ACQF

African Continental Qualifications Framework

Session 14-1:
Digital registers of qualifications
The Accra Workshop

Digital Registers of qualifications are essential for transparency and information-sharing

Qualifications are a public good for the benefit of individuals, enterprises and the society.

Qualifications authorities, awarding bodies, education and training institutions need to contribute to systematise and deliver updated and reliable information on all qualifications in readable and digital format, secured and accessible for the public.

Speaker: Eduarda Castel-Branco

Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações

Main topics

Qualifications registers, databases: a key component of NQF-NQS

Qualifications registers, databases: added-value

Trends and developments

Functions and services of online qualifications registers

Final notes

01

**Qualifications management and information-sharing
Registers, répértoires, catálogos
– a key component of the NQF-NQS**

Training Module and Guideline 6: learn more...

https://acqf.africa/capacity-development-programme/training-modules

https://acqf.africa/resources/policy-guidelines/acqf-guidelines

02

Registers, catalogues and qualifications databases: added-value, advantages
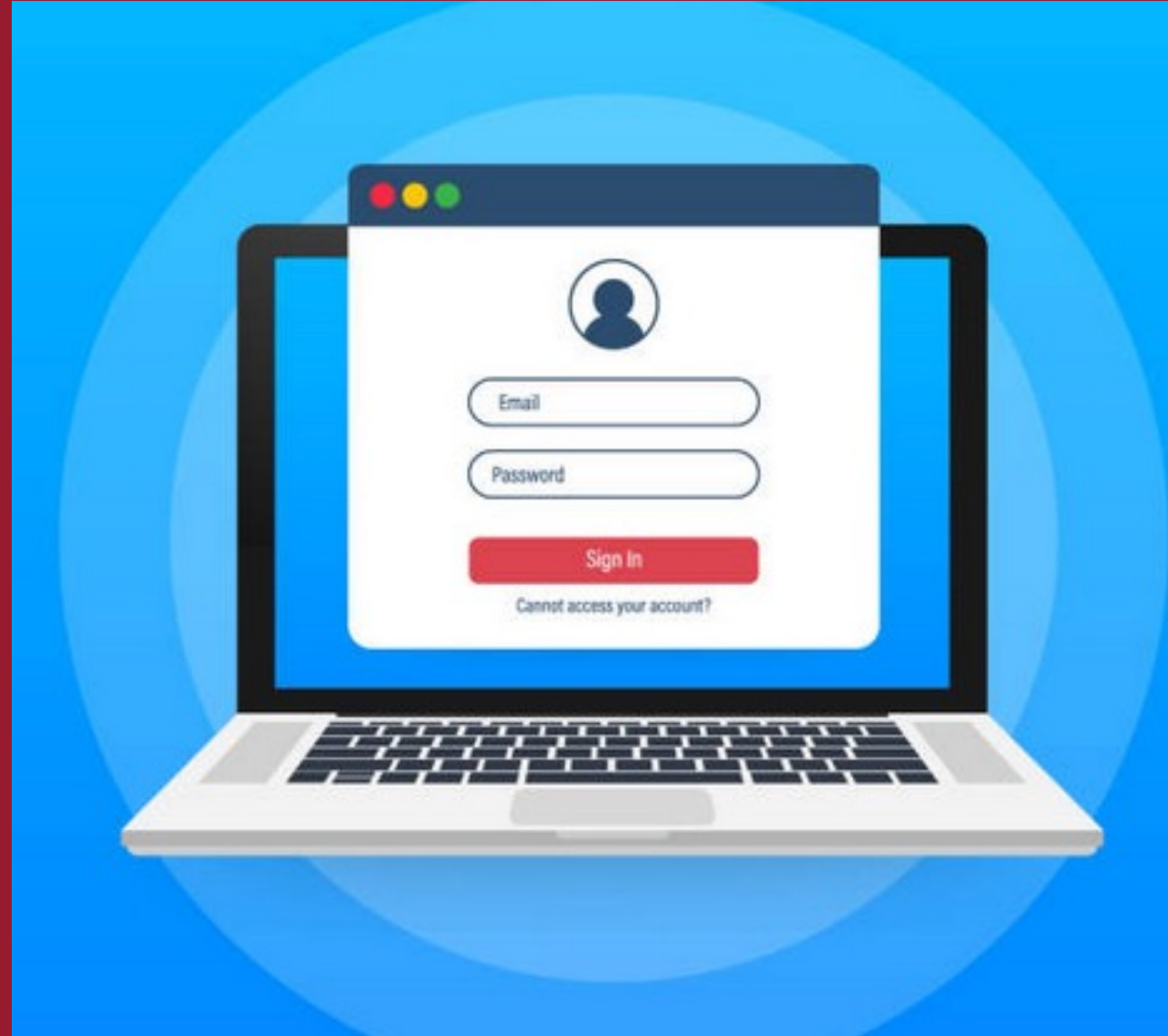
Qualifications registers / databases – part of the NQF eco-system
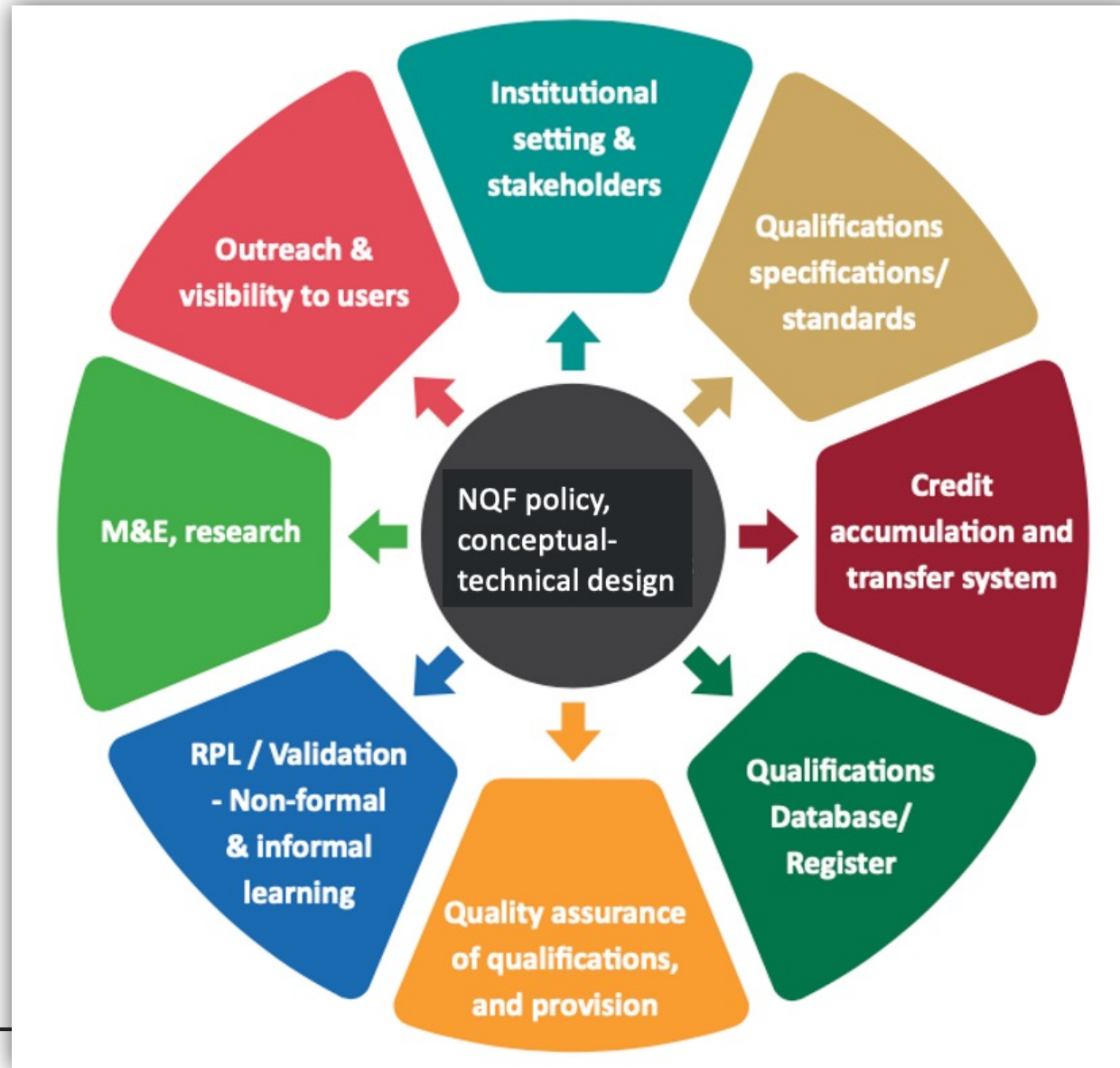
Digitisation

