation of the National Qualification Framework and the National Board for the NQF . It will also support the Sectoral Qualification Councils responsible for contributing to policy making and active in quality assurance of qualifications which are to be uploaded in the NQF Register. The project will also support the work of the newly established National Council for Higher Education and Science Research and the Agency for Quality in Higher Education including the Board for Accreditation and the Board for Evaluation.

The NQF (legislative, institutional, stakeholder inclusive and quality framework) has aim to strengthen the national system of qualifications by improving education and training through implementation of the learning outcomes approach, will make easier the access to learning in various contexts to every citizen, and will strengthen the links between qualifications and employment prospects. It will ensure that certificates and diplomas issued in North Macedonia will be internationally comparable and will facilitate mobility within the beneficiary country and the Region taking into consideration European labour market needs.

¹² [Zakon za osnovnoto obrazovanie - nov.pdf \(mon.gov.mk\)](#)

¹³ [strategija-za-obrazovanie-na-vozasni-2019-2023-mk.pdf \(mon.gov.mk\)](#)

¹⁴ [Zakon za obrazovanie na vozrasnite.pdf \(mon.gov.mk\)](#)

The Ministry of Education and Science has had overall responsibility for developing the NQF and for EQF referencing it is the EQF national coordination point (EQF NCP), North Macedonia has been a member of the EQF advisory group since 2013 and it was referenced to the EQF and self-certified to the qualifications framework of the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) in February 2016. It has a coordinating role shared with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which proposes the development of qualifications, adopts occupational standards and is responsible for setting up a system for collecting information on labour market needs and changes in required competences.

The NQF in accordance with Law on the NQF adopted and being effective from September 2015 incorporates awareness and involvement of stakeholders in matters related to the NQF increased through a series of actions: establishment and staffing of the NQF unit within the Ministry of Education and Science, the launch of the NQF website and register set up and in use from December 2017, establishment of the National Board for the NQF created in October 2015, ensuring the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in framework governance, and establishment of sectoral qualifications councils: (by February 2020, nine (9) of the 16 planned sectoral qualifications councils established by the National Board in sectors considered of national priority: construction and geodesy; electro-technical; chemistry and technology; hospitality and tourism; and personal services). Cooperation between specific stakeholders involved in the qualifications system has also been formalized through a series of protocols designed by the National Board for the NQF.

The law on the NQF stipulates the mandatory elements of qualification standards: title and type of qualification, level or sublevel, qualification code, credit value, description of qualification (measurable indicators of learning outcomes relating to the acquired knowledge and understanding, skills and competence) and contents (entry requirements, number of mandatory and optional subjects, assessment methods and criteria for assessment of learning outcomes). The shift to learning outcomes is seen as an essential part of qualifications development and one of the leading principles outlined in the law on the NQF. Other principles include transferability of credits, classification of qualifications at levels and sublevels, comparability with the EQF, and quality assurance in the development and acquisition of qualifications. Several documents were produced to support the development of qualifications and their allocation in the NQF: Procedure for development of qualifications; Format of qualifications; Protocol for cooperation among the stakeholders involved in the process of NQF and Methodology for including qualifications in NQF. A comprehensive inventory of qualifications was created in 2015 in cooperation with the ETF, as a first version of a qualifications register. It covered all formal qualifications from higher education, general education and VET, and the verified non-formal adult education programmes. The qualifications register has been under development since 2016, it was set up and inclusion of qualifications in the register started in December 2017 with 52 qualifications listed in the register by April 2020. NQF and EQF levels are indicated in the qualifications register, and on Europass diploma supplements.

It has been agreed to include NQF and EQF levels on qualification documents for all qualifications in the NQF. Implementing this decision in all education and training subsystems will, however, take time, as it is technically challenging and requires updating of legislation. A bylaw that stipulates the indication of levels on higher education qualifications was adopted in June 2018 (New Law on Higher education 2018), also New Law for Primary education was adopted in August 2019, New Law on Adult education was adopted in February 2020 and draft law for secondary general education and VET are currently under debate. Their adoption is expected in Q4 2020. For general education and VET, the design of the new learning-

outcomes-based education programmes and the leveling of existing ones is still work in progress.

However, analysis of qualifications and relevant legislation were carried out in the past period. The Roadmap for further development and implementation of the NQF, conducted analysis by the first Twinning (TW) project and final report from it, still underline some weaknesses and gap in the system. As the NQF is a young framework, targeted systematic evaluation of its use or impact has been carried out by the Twining Review Mission in August 2019. Based on all of the relevant reports so far, this twinning project will further support the NQF.

The further development and implementation of NQF is one of the strategic priorities and this project shall contribute toward fine-tuning of the existing legislation with the NQF Law, capacity building and stronger involvement of labour market actors in qualifications development, strengthening the quality assurance systems¹⁵, setting up the system for validation of non-formal and informal learning, promotion of the learning outcomes approach through the educational system; review, renewal and quality assurance of qualifications; to improve the dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders across education and training sectors and between education and the labour market. The NQF is used to support the recognition of foreign qualifications and is seen as a catalyst for setting up a system for validation of non-formal and informal learning. The main challenges and priority tasks in future development and implementation of the framework included the newly establishment of NQF-related structures (National Council for Higher Education and Science Research and the Agency for Quality in Higher Education including the Board for Accreditation and the Board for Evaluation), switching from educational goals to learning-outcomes-based education programmes for existing qualifications, development of new qualifications, increase the interest of employers to become more deeply involved in implementing the framework.

As expected result is also support to the piloted European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET) through support of the uses and understanding of the existing ECVET guidelines and introduction of Europass certificate supplement for VET Reform of three- and four-year VET programmes and adult education in line with the NQF is in progress but still need some fine tuning and flexibility.

Also endorsement of the referencing report in the EQF advisory group is one important milestones in the development of the NQF . This project will contribute to drafting a comprehensive report on referencing of the NQF to the EQF and self- certification to the qualifications framework for the European higher education area (QF-EHEA) An updated report on progress with the implementation of the framework is expected in 2020/2021¹⁶. Further support for the institutional capacity building remains a challenge regarding implementation NQF. So far the Ministry of Education and Science has led the NQF development process and related institutional capacity building and systematically involved other relevant ministries, agencies and social partners. The newly established Agency for Quality in Higher Education including the Board for Accreditation and the Board for Evaluation are new conducted bodies established in January 2020, introduced in the system for

¹⁵Definition : Quality assurance - a process or set of processes adopted at national and/or institutional level with the goal of ensuring the quality of the education process, education programmes and qualifications. The national quality assurance system (s) is presented trough wide range of stakeholders that should be involved in implementing the EQF at Union and national levels in order to ensure its broad support. Key stakeholders, all learners, education and training providers, qualifications authorities, quality assurance bodies, employers, trade unions, chambers of industry, commerce and skilled crafts, bodies involved in the recognition of academic and professional qualifications, employment services and services in charge of migrant integration are part of the continuous quality assurance and improvement trough continues transposition of the relevant European common principles fully compatible with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and with European Quality Assurance in VET (EQAVET).

¹⁶ European Commission and Cedefop, 2018

Quality Assurance in HE as part of the New Law on Higher Education (2018). Revising the system of higher education quality assurance to support the development-oriented and outcome-based quality evaluation mechanisms with aim to ensure its compliance, independents and meeting with the requirements of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG EHEA 2015). Specifically, the quality assurance standards and procedures need to be revised; students, employer representatives and international experts have been involved in the evaluation expert panels. Taking into account Bologna follow-up group (BFUG)¹⁷ work on vision and thematic priorities after 2020- Policy Development for new EHEA goals (2015-2018): During the preparation of the Paris Ministerial Conference, the Working Group 3, taking into account the Yerevan Communiqué and “The Bologna Process revisited”, proposed focussing in the future on six topics: 1. Promoting active and responsible citizens, 2. Linking European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and European Research Area (ERA), 3. Using digital technologies, 4. Supporting students from non-traditional backgrounds, 5. Enhancing teacher support, 6. Improving professional recognition, North Macedonia as co-chair of BFUG (in the second half of 2019) has the leading role in fallowing and fulfillment of all policies agreed. In parallel, on regional level under the guidance of Regional Cooperation Council there are several ongoing actions regarding the process of Multi-annual action plan for a regional economic area in the Western Balkans(MAP REA)¹⁸ and Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualification for 4 (four) qualification (Teachers , Doctor of medicine, Medical nurses and Architects) including establishment of Joint Information System¹⁹ facilitating recognition of academic qualifications for the region of Western Balkans, processes for which North Macedonia is participating and should meet the requirements, this project will directly contribute in fulfillment of some of above mentioned activities.

