



Blended Programme

Complimentary report on ECVET based on VETeducation of Child Care

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1. Foreword

Direct citation from The European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

“The aim of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is to:

- Make it easier for people to get validation and recognition of work-related skills and knowledge acquired in different systems and countries – so that they can count towards vocational qualifications;
- Make it more attractive to move between different countries and learning environments;
- Increase the compatibility between the different vocational education and training (VET) systems in place across Europe, and the qualifications they offer;
- Increase the employability of VET graduates and the confidence of employers that each VET qualification requires specific skills and knowledge.”

The aim of this report is to look at similarities and differences between qualification criteria in order to find out if it would be possible to create common modules or part modules that all students could complete during their international exchange. The report also tries to address some of the reasons why there have been some difficulties reaching all BP-project's targets and what has been learnt through these problems.

The writers of this report are working in Finland as VET school lecturers in the social and health care field. They are, therefore, familiar with the VET school system in Finland. The challenge was to discover and explain this to all participating vocational school systems in the different countries, particularly in the social care and health care sector.

The knowledge has been gathered from:

- Reading participant countries curriculums, modules and assessments criteria
- Co-operation and discussions with other subject teachers and on-the-job learning places, tutors and supervisors in participating countries
- Observing and interviewing students from Ireland, the Netherlands and Finland about their studies, on-the-job learning periods and internships
- Reading previous reports.

During the project all the participants of BP thought that it was important to try to find common parts of education of social and health care. In the 4th meeting in Finland the group decided to concentrate on the modules for studying, which are related to children's social work, care, education and nursing. The comparison of these modules was difficult because of the different names given to these professions/VET education or VET courses. Also information inside assessment criteria or specific subjects under the headlines are very common and there is a difference in meaning of the same named modules in each countries.

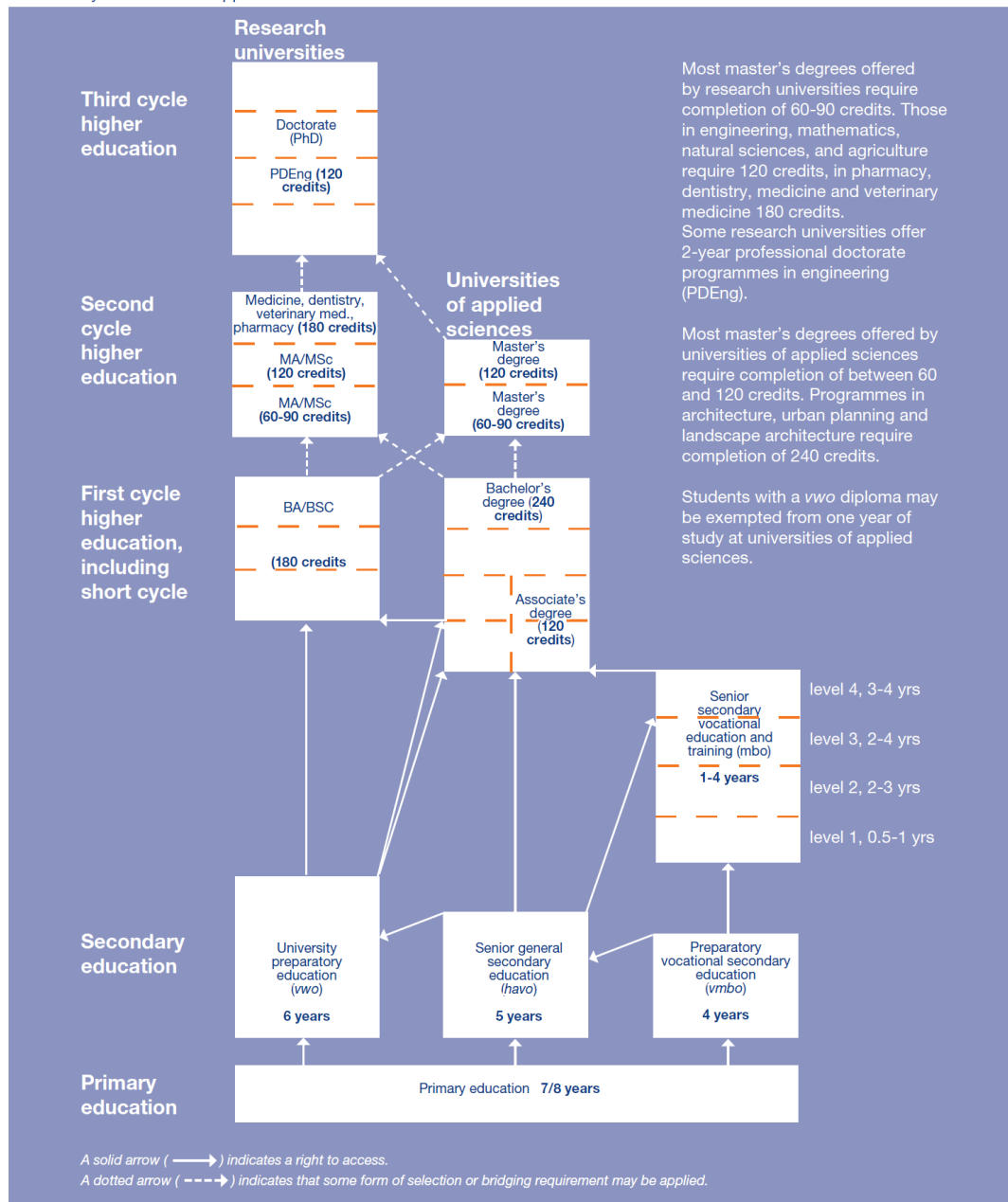
2. Structure of the national educational system of the Netherlands, Ireland and Finland (focus on VET)