Processes (workflows)

Digital documentation, decision - qualifications registration

Digital platforms QA Agencies: evaluation, accreditation, recognition of foreign qualifications

Automation of qualifications registration

AI – in curriculum development

AI – in leveling

Management (data, maintenance)

Digital certificates of evaluation of foreign qualifications

Databases, registers of qualifications

Data exchange, data analysis

Interoperability

Information-sharing

Open, public platforms: information and data interactive for end-users

Session 14-1: online registers of qualifications

What courses and qualifications do we have and do we need? How can I find this information (updated and reliable)?

✓ What courses and qualifications do we have in the country (region) able to satisfy the demand for labour in emerging occupations in the sectors of agriculture, IT, energy, transport, manufacturing, healthcare...?

✓ What competences do learners acquire in course A or B?

✓ How can our construction companies quickly train and upskill their workers on skills for the greener construction? Can we compare the existing courses to select the most adequate for our needs?

✓ How many new qualifications have been registered in the last year?

✓ In which fields of education?

✓ Which existing qualifications need renewal and revision)?

Role of digital databases / registers of qualifications

- Databases / registers of qualifications are important instruments for **transparency** across the panorama of qualifications of different countries.

- The population **has the right** to know what courses and qualifications are available and quality-assured for easier study and career choices.

- The **quality, completeness and accessibility** to this information is an important service for the end-users (learners, training providers, employers, and workers) and policy makers and institutions.