According to the EQF NCP²⁰ , there is a medium- to high-level of awareness about the NQF, and its use among education and training providers. Large companies and recognition bodies are aware of the framework and use it to a medium extent, and guidance and counseling practitioners to a low to medium extent. The NQF is less visible among pupils, parents, small and medium-size companies and job-seekers. Communication efforts for this project are oriented towards employers, learners, education providers and authorities. The main channels used are the NQF website, leaflets, brochures, workshops, information campaigns, and, occasionally, TV and radio channels. The important role of the communication dimension of the NQF is recognized and a series of protocols for cooperation among stakeholders involved in the qualifications system, adopted by the NQF Board, serve as a basis for a future communication strategy. So far all listed challenges for this project are identified and will contribute in fulfilment of priorities’ foreseen in the Strategy for education 2018-2025.

In addition, through supply of equipment (IPA I and IPA II AD 2017) for strengthening the capacities of the institutions in the area of NQF will allow better and faster exchange of information and access to NQF, transparent accessibility of the NQF Register for all relevant stakeholders.

3.2 Ongoing reforms:

¹⁷ BFUG- Bologna follow-up group in EHEA <http://www.ehea.info/page-bfug-secretariat>

¹⁸ The MAP REA, whose development is coordinated by the rcc upon request of the Western Balkans’ leaders and supported by the European Commission , aims to enable unobstructed flow of goods, services, capital and highly skilled labour; making the region more attractive for investment and trade; and accelerating convergence with the EU, thus bringing prosperity to Western Balkans citizens. https://www.rcc.int/priority_areas/39/map-rea

¹⁹ Joint Information System - data gathering and data management systems for compatibility of data on academic qualifications and study programmes with regional (Western Balkans) portal – joint information system – facilitating recognition of academic qualifications.

²⁰European Commission and Cedefop, 2018

Ministry of Education and Science in the past two decades was working on improving the deficiencies in the educational system in the country. Many national and international programmes and initiatives were focused on teaching and learning, i.e. modernizing education the teaching process and practice and raising the quality of learning by students in primary and secondary education. This was realized by implementing long reforms and improvements in the educational system including revised and improved national curriculum, adopting new legislation such as Law on Primary education and Law on Teachers in Primary and Secondary Education adopted in August 2019 on Teacher Career and Professional Development in 2019. Revision of quality assurance system of general education is in the process (Concept for national assessment is prepared) and it is identified as of the biggest challenges presented in the OECD Analysis and report²¹ for the country conducted in 2019, including an Action Plan. The country results of PISA 2018 show improvement in science, reading and mathematics compared with the previous rounds PISA 2015. Nonetheless the country's performance in PISA is still below the average, in particular the percentage of low achievers, which is well above the OECD average (OECD report for the country 2019)²²

North Macedonia has been implementing vocational education and training (VET) reforms aimed at supporting the socioeconomic development and poverty reduction priorities of the country, as well as to meet requirements of the labour market. WB project "Skills Development and Innovation Support" developed new VET programmes and 52 qualifications, based on the learning outcomes approach and structured in modules including ECVET credits. From the academic year 2017-2018, the reform of vocational education in two and three years of education according to the new curricula began to be implemented in all secondary vocational schools. The reform of vocational education in the four-year duration of education was realized first as a pilot project in 6 high schools for three educational profiles (qualifications), construction technician, hotel-catering technician and electrical technician for computer technology and automation, from the academic year 2017-2018. In these profiles (in the 6 pilot schools) the teaching of general education and vocational subjects in the first year, from the academic year 2018-2019, is realized according to the new curricula that are modularly designed, expressed with credit value of the program and with results from learning and assessment criteria

From the academic year 2019/2020 (September 2019) in all secondary vocational schools in the first year (for all 52 qualifications), the new reformed modular curricula began to be applied, with ECVET credits, based on learning outcomes. For that purpose, 79 new curricula for vocational subjects and 19 new curricula for general education programs for the first year have been adopted.

New approaches and arrangements to strengthen quality improvement in VET offers have been implemented such as school companies, dual learning, the concept for work based learning, introduction of Regional VET Centers etc. Regarding Adult learning all relevant aspect are in line and harmonization with the requirements from the existing Law for NQF by adopting new Law on Adult education and establishing procedures for validation of non-formal education and informal learning. Currently the preparation of the Draft Law on Secondary education and the Draft Law on VET is under preparation. In 2018, by adopting the new Law on Higher Education, the Ministry has revised the system of higher education quality assurance to promote the development-oriented and outcome-based quality evaluation mechanisms and to

²¹ <http://mrk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/OECD-study-MK-EDU.pdf>

²² <http://mrk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/OECD-study-MK-EDU.pdf>

ensure its compliance with the requirements of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015). Specifically, the quality assurance standards and procedures need to be revised in light of these legislative developments. This Twinning fiche has been drafted in a moment/at the time of the establishment of the new structure for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

3.3 Linked activities:

Title: Referencing of the National Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework

Donor/development partner: ETF

Duration May 2014- March 2016

Overall objective: institutional building and preparation towards referencing to the EQF after the adoption of the Law on the National Qualifications Framework in 2013. The referencing is based on a participative process, owned and led by the national institutions and complying with EQF referencing criteria and procedures. It is also analyzing and improving the quality of the inventory of qualifications.

Title: Further improvement of the system for development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework

Donor: EU – IPA Twinning project

Value: EUR 2,250,000

Duration: 22 months 2015-2017

Overall objective: to support further improvement of the system for development and implementation of the MQF.

Title: Skills Development and Innovation Support

Development partner: World Bank

Value: EUR 17,700,000

Duration: 2014- 2019

Overall objective: to contribute to better connectivity of the vocational and higher education to the labor market needs through properly trained workforce.

Title: Enhancing Life-Long Learning through modernizing VET and adult education systems

Donor: EU - IPA project

Value: EUR 1,972,500

Duration: January 2016 – November 2017

Overall objective: to contribute to the strengthening of a comprehensive and integrated Lifelong Learning system, with focus on Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, by establishing a dynamic correlation between education and the changes of both the social sphere and the labour market.

Title: Support to the modernization of the system for post-secondary education

Donor: EU - IPA Twinning Light project

Value: EUR 250,000

Duration: April 2016 – December 2016

Overall objective: to support the development of human resources through modernizing the education and training system, with special focus on post-secondary education through revision of strategic documents, relevant legislation and the institutional and organizational setup.

Title: Developing cooperation between higher education institutions, private sector and relevant public bodies

Donor: EU- IPA Twinning Light project

Value: EUR 750,000

Duration: 07.2016 – 12.2017

Overall objective: to support the linkage between higher education institutions and the labour market, in order to improve the quality of higher education from the perspective of graduates and employers as main beneficiaries of higher education services. Specific objective: to further strengthen institutional capacities of higher education institutions and their cooperation with the private sector.

Title: Support to the Ministry of Education and Science of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for implementation of the National Qualification Framework, including employer engagement

Donor: British Council

Value: EUR 10,000

Duration: June 2015 – April 2016

Overall objective: The main objective of the project is building and strengthening the capacities of the employers in formal and non-formal education and training in two sectors (tourism and hospitality and IT)

Title: 'EU For Youth'

Donor: European Union - IPA II Action Document 2019 'EU for Youth' Sector Reform Performance

Value: EUR 16,000,000

Duration: 2020-2023

Overall objective: The overall objective is to support the Government of North Macedonia in improving the employment of young women and men through improving quality, relevance and inclusiveness of the national vocational education and training system and increasing employment opportunities for young women and men.