2.1 Structure of the Netherlands educational system

Update February 2015

The Dutch education system

The higher education system in the Netherlands is based on a three-cycle degree system, consisting of a bachelor, master and PhD. Two types of programmes are offered: research-oriented degree programmes offered by research universities, and professional higher education programmes offered by universities of applied sciences.



In the Netherlands primary education lasts eight years. Around the age of 12 pupils start secondary education. There are three types of secondary education:

1. Pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO), which lasts four years
2. Senior general secondary education (HAVO), five years
3. Pre-university education (VWO), six years

Pupils can transfer from one type to another, if needed.

After completion of one of the above-mentioned secondary education courses pupils can go to Senior Secondary education and training (MBO) which comprises of school-based vocational training (BOL) and block or day-release programmes (BBL). Students can take MBO-courses at four different national qualifications levels:

- Assistant training (level 1)
- Basic vocational training (level 2)
- Professional training (level 3)
- Middle-management or specialist training (level 4)

The level of one's diploma of secondary education dictates the level a pupil is allowed to follow at MBO. When pupils have not succeeded in achieving a diploma of secondary education then they must start at level-1 of MBO. All students must also have a start qualification of level-2, unless there is a reason for not being able to do so (e.g. illness).

Students can step directly to professional and middle-management training (levels 3 and 4) when they have successfully completed the Pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO), which lasts four year, or the senior general secondary education (HAVO), which lasts five years.

Students who have completed level 4 successfully can go on to higher professional education (HBO/University of Applied Science).

In the Netherlands MBO-courses are offered in four different sectors:

- Personal and social care services and health care
- Engineering and technology
- Business
- Agriculture and the natural environment.