- Databases / registers of qualifications also offer a view on the actual status of **implementation of NQFs.**

Sum-up: Benefits of online qualifications registers

Registration of qualifications is an important measure that enhances quality and regulation of qualifications.

It provides greater protection for the public and employers as key information required for recognition purposes is made available on the platform/database.
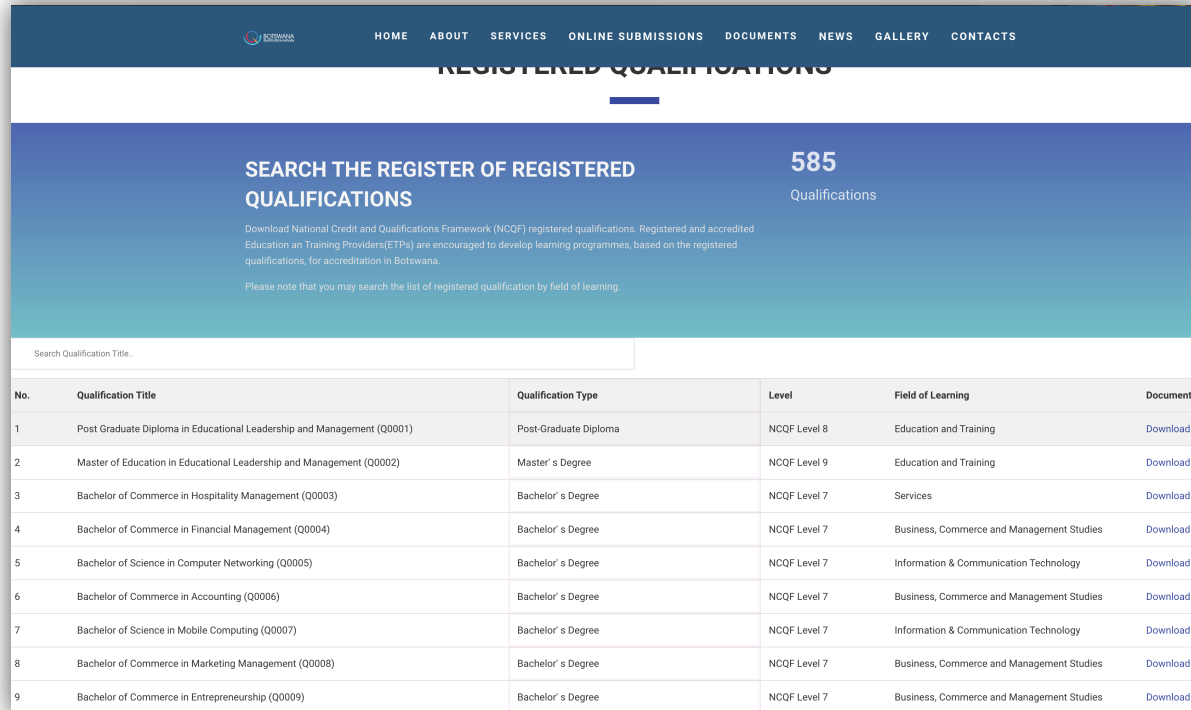
Benefits:

- Transparency of information on qualifications for different uses (comparison, career information for learners, study choices);

- Enhances quality and recognition of qualifications;

- Facilitates mobility of learners and workers from one country to another as well as across regions and continents;

- Protecting learners, employers and the public from misrepresented qualifications;

- Deepens integration and harmonisation of qualifications among states;

- Eases recognition and transfer of credits; and

- Facilitates for smooth verification and evaluation of qualifications.

03

Trends and developments

Trends and developments

- In many countries around the world, authorities and departments managing qualifications at national level are taking steps to improve and modernise the tools, technology and methods used to structure, manage and visualise information and data on qualifications.

- For greater overall transparency of qualifications - efficient sharing of information between NQFs between continents and regions is crucial.

- **Minimum qualification information fields for electronic publication in digital databases – useful for comparability of qualifications between countries in a region, data exchange.**