The NQF is seen as a valuable reform tool for modernizing education and training, with a view to improving the quality and adaptability of education to labour market needs, and promoting lifelong learning and mobility. It is reflected in several strategic documents, such as the Economic reform programme 2018-20, the Education strategy 2018-25, the Employment and social reform programme 2022 and the Framework for strategic engagement of employers in North Macedonia.

North Macedonia has been working towards a national qualification framework (NQF) for several years, with international assistance (European Union (EU), European Training Foundation and British Council). The development of a national qualifications framework (NQF) has been closely linked to the country's strategic priority of achieving EU membership, and its commitment to the Lisbon strategy, the Europe 2020 strategy, the Bologna process, and the Copenhagen/Bruges process. The primary roles of the NQF are communication, transparency and support to reforms. It helps to coordinate and integrate all stakeholders by taking into consideration the needs of the labour market, society and individuals.

ETF supported the referencing of the NQF to the EQF (2016), capacity building for stakeholders, revision and analysis of qualifications, and leveling of a small number of VET qualifications using learning outcomes. NQF implementation was also supported by the British Council, with emphasis on employer engagement with NQF development, and the establishment of sectoral qualifications councils (Ministry of Education and Science, 2016). An IPA twinning project – Further improvement of the system for development and

implementation of the national qualifications framework – was launched in March 2016, aimed at activities for review of NQF-related legislation; strengthening institutional capacity; and development of qualifications in line with the NQF. Other specific projects aimed to continue reforms of three- and two-year VET qualifications by developing new qualification and occupation standards, reforming curricula and strengthening cooperation between stakeholders and VET teachers. EU funded Projects also supported the modernisation of post-secondary education; cooperation between higher education institutions and the business community; and building capacity of the EQF national coordination point (EQF NCP) and other relevant stakeholders.

3.4 List of applicable Union acquis/standards/norms:

- ET 2020 strategic framework and future European ET strategic frameworks. The development of the EQF should be fully coherent with existing European cooperation in education and training under the ET 2020 strategic framework and future European ET strategic frameworks. The European Commission’s 2018 and 2019 Reports. Below is the part covering the progress that has been done in the area of qualifications: 5.26. Chapter 26: Education and culture
- **National Programme for Adoption of Acquis – NPAA2017/** Part 3.26 Education and culture- Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) signed with the EU in 2001. By doing so, and according to the Article 52 of the Agreement, the country undertook the obligation of undertaking the necessary steps for establishing National Qualifications Framework
- **Directive 2011/95/EU** of the European Parliament and of the Council (2), high rates of over-qualification and under-employment persist among third-country nationals with tertiary education. Cooperation between the Union and third countries over the transparency of qualifications can foster migrant integration into Union labour markets. Given the growing migration flows to and from the Union, a better understanding and a fair recognition of qualifications awarded outside the Union is needed.
- **Directive 2005/36/EC** of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) provides that common training frameworks for regulated professions can be set up through a Commission delegated act as a common set of knowledge, skills and competences. Common training frameworks are to be based on levels of the EQF. Reference to EQF levels on qualifications is not to affect access to the labour market where professional qualifications have been recognised in accordance with Directive 2005/36/EC.
- **Decision No 2241/2004/EC** of the European Parliament and of the Council (4) helps people to better present their skills, competences and qualifications.
- **ET 2020 strategic framework and future European ET strategic frameworks.** The development of the EQF should be fully coherent with existing European cooperation in education and training under the ET 2020 strategic framework and future European ET strategic frameworks.
 - **The Copenhagen process** - The Copenhagen Process was initiated in November 2002 with an agreed Declaration on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training (VET). The Main objectives set by the Copenhagen declaration are:
 - Single framework for transparency of qualifications and competences;
 - Cooperation in quality assurance in VET;
 - Credit transfer system for VET - a system that enables individuals to progressively obtain credit points based on the competences they acquire along their vocational learning route, in both formal and informal settings;
 - Common principles for validation of non-formal and informal learning;

- Strengthening policies, systems and practices for lifelong guidance;
- Support to the development of qualifications and competences at sectoral level;
- Attention to the learning needs of teachers and trainers.

➤ Main Laws and legislation relevant for this Twinning project:

- Law on National qualification framework²³ (2016)
- New Law on Primary Education (2019)
- Law on Secondary education and VET
- New Law on Adult Education (2019)
- New Law on Higher Education (2018)

Please Note that the list of main Recommendations relevant and other more recent Council Recommendations highly relevant for this Twinning project are listed in Annex 2.

3.5. Results per Component

Under the IPA II the further implementation of the NQF will be built towards establishing a coordinated and more effective system of quality assurance in qualifications development, validation and accreditation process.

Mandatory Result 1 (Component 1): Quality assurance of education and training in a LLL perspective is strengthened

Sub- Result 1.1: Quality assurance (QA) framework reviewed.

Sub - Result 1.2: Efficient and applicable Methodology and procedures on QA developed - for new users in Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (AQAHE) Boards, practitioners in education and training institutions and stakeholders (e.g. NQF Board, Sector Committee).

Mandatory Result 2 (Component 2): Strengthened implementation and capacities of the NQF in accordance with the QA framework

Sub - Result 2.1: Road map (2021-2023) for future implementation and capacity building of the NQF aligned with the QA framework and other relevant policies and strategies (e.g.: education, employment, economic development, Smart specialization (S3) strategy) developed.

Sub - Result 2.2: Transparent and simplified procedures and methodology drafted and agreed for development and inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards from various learning settings in the digital NQF register.

Mandatory Result 3 (Component 3): Operational and administrative capacities of NQF Administration for management for NQF communication and awareness raising practices improved

Sub - Result: 3.1: Communication Strategy developed and implemented for increased understanding and visibility of the NQF and NQF Digital Register

²³ https://mon.gov.mk/stored/document/zakon_za_nacionalna_ramka_na_kvalifikacii_26-02-2016.pdf

Mandatory Result 4 (Component 4): NQF Digital register interconnection and compatibility on National and EU level improved

Sub - Result 4.1 NQF Digital register further supported for potential interconnection and compatibility to QMS, QDR, LOQ, ESCO and EUROPASS .

3.6 Means/input from the EU Member State Partner Administration(s)*:

The project will be implemented in the form of a Twinning contract between the Beneficiary Country and EU Member State(s). The implementation of the project requires one Project Leader (PL) with responsibility for the overall coordination of project activities and one Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA) to manage implementation of project activities, Component Leaders (CL) and pool of short-term experts within the limits of the budget. It is essential that the team has sufficiently broad expertise to cover all areas included in the project description.

Proposals submitted by Member State shall be concise and focused on the strategy and methodology and an indicative timetable underpinning this, the administrative model suggested, the quality of the expertise to be mobilised and clearly show the administrative structure and capacity of the Member State entities. Proposals shall be detailed enough to respond adequately to the Twinning Fiche, but are not expected to contain a fully elaborated project. They shall contain enough detail about the strategy and methodology and indicate the sequencing and mention key activities during the implementation of the project to ensure the achievement of overall and specific objectives and mandatory results/outputs.

The interested EU Member State(s) shall include in their proposal the CVs of the designated Project Leader (PL) and the Resident Twinning Adviser (RTA), as well as the CVs of the potentially designated Component Leaders-(CLs).

The Twinning project will be implemented by close co-operation between the partners aiming to achieve the mandatory results in sustainable manner.

The set of proposed activities will be further developed with the Twinning partners when drafting the initial work plan and successive rolling work plan every three months, keeping in mind that the final list of activities will be decided in cooperation with the Twinning partner. The components are closely inter-linked and need to be sequenced accordingly.