In the sector of personal and social care services and health care the students can study for the following professions (these levels are levels of VET education):

LEVEL 1

Home care assistant

LEVEL 2

Helper

LEVEL 3

Childcare worker

Welfare worker

Carer

LEVEL 4

Specialised childcare worker

Youth care worker

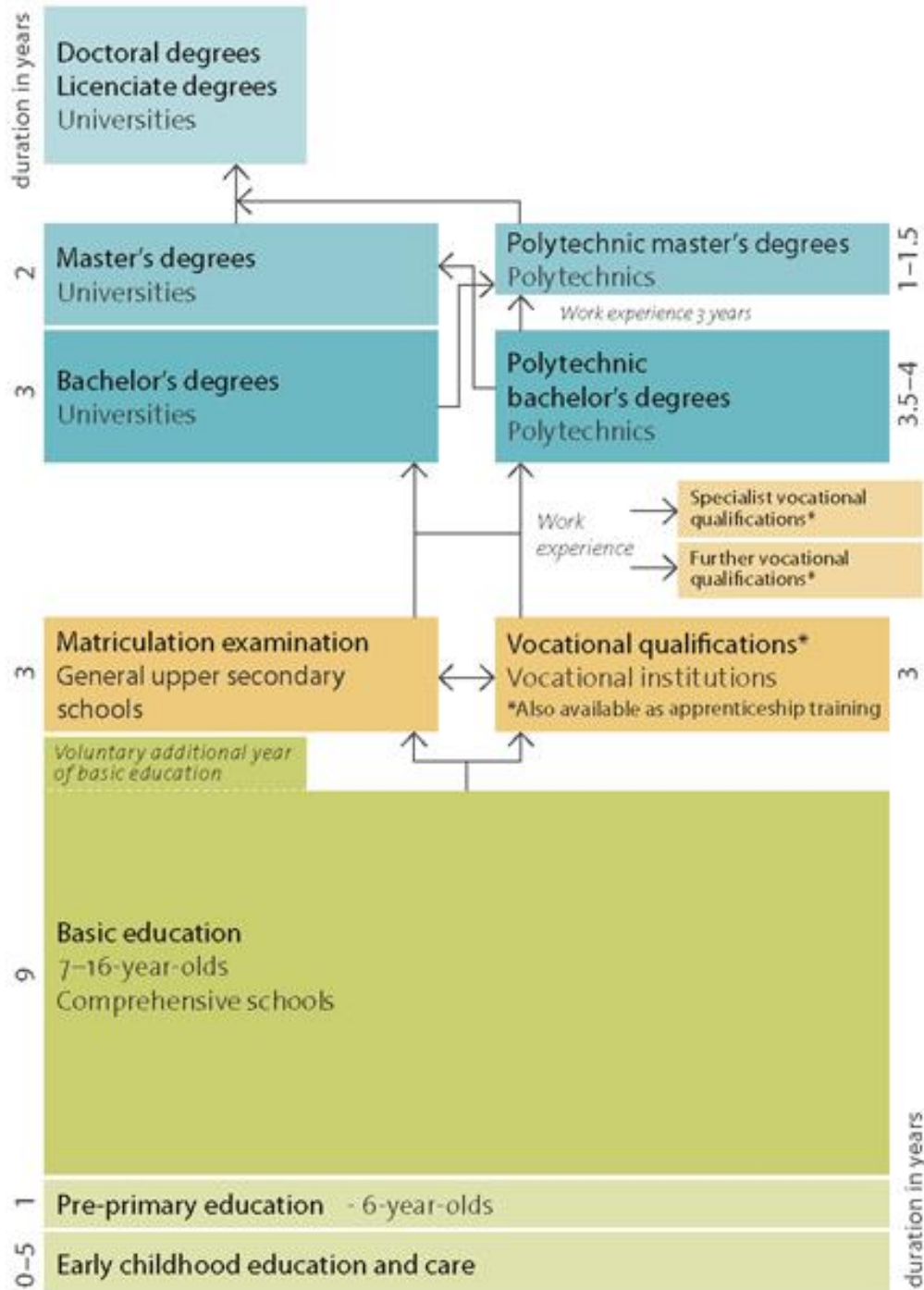
Personal attendant for special target groups

Personal attendant for care of disables

Nurse

2.2. Structure of Finland's educational system

Education system in Finland



In Finland basic education lasts nine years. It caters for all children and young people between 6/7 and 15/16 years of age. Basic education is provided by comprehensive schools. They do not select their students and everyone has the right to get a place in a nearby school. Pupils, in consultation

with parents, can also choose another school. All schools follow a national core curriculum and basic education is integrated within a single structure, which comprises primary and lower secondary education levels.