28. Has a single or multiple national database(s)/register(s) of NQF qualifications been set up in your country?

ACQF-II National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) Survey

3% Cannot answer / I don't know

27% Yes, a single national database/register

35% Under development

9% Yes, NQF qualifications are published in different databases/registers

27% No
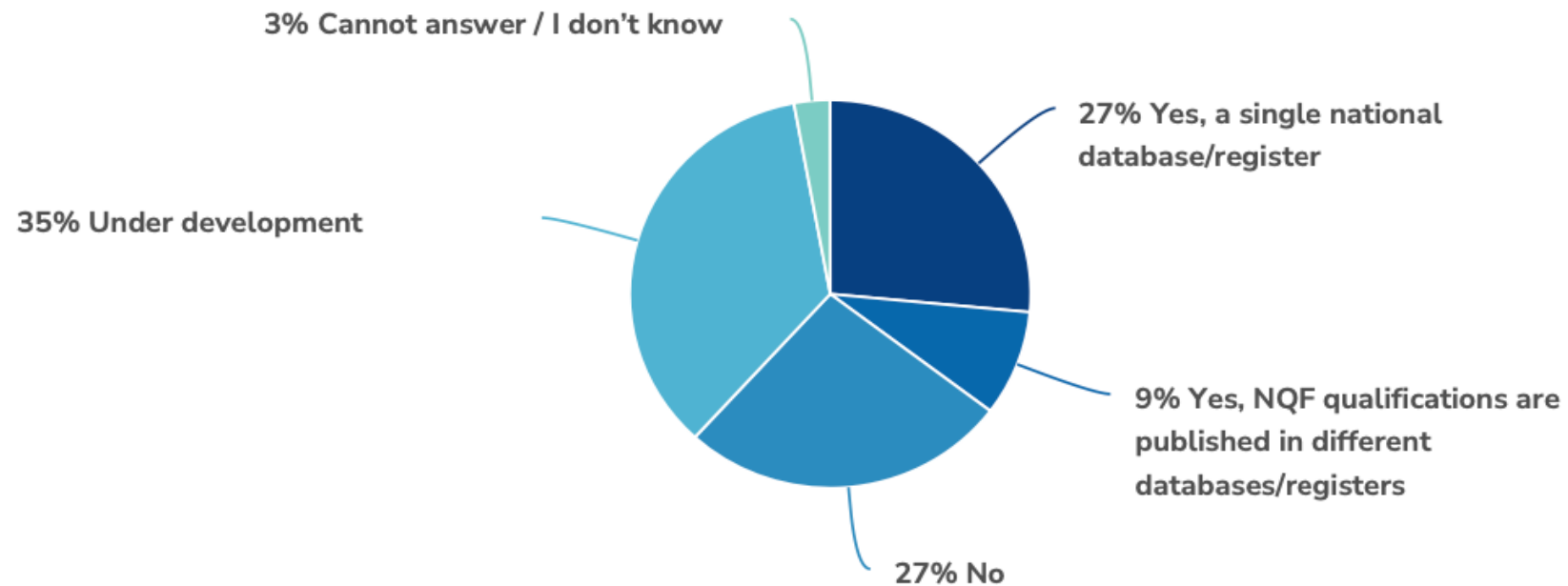
Results from ACQF NQF survey (Sept-Oct 2023)