3.6.1. Profile and tasks of the PL:

Qualifications and skills

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body (see Twinning Manual 4.1.4.2);
- At least university degree²⁴ preferably in the field of Human resources, Education or any other discipline relevant for the position such as, management, science and technology, social science, natural science, political science) or in its absence an equivalent professional experience of 8 years.
- At least 3 years of specific experience in the field of governance and quality assurance of qualifications in the EU MS relevant administration / institutions;
- Experience in EQF, ESG, NQA, EQAVET, Bologna process will be considered as an

²⁴ For reference on equivalent qualification see: EPSO website-Annex 1 (http://europa.eu.int/epso/online-applications/pdf/guide-1242-171104_en.doc)

- asset;
- Experience in project coordination, in International and/or EU funded project will be considered as an asset;
- Excellent command of written and spoken English;

Tasks of the Project Leader:

- Conceive, supervise and coordinate the overall Twinning project;
- To provide strategic advice on high level reforms supported by the Twinning;
- Coordinate and monitor the overall implementation of the project including coordination and direction of the MS Twinning partner;
- Co-ordinate MS experts' work and availability;
- Communicate with the final beneficiary and EU Delegation;
- Ensure the backstopping functions and financial management;
- Guarantee from the MS administration side, the successful implementation of the Project's Work Plan; Participate in quarterly meetings of the Project Steering Committee with the BC PL;
- Participate in preparation of the initial and subsequent work plans

3.6.2. Profile and tasks of the RTA:

One Resident Twinning Advisor (RTA) will be appointed and he/she will be located in the premises of the Ministry of Education and Science. The secondment of the RTA will last for 27 months, during which he/she will be responsible for the direct implementation of the project under the overall supervision of the MS Project Leader.

Qualifications and skills:

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body (see Twinning Manual 4.1.4.2)
- At least a University degree in law, education, public administration MBA, or other relevant discipline with the project focus or equivalent professional experience of 5 years;
- At least 3 years of specific experience in any related field of European Qualification Framework
- Experience in international cooperation instruments, conventions and ongoing developments related to QA, NQF will be considered as an asset;
- Experience in implementing international and/or EU funded project will be considered as asset
- Excellent command of English both written and spoken

Tasks of the Resident Twinning Adviser:

- Drafting an initial work plan in close cooperation with all relevant actors;
- Coordinate of all project activities and experts' inputs in the country;
- Ensure timely and correct implementation of the activities as outlined in the initial and subsequent work plans; Keeps the Beneficiary PL informed about the implementation and reports regularly to the Member State PL;
- Updates the work plan to be transmitted to the Project Steering Committee under the authority of the Member State PL;
- Providing advice and technical assistance to the representatives of the Beneficiary administration;

- Monitoring and evaluating the needs and priorities in the respective sector, project risks, progress against the project budget, benchmarks, and outputs, and taking any necessary remedial actions if needed;
- Coordination of the EU MS experts' work and availability;
- Preparation of the materials and documentation for regular monitoring and reporting.

RTA Assistant:

The RTA shall be supported by a full time project assistant. The RTA assistant will be recruited and funded by the project. He/she will be working together with the RTA for the whole duration of the project. The RTA assistant will provide logistical and administrative support, translation and interpretation services as necessary and assist in the preparation of working documents, organisation of seminars, training and study tours. The profile of the RTA assistant will be specified by the RTA who will proceed to his/her recruitment following the provisions of the Twinning Manual. The assistant will be contracted in line with the Twinning Manual rules (see point 4.1.6.10) and paid from the Twinning budget. The assistant will be selected through an open call.

Full-time translator / interpreter:

For the purpose of the project and for cost effectiveness the Twinning Project foresees a part or full- time translator / interpreter who should be selected through an open call. The full-time translator / interpreter will be involved in all necessary project activities (training sessions, translation of project documents/reports and materials, organizational activities, etc.). The role of the translator / interpreter will be to provide translation and editing as well as interpretation services to the Twinning project in general.

3.6.3. Profile and tasks of Component Leaders:

The Component Leaders will work in close cooperation with the RTA and the Beneficiary administration in order to meet the mandatory results. The main task of the Component Leaders is to coordinate the activities under the area of responsibility in liaison with the partner institutions.

The Component Leaders 3 (three) persons, one for each Component above will be responsible for achievement of project results, ensuring the activities for the co-operation and information exchange between the RTA and the final beneficiary side and ensuring that all the required support of the management and staff of the EU side are available.

Component Leader 1: Quality assurance of education and training in a LLL perspective strengthened.

Qualifications and skills:

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body;
- At least a University degree in education or other relevant discipline with the project focus or equivalent professional experience of 5 years;
- At least 3 years of specific experience in the field of QA procedures,
- Experience in implementing at least one international or EU funded project with similar nature, will be considered as asset;
- Fluent written and spoken English.

Tasks:

- Provide practical expertise/advice to relevant staff for execution of different tasks related to the project;
- Assist in key tasks, in the field of manuals, training, preparing guidelines for strategic use and management of training and providing training;

- Contribute to the project reporting, to drafting the notes and other documents and reports on their missions; Address cross-cutting issues;
- Provide technical advice, support and assist the BC institution in the context of the project's components;
- Prepare analyses of the existing guidelines, instructions and manuals regarding procedures and working practices;
- Participate in preparation of both interim and final reports

Component Leader 2: Support to the further implementation and enhanced capacities of the National Qualifications Framework in accordance with the QA framework

Qualifications and skills:

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body;
- At least a University degree in Education / other relevant discipline with the project focus or equivalent professional experience of 5 years;
- At least 3 years of specific experience in the field in QA of education and training and/or EQF referencing (QA standards, process, criteria and working methods of the EQF Advisory Group);
- Experience of the ENQA, EQAR, ESG and other relevant QA frameworks, as well as good practice in the EU MS will be considered as asset;
- Experience in implementing at least one international or EU funded project with similar nature, will be considered as asset;
- Fluent written and spoken English.

Tasks:

- Provide practical expertise/advice to relevant staff for execution of different tasks related to the project;
- Assist in key tasks, in the field of analysis, manuals, training, preparing guidelines for strategic use and management of training and providing training;
- Contribute to the project reporting, to drafting the notes and other documents and reports on their missions;
- Provide technical advice, support and assist the BC institution in the context of the project's components;
- Prepare analyses of the existing guidelines, instructions and manuals regarding procedures and working practices;
- Participate in preparation of both interim and final reports.

Component Leader 3: Operational and administrative capacities of NQF Administration for management including NQF communication and awareness raising practices improved.

Qualifications and skills:

- Proven contractual relation to a public administration or mandated body;
- At least a University degree in education/law/other relevant discipline with the project focus or equivalent professional experience of 5 years;
- At least 3 years of specific experience in the field of governance of education and training systems, notably NQF and qualifications development
- Experience in implementing at least one international or EU funded project with similar nature, will be considered as asset;
- Experience in trainings design and/or delivery will be considered an asset
- Fluent written and spoken English.
-

Tasks:

- Component coordination, guidance and monitoring;
- Conducting analysis of the area relevant to the component;
- Preparing and conducting training programs;
- Drafting thematic / technical contributions and documents relevant for the results of the component 3 and component 4,
- close cooperation with the BC counterparts and other project experts
- Provision of legal and technical advice and analysis whenever needed;
- Timely proposals for any corrective measures;
- Participate in preparation of both interim and final reports.

3.6.4. Profile and tasks of other short-term experts:

Qualifications and skills;

Short Term Experts shall comply with the following minimum requirements:

University degree in a relevant field or equivalent professional experience of 5 years in a related field

- A minimum of 3 years of experience in the field of education:
- QA of education and training systems/ implementation and governance of the NQF/ qualifications development and QA/ development of online registers of qualifications/ IT manager / validation of non-formal and informal learning/ recognition of prior learning in the framework of higher education/ LLL and adult learning/ communities of practice/ information and dissemination methods and tools on NQF and QA for users (wider public and practitioners in the qualifications system);
- relevant international conventions and their application and recent amendments, EU acquis, EU institutions and instruments (EQF Advisory Group, relevant groups of the open method of coordination in the EU, relevant web-resources managed by the European Commission related with the new Skills Agenda for Europe, Learning Opportunities and Qualifications, ESCO, Europass);
- Experience in developing strategy documents and methodology packages / toolkits and handbooks;
- Proven IT experience in developing, managing and improving registers of qualifications and data management (in charge for activity's under component 4);
- Relevant experience in capacity building activities;
- Good command of written and spoken English;

Tasks of the short term experts:

A pool of short term experts is required to implement the project activities covering the following indicative subjects:

- Prepare and implement specific tasks based mainly on practical cases and experience in compliance with their mission description and in accordance with Project activities;
- Effective contribution and assistance with drafting project related documents in accordance with the planned results of the respective components and taking account of the national rules for legislative development.
- Provision of practical support, training, advice, recommendations and reports as foreseen under the Project in close cooperation and coordination with the relevant institution;
- Contributing to the sustainability of the project by ensuring that aspects of the project related to their field of expertise are implemented timely;

- Provide practical expertise/advices and transfer knowledge to relevant staff for execution of all activities related to the results and objective required within the project;
- Timely proposals for any corrective measures;
- Liaise with RTA and BC counterparts.
- Address cross-cutting issues

4. Budget:

Maximum Budget available for the Twinning project is EUR 1,500,000.

