



# The German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DQR)

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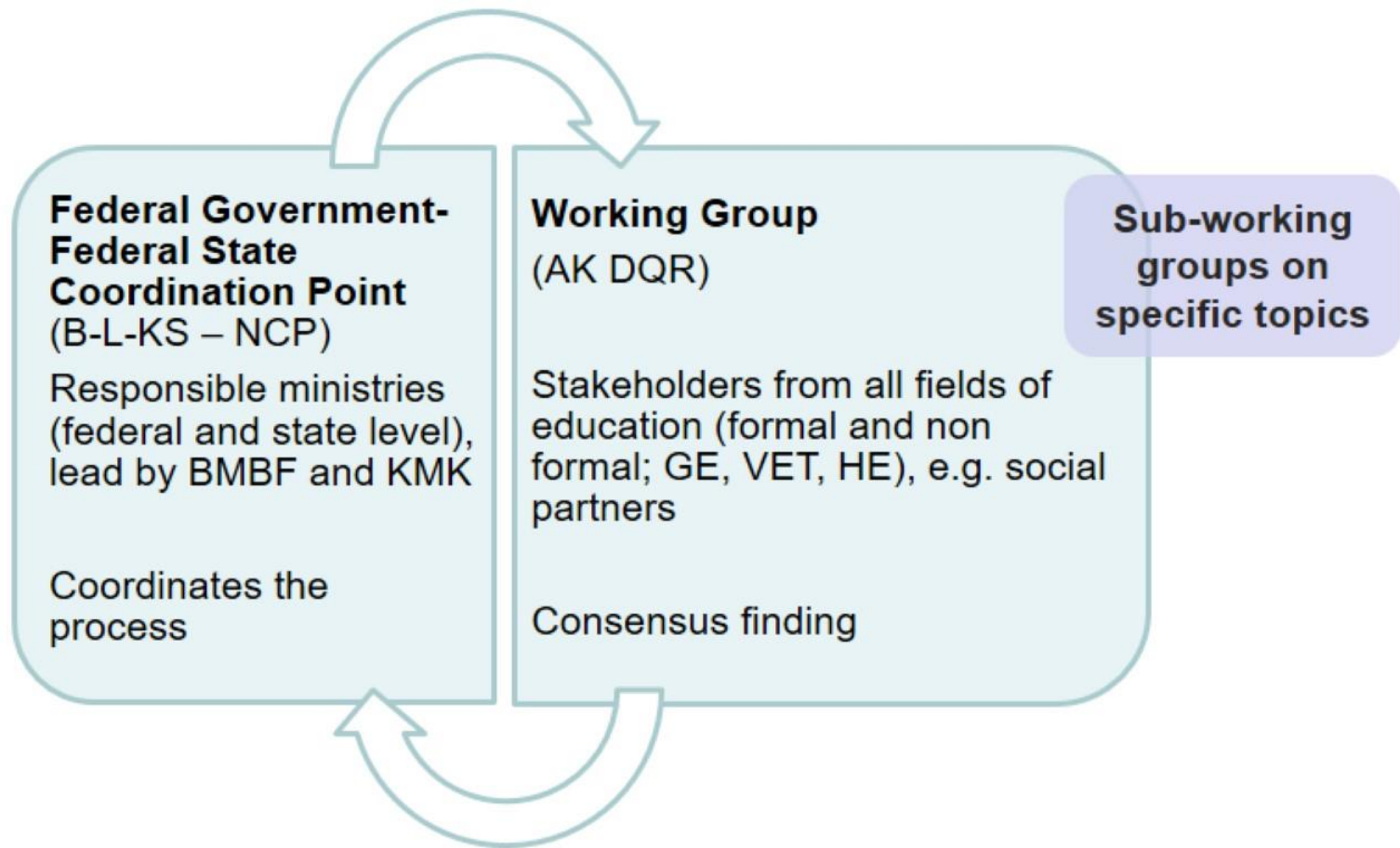
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# Brief information about the German Qualifications Framework (DQR)

- **DQR = Deutscher QualifikationsRahmen** (German Qualifications Framework) [www.dqr.de](http://www.dqr.de)
- Formally launched in May 2013 by a **Joint Resolution** of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Conference of Economics Ministers
- The DQR has been designed as a comprehensive framework: currently includes qualifications from the **formal sector, i.e. qualifications which are regulated by the state**: general education, VET, higher education, CVET.
- EQF and NQF levels feature on VET certificates, certificate supplements, on diploma supplements and in the qualifications database (in DE and EN, also linked to Europass portal)

## Brief information: Governance of the DQR



## Brief information: The DQR structure

| Level indicator           |                                             |                                                       |                                                                                   |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Structure of requirements |                                             |                                                       |                                                                                   |
| Professional Competence   |                                             | Personal Competence                                   |                                                                                   |
| Knowledge                 | Skills                                      | Social Competence                                     | Autonomy                                                                          |
| Depth and breadth         | Instrumental and systemic skills, judgement | Team/leadership skills, involvement and communication | Autonomous responsibility/ responsibility, reflectiveness and learning competence |

8 levels defined by learning outcomes (competences) and corresponding to the EQF levels

# Development of the German Qualifications Framework (1)

Main driver for the DQR development: EQF

In October 2006,

- the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and
- the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK)

agreed to work together on the development of a German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (DQR)

## Steering Committees:

- Federal Government/Länder Coordination Point for the German Qualifications Framework
- German Qualifications Framework Working Group

# Development of the German Qualifications Framework (2)

## Phase I – Development

|      |                                                                                                                                                      |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2007 | Set up of the Federal Government/Länder Coordination Group for the German Qualifications Framework and German Qualifications Framework Working Group |
| 2008 | Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning     |
| 2009 | Finish of a first draft of the matrix for the DQR (including the description of learning outcomes for the individual levels)                         |