29. Can the public (e.g. individuals, organisations) access and use the information on the database(s)/register(s)?

ACQF-II National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) Survey

8% Cannot answer / I don't know

17% Partially

75% Yes
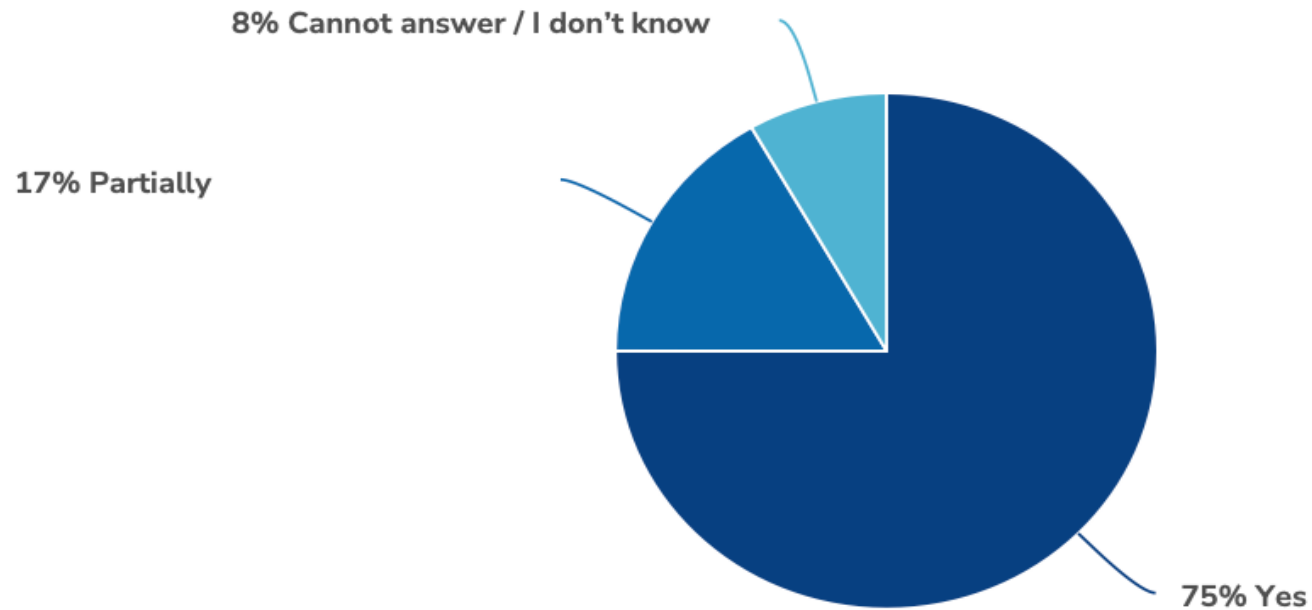
ACQF

30. What qualifications are included in the database(s)/register(s)?Please select all that apply.

ACQF-II National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) Survey

ACQF
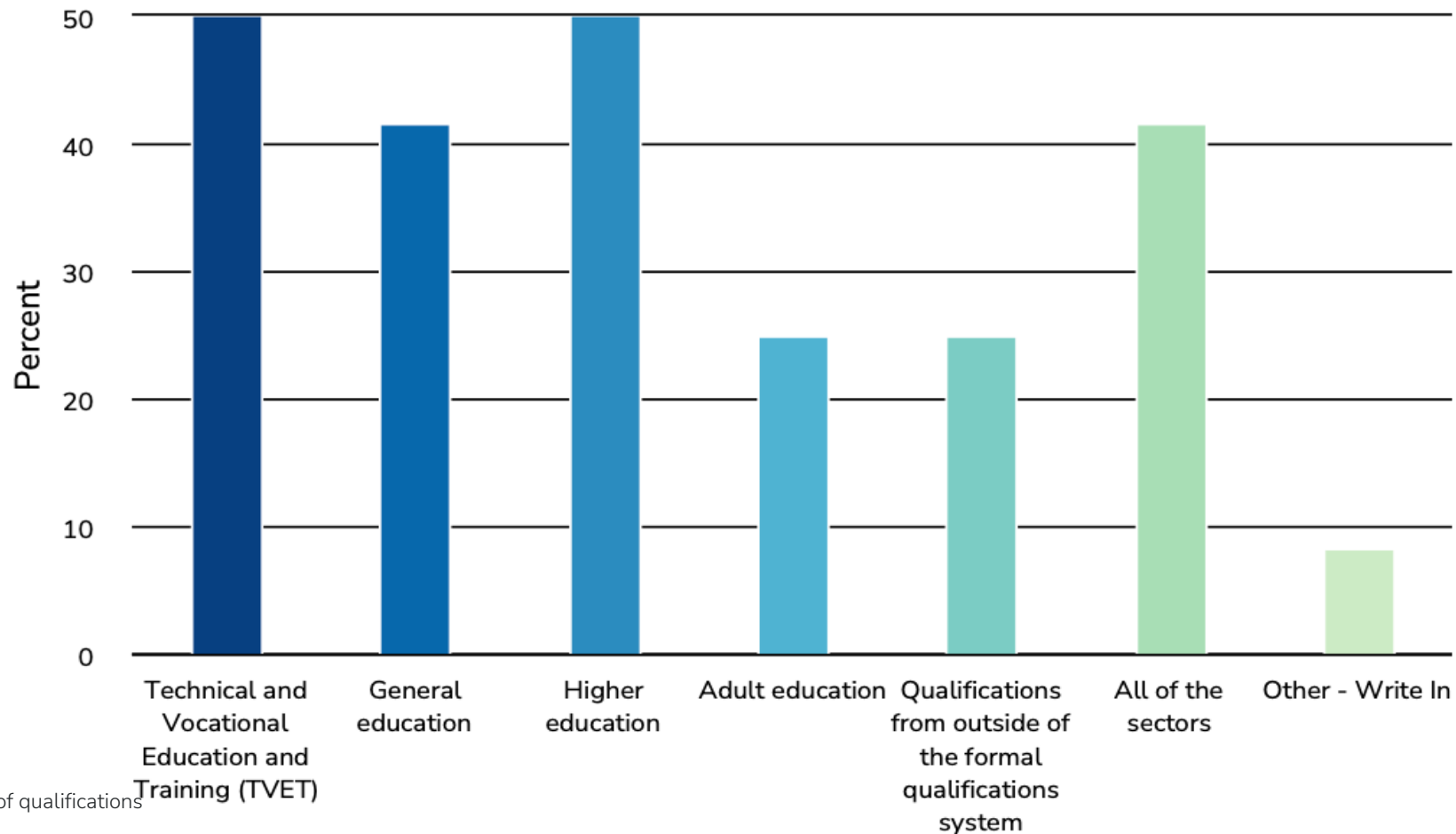
33. What elements of data fields for electronic publication of qualifications does the database consist of. Please tick all that applies.