Twining Contract	IPA Community Contribution	TOTAL
Further support to the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework	100% EUR 1,500,000	EUR 1,500,000

5. Implementation Arrangements:

5.1 Implementing Agency responsible for tendering, contracting and accounting is the Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) within the Ministry of Finance.

Name: Ermira Fida

Institution: Ministry of Finance / Central Financing and Contracting Department

Position: Head of the Operating Structure

E-mail: tanja.beginova@finance.gov.mk

Address: st. Dame Gruev no. 12, 1000 Skopje

5.2 Institutional framework

This Twinning project will be implemented by the main beneficiary and coordinator of the project the Ministry of Education and Science responsible for the development and implementation of the National Qualification Framework. Accordingly, the technical implementation of the project, which means day-to-day co-ordination and implementation of the project activities will be a responsibility of the NQF Unit and NQF Board. The Ministry of Education and Science will be directly responsible for co-ordination and management of the project from the beneficiary side and will support the Twinning project team in organizational and technical matters. Coordination will be ensured among all institutions relevant to the implementation of the project. Key stakeholders need to be include all learners, education and training providers, qualifications authorities, quality assurance bodies, employers, trade unions, chambers of industry, commerce and skilled crafts, bodies involved in the recognition of academic and professional qualifications, employment services and services in charge of migrant integration.

Structure of the Ministry of Education and Science

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main state authority in charge of education policies. Some of the relevant responsible Department related to this project are:

- Department of Primary and Secondary Education, through the Bureau for Development of Education coordinates all activities related to development of general qualifications.
- Department of Higher Education, Unit for equivalence and recognition of foreign

qualifications, coordinates all activities related to the compliance European area of higher education.

- National Focal Point connects the National Framework of qualifications with the European Qualifications Framework and the qualification framework for European area of higher education
- EU Department, Unit for negotiation and community integration, coordination of projects and grants in education and science, is in charge of coordination of the process of alignment with EU requirements. It also coordinates programming and implementation of EU and other donor assistance in the field of education and in other areas, which are under competences of the Ministry of education and science.
- Vocational and education training centre, coordinates all activities related to development of qualifications which are coming from educational and vocational policy, and
- Centre for Adult Education coordinates all activities related to development of qualifications which are coming from non-formal education.
- Bureau for Development of Education.

Other relevant institutions which will be involved during the implementation of the contract:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
- Employment Service Agency
- State Statistical Office
- Participation of stakeholders, especially social partners
- State Examination Centre;
- Agency for QA in HE
- Board for Accreditation of HE and
- Board for Evaluation of HE;
- Employers and Chambers of Commerce;
- Education and training providers;
- Other relevant stakeholders

5.3 Counterparts in the Beneficiary administration:

The PL and RTA counterparts will be staff of the Beneficiary administration and will be actively involved in the management and coordination of the project.

5.3.1 Contact person:

Name: Ms Ivana Popovska
Position: IPA Coordinator/ EU department
Address: Ministry of Education and Science, st.Kiril and Metodi no. 54

Name: Ms Keti Kostovska
Position: Unit for implementation of the NQF
Address: Ministry of Education and Science, st.Kiril and Metodi no. 54

5.3.2 PL counterpart

Name: Mr. Borco Aleksov
Position: Deputy Head Department for Higher Education
Address: Ministry of Education and Science, st. Kiril and Metodi no. 54

5.3.3 RTA counterpart

Name: Ms. Keti Kostovska

Position: Unit for implementation of the NQF

Address: Ministry of Education and Science, st.Kiril and Metodi no. 54

6 .Duration of the project

The overall execution period of the Twinning project is : 30 months with an implementation period of 27 months. (The execution period of the contract shall enter into force upon the date of notification by the Contracting Authority of the contract signed by all parties, whereas it shall end 3 months after the implementation period of the Action).

7. Management and reporting

7.1 Language

The official language of the project is the one used as contract language under the instrument (English). All formal communications regarding the project, including interim and final reports, shall be produced in the language of the contract.

7.2 Project Steering Committee

A project steering committee (PSC) shall oversee the implementation of the project. The main duties of the PSC include verification of the progress and achievements *via-à-vis* the mandatory results/outputs chain (from mandatory results/outputs per component to impact), ensuring good coordination among the actors, finalising the interim reports and discuss the updated work plan. Other details concerning the establishment and functioning of the PSC are described in the Twinning Manual.

7.3 Reporting

All reports shall have a narrative section and a financial section. They shall include as a minimum the information detailed in section 5.5.2 (interim reports) and 5.5.3 (final report) of the Twinning Manual. Reports need to go beyond activities and inputs. Two types of reports are foreseen in the framework of Twinning: interim quarterly reports and final report. An interim quarterly report shall be presented for discussion at each meeting of the PSC. The narrative part shall primarily take stock of the progress and achievements *via-à-vis* the mandatory results and provide precise recommendations and corrective measures to be decided by in order to ensure the further progress.

8. Sustainability

The project will provide the beneficiaries with all necessary tools to facilitate the development of policy options instead of offering copy-paste solutions and easy-made outputs. In this way, the project will contribute to the sustainable development of the beneficiaries' capacities. Every result will be the product of a joint work of the public administration staff and the selected experts, which will ensure an increase of expertise within the public administration.

The achievements of a Twinning project (mandatory results) shall be maintained as a permanent asset to the Beneficiary administration even after the end of the Twinning project

implementation. This presupposes inter alia that effective mechanisms are put in place by the Beneficiary administration to disseminate and consolidate the results of the project.

In accordance with the purpose of this twinning which is strengthening of the national capacities for effective and efficient functioning of the system for National Qualification Framework, the beneficiary country should be ready for effective implementation of NQF. The strengthening of capacity of the NQF Unit, as a key for sustainability of all activity's outcomes included in the Twinning project supports closer integration of the work of senior staff and departments, in order to work towards more coherent strategic goals and provide a greater measure of self-sustainability.

Information and management system for National qualification framework will be established and will be fully operational in order to provide sustainability.

9. Cross-cutting issues (equal opportunity, environment, climate etc...)

9.1 Equal Opportunity and non-discrimination

Equal opportunity for men and women to participate in the project will be guaranteed in accordance with EU standard and the Law on Equal Opportunities on Women and Men of the country. All other forms of discrimination will be banned in accordance with National and EU legislation and standards.

The twinning partner is expected to provide specific advice and training on the way to set up, manage, monitor and evaluate the equal opportunities mainstreaming within IPA II. The project design and implementation must be inclusive (for example ensuring wheelchair accessible meeting rooms, interpretation as required, outreach to relevant stakeholders including minority groups). Specific inputs and outputs are expected in this field as in the field of other potential discriminations (e.g. people origin, ethnicity, persons with disabilities etc).

9.2. Civil Society development and dialogue

Cooperation with the civil society organizations is an important element in the implementation of MQF. Relevant civil society organizations will be included in twinning activities when relevant. In compliance with the provisions of the IPA II Implementing Regulation, the civil society will be involved through the mainstreaming mechanism developed to integrate it to the implementation of IPA II, in accordance with the principle of wide stakeholder representation and partnership of all interested and affected parties.