# Development of the German Qualifications Framework (3)

## Phase II – Test and finish

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2010/11 | Exemplary allocation of formal qualifications to DQR levels, testing of the matrix and reflexion on the results                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 2011    | DQR adopted by DQR Working Group (structure, level descriptors, DQR glossary)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 2012    | Meeting of high representatives: agreement between the Federal Government, Länder, social partners and economic organisations on the introduction of the DQR; temporarily waiver of the allocation of general knowledge; allocation of initial vocational education and training on DQR-level 3 and 4<br><br>Referencing to the EQF (referencing report) and manual of DQR |

# Development of the German Qualifications Framework (4)

## Phase III – Implementation

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2013       | Introduction of the DQR via a joint resolution by the Federal Government and the Länder<br><br>Establishment of a national coordination point<br><br>Development of a qualification database and link to EU database (since 2016 resp. 2020: LOQ-Portal resp. Europass) |
| Since 2014 | Indication of DQR-/EQF-levels on certificates and certificate supplements of VET qualifications and on diploma supplements for higher education qualifications                                                                                                          |
| 2017       | Allocation of general school leaving certificates on levels 2, 3 and 4                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 2018       | Start of a pilot to test a possible procedure for the inclusion of non-formal qualifications                                                                                                                                                                            |

**For the first time, a variety of stakeholders from all educational sectors worked together on the development and implementation of the DQR.**

## Political Context (1): Agreed Objectives of the DQR

- Increasing **transparency** in the German education system
- Enhancing **comparability** and better understanding of qualifications in Germany and Europe
- Enhancing **visibility** of equivalences and differences of qualifications
- Fostering **parity of esteem** of vocational education and training (VET) and general, and higher education
- Supporting **quality assurance**
- Supporting **mobility** of learners and workers
- Facilitating the **recognition/acceptance of qualifications** acquired in Germany in Europe
- Strengthening the **competence orientation** of qualifications and fostering the shift to learning outcomes
- Facilitating the **validation of non-formal and informal learning**

## Political Context (2): Benefits and impact

- Increased communication, understanding and trust across education sectors
- Increased transparency and better understanding of qualifications
- Visibility and increased acceptance of parity of esteem of VET and higher education, especially through the learning outcomes based comparison of qualifications and the indication of DQR-/EQF-levels on qualifications documents/database
- Further implementation of the learning outcomes approach in curricula as well as in training and assessment ordinances and thus fostering the competence orientation
- VET seems to benefit most from the DQR

## Political Context (3): Benefits and impact

- Better visibility of further vocational training (higher VET) showing that German VET is not only the „dual system“ but a comprehensive system of initial and further training covering qualifications from DQR-/EQF-level 3 to 7 (e.g. Master craftsmen on level 6, Certified technical business management specialist on level 7)
- Building awareness that success in a professional career is not only possible with an academic degree thus promoting the attractiveness of VET
- Further structural development of further vocational training (3 level system corresponding to DQR-/EQF-levels 5-7) triggered by communication and comparison with higher education
- Profile building of VET and higher education

# General Principles of the Allocation Procedure

- **Principle of consensus for all decisions** in the German Qualifications Framework Working Group and B-L-KS
- Central criterion: **learning outcomes**  
challenge: Curricula, training regulations etc. are not always sufficiently described in terms of learning outcomes
- **Supporting criteria**, e. g. learning time, requirements for access
- Result: blurring is unavoidable, therefore „**best fit principle**“
- Decision to allocate **qualification types**

**Principal objectives: consensus for all decisions in consideration of the coherence of the overall structure! Co-ownership of all stakeholders!**

# Status and current challenges (1)

## Coverage of qualifications

- As of August 2020, a total of 1,225 individual qualifications were listed in the DQR database ([www.dqr.de/content/2316.php](http://www.dqr.de/content/2316.php)) with the largest numbers at levels 4 (627 qualifications) and 6 (453 qualifications)

## VET (IVET + CVET)

- Vocational training preparation schemes on level 1 and 2
- Dual VET (apprenticeship) 2-year training courses on level 3
- **Dual VET (3-year and 3½ -year) + school based VET on level 4**
- CVET: Further vocational training qualifications according to Vocational Training Act (BBiG) and Handicraft Code (HwO) on level 5-7  
e.g. Master Craftsperson “Meister” or Senior clerk “Fachwirt” on level 6; Certified business economist “Betriebswirt” or Certified vocational training specialist “Berufspädagoge” on level 7

# Status and current challenges (2)

## General education

- Hauptschulabschluss = Lower secondary school leaving certificate (level 2)
- Mittlerer Schulabschluss = General education school leaving certificate obtained on completion of grade 10 at Realschule (level 3)
- Allgemeine Hochschulreife = Upper secondary general education school leaving certificate (higher education entrance qualification) (level 4)

## Higher education

- Bachelor (level 6), Master (level 7), Doctoral + equivalent artistic studies (level 8) – included as “types” (individual study programmes/courses are not listed in the database, approx. 20,000)

## Status and current challenges (3)

### Success factors

- Involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the development and ongoing implementation of the framework
- DQR Working Group provides a forum for reaching consensus, ensuring that all decisions are supported by the stakeholders
- Collaborative approach is also a challenge as decisions take a lot of time (extensive discussions and reiterations)

### Challenges

- Inclusion of qualifications awarded outside formal education and development of an agreed procedure for allocating these qualifications

**Thank you for your attention!**

**Further information at**

**[www.dqr.de](http://www.dqr.de)**