More Details

🔵	Title of qualification	9
🟠	Unique identifier code / number	8
🟢	NQF level	7
🔴	Learning outcomes	7
🟣	Sector / classification	7
🟤	Expiry date	8
🟣	Information on quality assurance	5
⚪	Other elements	2
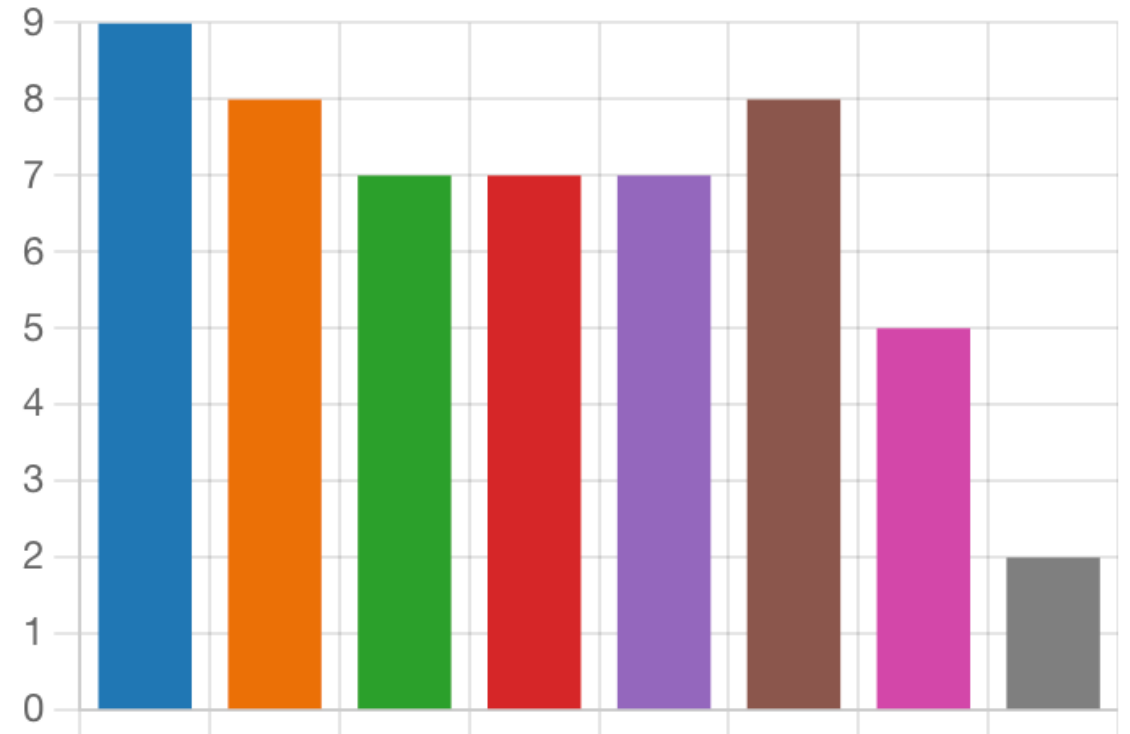
Databases / Registers / Catalogues of qualifications

Country	Register / database of qualifications	Number of Qualifications and levels included	Key features
Botswana BQA	Botswana Qualifications Authority – Register of qualifications	822 full qualifications (as of 07/11/2023) All levels of NCQF and fields of study.	The register is searchable by title of qualification (search by key word tool). Qualifications documents can be viewed and downloaded. The online register publishes a list of qualifications (title, type, level, field, document). All registered qualifications are formatted based on a standardised model. Section B of the model - Qualifications Specifications contains: graduate profiles (learning outcomes) and the associated assessment criteria (clarify the learning outcomes).
Mauritius MQA	National Qualifications and Unit Standards Maintained and managed by MQA	190 qualifications distributed in 22 sectors. As of 01/05/2023: 113 qualifications are published, 77 under review. Includes: qualifications of Levels 1 to 6 of NQF	The digital online database of National Qualifications and Unit Standards is accessible as a repository of qualifications files in PDF format. Qualifications at all levels (1—6) are structured in unit standards, described as learning outcomes. All qualifications files are structured following a harmonized format. The qualification files on the database include data on level, credits, review date, access to qualification including through RPL, list of unit standard titles and respective credits, and a brief description of the purpose of the qualification.

Databases / Registers / Catalogues of qualifications (2)

Country	Register / database of qualifications	Number of Qualifications and levels included	Key features
Mozambique ANEP	National Catalogue of Professional Qualifications Managed and maintained by ANEP	164 qualifications registered, at levels 2 to 5. 153 published in the online catalogue (01/05/2023) 19 independent modules	The digital online National Catalogue is accessible as a repository of qualification files in PDF format. All qualifications are structured following a standardised format, which includes: general information, units of general competencies, units of vocational competencies, training modules (general and vocational), training programme (modules) and training module in the real context of work. The qualifications in the Catalogue are distributed in 16 professional groups. The Catalogue also includes 19 independent modules.
South Africa SAQA	SAQA: register of qualifications and part-qualifications Managed and maintained by SAQA	Large number of qualifications (over 22,000) All NQF levels	The SAQA online register contains searchable databases: 1. All qualifications and unit standards (no matter their status) 2. Registered qualifications and unit standards (NQF qualifications) 3. Qualifications and unit standards that have passed their registration end date 4. Professional Bodies and Professional Designations 5. NQF MIS Incorporating the NLRD

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Country	Register/database of qualifications	Qualifications included	Key features
Cape Verde	National Catalogue of Qualifications UC-SNQ	64 full qualifications (levels 2 to 5 of the NQF)	The digital online Catalogue is attached as a repository of PDF files. All qualifications are structured based on a balanced format, including: professional profile, units of competence (learning outcomes and assessment criteria), training programme (modules) and training module in the real context of work. The qualifications in the Catalogue are distributed in 15 professional families. The Catalogue also includes a new Transversal Training Module of 3 units. New! RVCC (RPL) standards

What is the National Qualifications Catalogue? Ex.: Cabo Verde

- Dynamic instrument for strategic management of qualifications, which are essential for the competitiveness and modernisation of the economy, and for personal and social development of individuals.