9.3 Environment

As per equal opportunities, better educated people are more familiarised with environmental concerns. The project beneficiaries shall ensure that, during implementation of this action, due consideration is given to the Government's development policy relating to environmental management and that such policy is embodied, within all strategic policy documents they may draft, all training activities they may carry out and new study programmes and curricula they may design. Equally, environmental considerations will be taken into account for the procurement of equipment. Any ecological friendly initiative which can be taken will have to be implemented.

The principle of implementation of this Twinning project will be based on environment friendly atmosphere. This in particular guarantees, minimising paper use during project implementation by the maximum feasible use of electronic tools and resources. Minimal use of plastics and not using plastics for the visibility materials (e.g. no plastic pens or plastic folders).

9.4 Good governance

All relevant requirements to insure a sound financial management of the project will be fulfilled in accordance with the principle of good governance.

All necessary provisions will be taken to fight against corruption in accordance with Article 51.3 of the Law on Ratification of Framework Agreement between the Government and the European Commission on the arrangements for implementation of Union financial assistance under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) (published in the Official Gazette No.99/2015 on 16 June 2015):

“The IPA II Final beneficiary shall under indirect management, take any appropriate measure to prevent and counter any active or passive corruption practices at any stage of the procurement procedure or grant award procedure or during the implementation of the corresponding contracts.”

10. Conditionality and sequencing

The implementation of this project requires the full commitment and participation of the senior management of the final beneficiary institution. In addition to providing the twinning partner with adequate staff and other resources to operate effectively, the senior management must be actively involved in the development and implementation of the policies and institutional change required to deliver the project results.

10.1 Conditionality

- Appointment of counterpart personnel by the final beneficiary before the launch of the call of proposal and guaranteeing the continuity of the appointed and trained staff;
- Allocation of working space and facilities by the final beneficiary within the premises of the beneficiaries before contract signature;
- Participation by the final beneficiary in the selection process as per EU regulations;
- Organisation, selection and appointment of members of working groups, steering and coordination committees, seminars by the final beneficiaries.

10.2 Sequencing

Key milestones will be:

- Approval of the Twinning project fiche;
- Circulation of the Twinning Project Fiche to Member State National Contact Points;
- Completion of the selection of the twinning partner;
- Signature of the Twinning contract;
- Commencement of the implementation of the twinning (inter alia, the arrival in the country of the Resident Twinning Adviser);
- Preparation of Project Work Plan
- End of the implementation period;
- Submission of the final report;
- Twinning review mission (6 to 12 months after end of the project).

11. Indicators for performance measurement

Mandatory Results (outcomes)	Objectively Verifiable Indicators
Component 1: Quality assurance of education and training in a LLL perspective strengthened.	
<p>Result 1.1: Reviewed and strengthened the quality assurance (QA) framework.</p>	<p>Number of revised /amendments introduced to the methodology for evaluation of NQF in line with the policy and legal framework for QA in education and training conducted in accordance with an inclusive and evidence- based approach;</p> <p>Number of benchmarks’ formulation, including new benchmarks for higher education programmes prepared in accordance with Bologna requirements and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA ESG 2015)</p> <p>Number of Programme for Linking QA system for the higher education with NQF (in line with Bologna requirements) (ESG 2015 1.2)</p> <p>Number of procedures and guidelines for Quality assurance of the NQF system updated in accordance with latest requirements from EQF QA framework in VET developed in accordance with EQAVET Linked with ECVET through a Life Long Learning (LLL) perspective</p> <p>Number of Technical proposals developed (Evaluation methods, associating self-assessment and external review) for a QA framework, including standards and procedures using ECVET, for providers, programmes and qualifications of the non-formal education (e.g. civil society organisations, companies, sector associations) and agreement with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Number of staff trained trough practical transfer of knowledge and know-how on EQAVET Linked with ECVET at relevant institutions of the implementing party</p>
<p>Result 1.2: Efficient and applicable Methodology and procedures on QA developed - for new users in AQAHE (Boards), practitioners in education and training institutions and stakeholders (e.g. NQF Board, Sector Committee).</p>	<p>Number of manual developed and disseminated for practitioners in all higher education (HE), VET institutions and general education institutions on the relevant themes and issues;</p> <p>Number of staff (all involved AQAHE) trained on use of Methodology and procedures on QA of NQF.</p> <p>Number of evaluations conducted and thematic analysis reports produced for different levels of education (higher education, VET and general education) institutions and programmes.</p> <p>Number of Analysis/assessment conducted for potential Short cycles studies (level V) and future development of vocational qualification in HE</p> <p>Number of Peer learning activities provided regarding Western Balkans-based occupational standards in VET sector in priority areas</p> <p>Number of Analysis/assessment conducted about the differences and the need of Unification of the Title of the qualification (ISCED fields/Harmonies and standardized) – labour market aspects European Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA submitted.</p> <p>Number of public awareness events organized by the implementing institution on Skills Development and Matching labor market trough NQF perspective</p>
<p>Mandatory Result 2 (Component 2): Support to the further implementation and enhanced capacities of the National Qualifications Framework in accordance with the QA framework</p>	
<p>Result 2.1: Road map (2021-2023) for future implementation and capacity building of the</p>	<p>Number of evaluations conducted and analysis report produced on implementation and practice of the NQF</p> <p>Number of NQF Road map drafted (2021-2023) based on dialogue</p>

<p>NQF aligned with the QA framework and other relevant policies and strategies (e.g.: education, employment, economic development, Smart soecialization (S3) strategy developed.</p>	<p>with the key partners and agreement with AQAHE and the NQF Board in charge of strategic governance of the NQF . Number of staff trained on drafting the evidence-based comparison report based on good practices of EU MSs. Number of staff trained trough practical transfer of knowledge and know-how for Quality Assurance system at relevant institutions of the implementing party Number of Referencing report for the country drafted (making a comparison of the NQF with the European Qualifications Framework – the EQF in accordance with the new referencing procedures 2017)</p>
<p>Result 2.2 Transparent and simplified procedures and methodology drafted and agreed for development and inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards from various learning settings in the digital NQF register.</p>	<p>Development of Manual/ (user friendly) guide for transparent inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards (all levels) in the digital NQF register for all users; number of procedures introduced for the development of occupational standards and qualification standards based on learning outcomes meeting the labour market need Qualification Standards in Higher Education developed, based on learning outcomes, in accordance with the Manual for Development of new Qualifications for NQF number of Qualification Standards developed for the teaching profession for teachers of primary and secondary education, for school support staff and educational service experts (Pedagogues and Psychologists) and qualification standards developed for Tourism and hospitality sector as national priority Number of staff (NQF staffUnit and Board, representatives of the Sector Councils and representatives from at least 50% of education and training institutions and among important partners trained on inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards (all levels) in the digital NQF register Number of public awareness events organized by the implementing institution for targeted HE institution on developing Qualification Standard linked with QA procedures</p>
<p>Component 3: Operational and administrative capacities of NQF Administration for management NQF communication and awareness raising practices improved</p>	
<p>Result: 3.1 Communication Strategy developed and implemented for increased understanding and visibility of the NQF and NQF Digital register</p>	<p>Status of the development and implementation of Communication Strategy and awareness raising plan Number of Written recommendations with Elaborated Communication Strategy and awareness raising plan with relevant stakeholders number of Communication tools and various visibility/information materials developed for promotion of the NQF (like: leaflets, brochures, promotional articles, on line communication and informations etc.) and Disseminated to at least 70 % to education institutions, VET providers and other interested parties; Number of public promotion campaigns conducted of the possibilities and opportunity provided under NQF- LLL– At least one conference organized on mobility aspects (relating to education and training mobility and employment mobility). Number of staff trained on the use and maintaining of NQF digital register, at strategic and operational level, in line with the EU MS relevant approaches (MOES NQF UNIT, NQF BOARD, Sector councils and AQAHE)</p>