- Integrates learning outcomes-based qualifications, which can be acquired via RPL. NQF level. (*Ordinance 09/2020 on the CNQ*)

Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações

- **From country to country there is variation of the features of qualifications registers on:**
  - ➤ Procedures to place qualifications and credentials in registers
  - ➤ Data and content, format of main documents
  - ➤ Functions
  - ➤ Digital features, access

New Zealand Qualifications Framework register

- New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) register, formerly known as the Sector Qualifications Register (SQR): designed to be the **single, authoritative register of data for qualifications** (including awards), programmes and components of programmes.

- The Development of the NZQF register is a key component of the **Education Sector Digital Strategy programme of work, and of NZQA's Future State Portfolio**. NZQA worked closely with both the Tertiary Education Commission and the Ministry of Education to build the NZQF Register and consider conditions for access, use, and management of this core education data.

Benefits

- **Unified data system** Removed the need to store qualification and programme information in separate systems across various education agencies

- **Interaction, streamlining process:** Provide tertiary education organisations and NZQA the opportunity to interact online during the quality assurance process, modernising the way qualifications are approved and updated, and streamlining the process

- **Enable the real-time** publication of information relating to approved qualifications

- Provide an **adaptable, robust, reliable, cost-effective information system**, which is easier to implement and maintain.

https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/

Qualifications databases – online: examples

Portugal

Netherlands

392
QUALIFICAÇÕES

3993
UNIDADES DE COMPETÊNCIA

8666
UNIDADES DE FORMAÇÃO DE CURTA DURAÇÃO

https://catalogo.anqep.gov.pt/

NLQF Qualifications Database

Are you looking for information about what someone can do and knows after obtaining a diploma or certificate? Or, do you want to know the NLQF level of a qualification, or how this information compares to that of another qualification? Choose above how you want to filter, compare, or share that information.
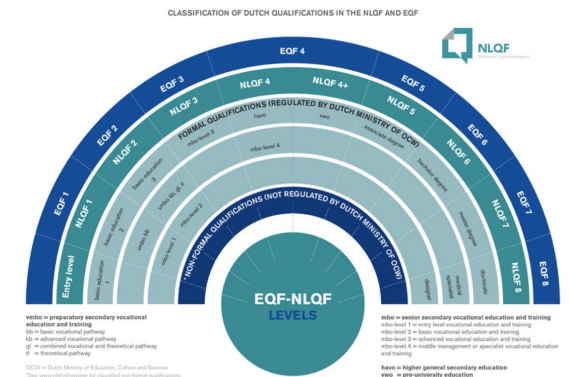
https://database.nlqf.nl/

Qualifications databases – online: examples

http://qualifications.ncfhe.gov.mt/#/dashboard

https://www.nok.si/en/sqf-register

Credential Engine (USA)

https://credentialengine.org

About Credential Engine   News & Events

Credential Engine™

Credential Transparency   Credential Engine Partners   Develop Solutions   Publish Credentials   Resources

WHAT WE DO

🔍 **Credential Transparency**
We are on a mission to level the credential landscape. Learn about why this work matters.

🔗 **Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL)**
The standard for making credentials and competencies and their relationships to learning and work beneficial, open data.

🏅 **Credential Registry**
Our registry hosts detailed information about credentials and fuels tools and services.

HOW WE DO IT

🏛 **Policy & Advocacy**
We work with policy makers and leaders to advance credential transparency through legislation of all types and at all levels.

🤝 **Support for Products**
We work with different product and service providers to align technologies and build capabilities to advance the mission and value of credential transparency.

✅ **Tailored Services**
A wide range of services that meet the needs of organizations managing credential and competency data

🤝 **Strategic Partnerships**
We don't do anything alone. Instead, we take a collaborative approach to our work.

CREDENTIAL ENGINE IN ACTION

Credential Publisher ↗
Credential Finder ↗
Infographic and Video

Making Opportunitie

Credential Engine is a non-profit on
consistent information and fuel the
find the best pathways.

1.076 MILLION
Credentials in the U.S.

$2.13 TRILLION
Spent in education and training

59.69 THOUSAND
Credential providers across the U.S.

Learn more about Credential Engine and Illuminate Paths to a better future.

Credential Engine (CTDL)

Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL)

- Discovering and understanding credentials, competencies, and learning and career pathways is difficult. To fix this problem: created the CTDL schema, a common language for any organization to use with their information systems to empower learners, workers, educators, employers, and policymakers.

- CTDL is the family of de facto standards for making descriptions of credentials and other resources available as data for search and cross-system interoperability.

- **A large dictionary of terms that is at users' fingertips for creating descriptions where you can use all of the terms or only those terms that meet your needs.**

- The power of the CTDL comes from every term having **semantic meaning** and from using a model based on specifications for the semantic web. This means that the CTDL is designed to include terms for **linking data**.

- CTDL linked data structure enables telling complete stories to answer questions such as how much a credential cost, how long to earn it, requirements to enrol, courses that are required, transfer value, preparation for other credentials, jobs it prepares people for, pathway options, outcomes, and more.

https://credentialengine.org/credential-transparency/ctdl/

Credential Engine - US

Learn more about Credential Engine and how tools like the Finder help illuminate paths to a better future.