Component 4: NQF Digital register interconnection and compatibility on National and EU level improved	
<p>Result 4.1 NQF Digital register further supported for potential interconnection and compatibility to QMS, QDR, LOQ, ESCO and EUROPASS</p>	<p>Number of written recommendations for updated Further functions and links defined and determined for the updated NQF digital Register, based on strategic and operational levels ; <u>Number of Practical short Handbooks developed</u> on managing and quality assuring the digital input in NQF Register; <u>Number of evaluations conducted and thematic analysis/assessment reports produced</u> for different levels of further upgrade and interconnection with online platforms at European level/ platforms LOQ, ESCO and EUROPASS Number of Analysis and reports conducted on NQF digital Register data structure compatibility to the Qualification Metadata Scheme (QMS) from Qualifications Dataset Register (QDR) and PQ Register with regional (Western Balkans) Joint Information System facilitating recognition of academic qualifications; Number of people reached in awareness raising events <u>on regional level on</u> data gathering and data management systems for compatibility of data on academic qualifications and study programmes with regional (Western Balkans) portal – joint information system – facilitating recognition of academic qualifications. <u>Number of staff trained</u> trough practical transfer of knowledge and know-how <u>on</u> Quality Assurance system for NQF digital Register data structure compatibility interconnection with EU platforms at relevant institutions of the implementing party</p>

12. Facilities available

An office for the RTA and his/her assistant will be made available by the beneficiary institution. Also, the beneficiary will put at disposal internal meeting and training rooms with all the necessary equipment. Exceptionally, rent of external meeting and training rooms may be necessary. The Beneficiary commits itself to deliver the following facilities:

Adequately equipped office space for the RTA and the RTA assistant(s) for the entire duration of their secondment; Supply of office room including access to computer, telephone, internet, printer, photocopier; Adequate conditions for the STE/ to perform their work while on mission; Provide suitable venues for the meetings and training sessions that will be held under the Project; Availability of staff that will be involved during the twinning project implementation;

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

Annex 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

Annex 2: Full list of relevant Union acquis

Annex 3: Road Map for Implementation of the NQF- http://mrk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/MQF_Roadmap.pdf

Annex4: Final Report IPA I Twinning project MK 13 IPA SO 02 15

https://mail.mon.gov.mk/service/home/~/?auth=co&loc=en_GB&id=35022&part=3

Annex 5: EQF Referencing Report for MQF and Self – Certification to the QF-

EHEA file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/IPA%20II%202017%20FILES/TW%20NQF/2020/Annex%205%20-MQF_Referencing_Report_Final.pdf

Annex 6: TAIEX Revue Mission Report on IPA I Twinning project MK 13 IPA

SO0215 https://mail.mon.gov.mk/service/home/~/?auth=co&loc=en_GB&id=35022&part=2

Annex 7: Organigramme of the BC institution

Annex 1. Logical framework matrix

Further support to the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework	Programme name and number	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) ²⁵ , IPA/2017/040-202 (EC) Annual Action Programme for the Republic of North Macedonia for the Year 2017 - Objective 2, Action 4: “EU Support for Education, Employment and Social Policy		
Ministry of Education and Science	Total budget: 1.500.000,00 EUR			

Overall objective (impact)	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Source of Verification	Risks	Assumptions
The overall objective is to further strengthen and improve the institutional structure responsible for management of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). To advance the process of modernization of the education and training systems and to increase the employability, mobility and social integration of workers and learners.	Qualifications aligned with labour market and societal needs; Quality of process performed increased and consistent.	Feedback and monitoring reports NQF; Monitoring/assessment reports by international organizations; Statistics; AA implementation report.		
Specific Objective(s) (outcome)	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Source of Verification		Assumptions
The specific objective is to support the effectiveness of the NQF with the further development and implementation of: Quality assurance(QA) process/procedures, transparency and governance of skills and qualifications in a lifelong	Institutional and human capacity of the NQF and AQAHE enhanced in line to the responsibilities and requirements of the policy and legal framework till the end of the project; At least 75 % of relevant staff trained and satisfied by the quality of the trainings; At least 75% of Study visit participants satisfied by quality of exchange with the MS partner administration;	Annual activity reports of NQF and Action Plans; NQF annual budget planning and execution, including provisions for staffing; Project documentation (monitoring reports and feedback, training programmes, technical and		Government commitment on fulfillment of AA requirements continued; Strong support and commitment from the senior management of NQF Strong support and commitment from twinning partner(s)

²⁵OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 11

learning (LLL) perspective of General, VET and Higher education- improving quality and better adaptability of education and training in line with the requirements from labour market needs It further aims to better link formal, non-formal and informal learning and support the validation of learning outcomes acquired in different settings.	Participation of relevant stakeholders in project information and visibility events ensured; At least 1 Team Leader of a similar projects in the country participated to at least one steering committee meeting At least 85% staff trained by end of project	conceptual notes, recommendations); Project interim and final reports		Relevant staff of NQF and AQAHE involved in the process
Mandatory Results (outcomes)	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Source of Verification	Risks	Assumptions
Component 1: Uuality assurance of education and training in a LLL perspective strengthened.				
Result 1.1: Reviewed and strengthened the quality assurance (QA) framework.	<u>Number of revised /amendments introduced to the methodology</u> for evaluation of NQF in line with the policy and legal framework for QA in education and training conducted in accordance with an inclusive and evidence-based approach; <u>Number of benchmarks' formulation</u> , including new benchmarks for higher education programmes prepared in accordance with Bologna requirements and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA ESG 2015) <u>Number of Programmes</u> for Linking QA system for the higher education with NQF (in line with Bologna requirements) (ESG 2015 1.2) <u>Number of Procedures and guidelines for Quality assurance</u> of the NQF system updated in accordance with latest requirements from EQF	Technical proposal of QA framework for institutions, programmes and qualifications of non-formal learning domain; Document on methodology for benchmarks' formulation, including new benchmarks for higher education programmes prepared in accordance with Bologna requirements and Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA ESG 2015) Action plan with developed Pilot program for Linking QA system for the higher education with NQF Project activity reports (consultations, discussion);		Strong support and commitment from the senior management of NQF/MoES; Twinning MS partner commitment; Availability of local staff; All relevant documentation/ information available;

	<p><u>QA framework developed in VET</u> in accordance with EQAVET Linked with ECVET through a Life Long Learning (LLL) perspective</p> <p><u>Number of Technical proposals developed</u> (Evaluation methods, associating self-assessment and external review) for a QA framework, including standards and procedures using ECVET, for providers, programmes and qualifications of the non-formal education (e.g. civil society organisations, companies, sector associations) and agreement with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p><u>Number of staff trained</u> through practical transfer of knowledge and know-how <u>on</u> EQAVET Linked with ECVET at relevant institutions of the implementing party</p>	<p>STE mission reports; Legislative amendments and explanatory note Minutes of the stakeholder consultations. Agenda and report of study-visit to EU;</p>		
<p>Result 1.2: Efficient and applicable Methodology and procedures on QA developed - for new users in AQAHE (Boards), practitioners in education and training institutions and stakeholders (e.g. NQF Board, Sector Committee).</p>	<p><u>Number of Manual developed and disseminated for practitioners</u> in all higher education (HE), VET institutions and general education institutions on the relevant themes and issues;</p> <p><u>Number of staff (all involved AQAHE) trained on</u> Methodology and procedures on QA of NQF.</p> <p><u>Number of evaluations conducted and thematic analysis reports produced</u> for different levels of education (higher education, VET and general education) institutions and programmes. Number of Analysis/assessment conducted for potential Short cycles studies (level V) and future development of vocational qualification in HE</p>	<p>Manual/Handbooks (final versions) Information on dissemination of manual/handbooks Agenda and reports of complementary training Report of thematic analysis of evaluation for different levels of education Training materials, lists of participants; Reports and feedback on capacity building; Project activity reports (consultations, discussion); At least 2 thematic event</p>		<p>Strong support and commitment from the senior management of NQF/MoES; Twinning MS partner commitment; Availability of local staff; Participation of stakeholders All relevant documentation/ information available;</p>