Making ALL Credentials Transparent & Revealing the Marketplace of Credentials

The Credential Landscape Today

Vast and Growing

967,734+ unique credentials in the U.S. alone. Read the report

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Reveal Reliable Information

The Registry contains trusted and reliable information that helps learners and those seeking opportunities to explore available pathways. This information fuels the creation of services and tools that allow students, employers, and workers to compare credentials and see the full range of opportunities available for learning, advancement, and meaningful careers.

Credential
Degrees, certificates, badges, and more that show what an individual knows and can do.

Learning Opportunities
Formal opportunities that allow individuals to earn credentials or specific competencies and skills to advance their knowledge and job prospects.

Assessments
Activities that evaluate what an individual knows and can do as a result of a specific learning opportunity or a collection of them en route to earning a credential.

Quality Assurance
Processes that help ensure credentials, learning opportunities, and individual skills and competencies are trusted, valuable, reliable.

Skills and Competencies
Abilities that individuals can acquire and have the capacity to apply in the workplace and real-world situations.

Pathways
Direct connections between education opportunities, skills/competencies, and the workforce that help people find clear avenues to meet their needs.

Transfer Value
How well an individual credential, learning opportunity, or competency will relate to and apply in other skill development and/or career advancement opportunities.

Overview and Navigation Tips

If you are new to the Credential Finder or want to get more familiar with the updated interface, we recommend exploring our overview page to learn how tools like the finder help make credential data more accessible and actionable. It includes helpful navigation tips, videos on changes we have implemented, and an invitation to share your feedback so we may improve tools like the Credential Finder or collaborate to develop custom tools that meet the needs of your stakeholders. You can also learn more about Credential Engine and how tools like the Finder help illuminate paths to a better future.

Overview Page | Feedback Page | About Credential Engine

Who is Credential Finder for?

Individuals | Credential Providers | Government Agencies | Application Developers | Skill and Competency Creators | Employers | Quality Assurance Organizations

Job Seekers / Individuals

Reliable information to help find your path

Whether you're just starting out, advancing your career, or just looking for new skills, Credential Finder helps you find the path. We know it can be confusing to navigate through thousands of degrees, certificates, and other credential options. Having the right information is key.

Credential Providers / Issuers

See where your credentials fit in the landscape

Our information can help you build better connections for the credentials you provide. We encourage you to explore how comparable credentials from other providers lead to different career opportunities, what competencies and skills are built into different credentials, and which are in demand.

Local, State, and Federal Government Agencies

Data that empowers decision making

Our credential information can help you understand the opportunities available for your constituents so that you may make better decisions about support, resources, and services to meet your needs and keep up with a rapidly changing economy.

Credential Finder *The Credential Finder is a tool for exploring all of the information published to the Credential Registry*

Home | Search | Finder Widgets | Reports and Data | Benchmark Reports | Compare (0)

Discover Credentials. Explore Opportunities

Discover and compare credential opportunities, build widgets, and access our linked open data network for timely and trusted information about credentials including competencies and education and career pathways. Here you can explore the Credential Registry to understand how data that you and others contribute can be used to fuel the creation of services and tools that allow students, employers, and workers to compare credentials and choose the best option.

Search | **for**

Credentials | Start typing to search ... | In | All Locations | Search | X

What's in the Registry?

1743	40141	930	5864
Organizations	Credentials	Competency Frameworks	Outcomes

9657	630	7	43
Learning Opportunities	Assessments	Pathways	Transfer Values

2
Collections

04

Functions and services

Varying range of functions / tools in the examples

Video on Slovenia Qualifications register
https://youtu.be/Xjt1a0mYhjc

Accessible, systematised public publication of information on qualifications – more or less detail **(Botswana, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Mauritius, Portugal…)**

Benchmarking, comparison of qualifications: nationally, international **(Slovenia)**

Career orientation and progression – horizontal and vertical **(Slovenia)**

Understanding national qualifications framework / system **(NZQR, BQA Register, Portugal, Ireland)**

International cooperation, especially recognition of foreign qualifications **(Ireland…)**

Data analysis (SAQA, US Credential Engine)

Data fields for electronic publication of qualifications (*ACQF policy document*)

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Common / mandatory:

- Title of qualification

- Field of education and training (according to ISCED-2013, fields of education and training – ISCED-F 2013)

- Country code

- NQF level – ACQF level

- Awarding body or competent authority

- Description of the qualification: short statements on the learning outcomes – what the learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do

- Credit points/notional workload needed to achieve the learning outcomes (if available)

- Expiry date (if available)

- Link to qualifications database (if available)

Optional:

- External quality assurance/regulatory body

- Ways to acquire the qualification

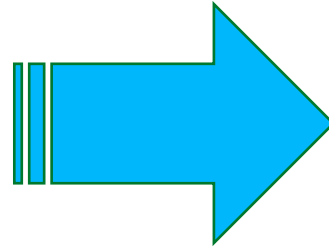- Relationship to occupations or occupational classification.

ISCED-F 2013, at: http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/isced-fields-of-education-and-training-2013-en.pdf

05

Final notes

Qualifications registers

- Clarity and transparency
- Systematisation
- Digital
- Online
- Accessible
- Services for all users

Worth the investment

Thank you

ACQF project – coordinator

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