	<p>Number of Peer learning activities provided regarding Western Balkans-based occupational standards in VET sector in priority areas</p> <p><u>Number of Analysis/assessment conducted</u> about the differences and the need of Unification of the Title of the qualification (ISCED fields/Harmonies and standardized) – labour market aspects European Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA submitted.</p> <p>Number of public awareness events organized by the implementing institution on Skills Development and Matching labor market trough NQF perspective</p>	<p>organized STE mission reports</p>		
<p>Mandatory Result 2 (Component 2): Support to the further implementation and enhanced capacities of the National Qualifications Framework in accordance with the QA framework</p>				
<p>Result 2.1: Road map (2021-2023) for future implementation and capacity building of the NQF aligned with the QA framework and other relevant policies and strategies (e.g.: education, employment, economic development, Smart soocialization (S3) strategy developed.</p>	<p>Number of evaluations conducted and analysis report produced on implementation and practice of the NQF</p> <p><u>Number of NQF Road map (2021-2023) drafted</u> based on dialogue with the key partners and agreement with AQAHE and the NQF Board in charge of strategic governance of the NQF .</p> <p><u>Number of staff trained on</u> drafting the evidence-based comparison report based on good practices of EU MSs.</p> <p><u>Number of staff trained</u> trough practical transfer of knowledge and know-how for Quality Assurance system at relevant institutions of the implementing party</p> <p><u>Number of Referencing reports for the country drafted</u> (making a comparison of the NQF</p>	<p>Final draft of the New Referencing report</p> <p>Information on dissemination of New Referencing report;</p> <p>Training materials, lists of participants;</p> <p>Reports and feedback on capacity building;</p> <p>Agenda and report of study-visit to EU;</p> <p>Project activity reports (consultations, discussion);</p> <p>STE mission reports.</p> <p>Agenda and report of study-visit to EU;</p>		<p>Strong support and commitment from the senior management of NQF/MoES;</p> <p>Participation of stakeholders, relevant NQF departments and divisions and MoES</p> <p>Twinning MS partner commitment;</p> <p>Availability of local staff;</p> <p>All relevant documentation/ information available</p>

	with the European Qualifications Framework – the EQF in accordance with the new referencing procedures 2017)			
Result 2.2 Transparent and simplified procedures and methodology drafted and agreed for development and inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards from various learning settings in the digital NQF register.	<p>) <u>Manual/ (user friendly) guide developed</u> for transparent inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards (all levels) in the digital NQF register for all users;</p> <p>Number of procedures introduced for the development of occupational standards and qualification standards based on learning outcomes meeting the labour market need <u>Qualification Standards in Higher Education developed</u>, based on learning outcomes, in accordance with the Manual for Development of new Qualifications for NQF</p> <p><u>Number of Qualification Standards developed for the teaching profession</u> for teachers of primary and secondary education, for school support staff and educational service experts (Pedagogues and Psychologists) and qualification standards developed for Tourism and hospitality sector as national priority</p> <p><u>Number of staff NQF staff</u> Unit and Board, representatives of the Sector Councils and representatives from at least 50% of education and training institutions and among important partners <u>trained on</u> inclusion of qualifications/ occupational standards (all levels) in the digital NQF register</p> <p>Number of public awareness events organized by the implementing institution for targeted HE institution on developing Qualification Standard linked with QA procedures</p>	<p>Manual/Handbooks (final versions)</p> <p>Information on dissemination of manual/handbooks</p> <p>Document on developed Qualification Standards</p> <p>Training materials, lists of participants;</p> <p>Reports and feedback on capacity building;</p> <p>At least 2 thematic public event organized</p> <p>Project activity reports (consultations, discussion);</p> <p>STE mission reports.</p>		<p>Strong support and commitment from the senior management of NQF/MoES;</p> <p>Participation of stakeholders, relevant NQF departments and divisions and MoES</p> <p>Twinning MS partner commitment;</p> <p>Availability of local staff;</p> <p>All relevant documentation/ information available</p>

Component 3: Operational and administrative capacities of NQF Administration for management including NQF communication and awareness raising practices Improved				
<p>Result: 3.1 Communication Strategy developed and implemented for increased understanding and visibility of the NQF and NQF Digital register</p>	<p>Status of the development and implementation of Communication Strategy and awareness raising plan</p> <p>Number of Written recommendations with Elaborated Communication Strategy and awareness raising plan with relevant stakeholders:</p> <p>Number of Communication tools and <u>various visibility/information materials developed for promotion of the NQF</u> (like: leaflets, brochures, promotional articles, on line communication and information etc.) and <u>Disseminated to at least 70 % to education institutions, VET providers and other interested parties;</u></p> <p><u>Number of Public promotion campaigns conducted</u> of the possibilities and opportunity provided under NQF- LLL- <u>At least one conference organized</u> on mobility aspects (relating to education and training mobility and employment mobility).</p> <p><u>Number of staff trained on</u> the use and maintaining of NQF digital register, at strategic and operational level, in line with the EU MS relevant approaches (MOES NQF UNIT, NQF BOARD, Sector councils and AQAHE)</p>	<p>Technical proposal of Communication Strategy</p> <p>Action plan for piloting for Communication and awareness raising</p> <p>Handbooks / toolkits /materials on visibility and promotion of NQF</p> <p>At least 1 thematic public event organized</p>		<p>Strong support and commitment from the senior management of NQF/MoES;</p> <p>Participation of stakeholders, relevant NQF departments and divisions and MoES</p> <p>Twinning MS partner commitment;</p> <p>Availability of local staff;</p> <p>All relevant documentation/ information available</p>
Component 4: NQF Digital register interconnection and compatibility on National and EU level improved				
<p>Result 4.1 NQF Digital register further supported for potential</p>	<p>Number of Written recommendations for updated Further functions and links defined and determined for the updated NQF digital</p>	<p>Information on consultation with public institutions and stakeholders on further</p>		

<p>interconnection and compatibility to QMS, QDR, LOQ, ESCO and EUROPASS</p>	<p>Register, based on strategic and operational levels ; <u>Number of Practical short Handbooks developed</u> on managing and quality assuring the digital input in NQF Register; <u>Number of evaluations conducted and thematic analysis/assessment reports produced</u> for different levels of further upgrade and interconnection with online platforms at European level / platforms LOQ, ESCO and EUROPASS Number of Analysis and reports conducted on NQF digital Register data structure compatibility to the Qualification Metadata Scheme (QMS) from Qualifications Dataset Register (QDR) and PQ Register with regional (Western Balkans) Joint Information System facilitating recognition of academic qualifications; Number of people reached in awareness raising events <u>on regional level</u> on data gathering and data management systems for compatibility of data on academic qualifications and study programmes with regional (Western Balkans) portal – joint information system – facilitating recognition of academic qualifications. <u>Number of staff trained</u> trough practical transfer of knowledge and know-how <u>on</u> NQF digital Register data structure compatibility interconnection with EU platforms at relevant institutions of the implementing party</p>	<p>functions and links of the updated NQF digital Register, based on strategic and operational levels; Reports on conducted thematic analysis/assessment Training materials, lists of participants; Reports and feedback on capacity building; Handbooks / toolkits Project activity reports (consultations, discussion); STE mission reports. At least 1 thematic public event organized with regional impact Agenda and report of study-visit to EU;</p>		
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Annex 2 – Full list of EU policies and Union *acquis*

Selected items from the Annex XXXII of the AA listed below give an indication of the relevant EU policies:

Council Recommendation of 24 September 1998 on European cooperation in quality assurance in higher education (98/561/EC)

Recommendation of European Parliament and of the Council of 15 February 2006 on further European cooperation on quality assurance in higher education (2006/143/EC)

Recommendation of European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EEC)

Recommendation of European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2008/C 111/01)

Recommendation of European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) (2009/C 155/02)

Recommendation of European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (2009/C155/01)

More recent EU legal acts highly relevant for the proposed Twinning project (refer to 3.4 of the Twinning

fiche):

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning (2012/C 398/01)

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 19 December 2016 on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (2016/C 484/01)

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 May 2017 on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning and repealing the recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (2017/C 189/03)

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 20 November 2017 on tracking graduates (2017/c 423/01)

Other key policy documents:

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), adopted. At:

<https://enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/>

Annex 7: Organigram for the NQF Operating Structure at the Ministry of Education and science