There are two main types of upper secondary schools, which can be chosen (some young people choose the post-secondary non-tertiary education, mostly offered by private schools):

- General upper secondary education
- Vocational upper secondary education

The upper secondary education consists of general and vocational education. Both forms usually take three years and both give eligibility for higher education. After basic education about 50 per cent of young people choose the general upper secondary school and 42 per cent vocational upper secondary education. The selection is based on leaving certificate of basic education and in vocational schools there may also be a psychological test and an interview (e.g. social- and health care) or other tests. The upper secondary general education is mostly in the same school campus as basic education's last three years. Vocational schools have their own campus.

Sectors of the vocational education in Finland are:

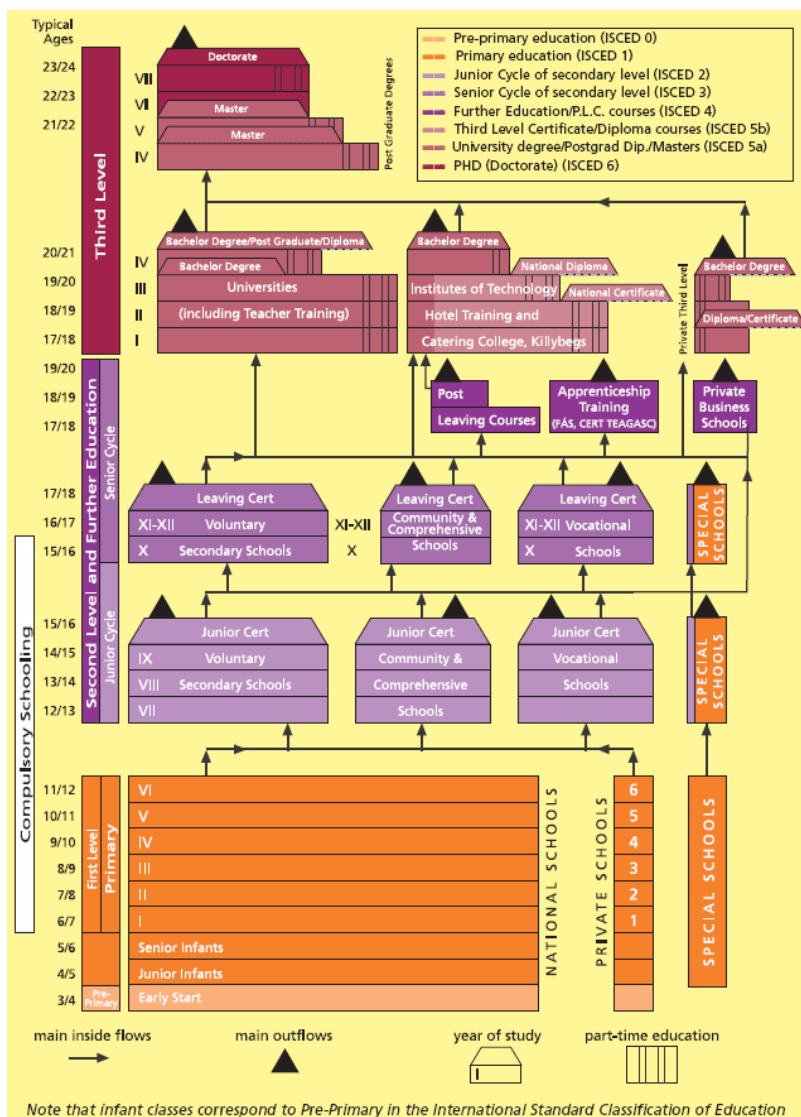
- Culture
- Humanities and Education
- Natural resources and the Environment
- Natural sciences
- Social sciences, Business and Administration
- Social services, Health and Sport
- Tourism, Catering and Domestic services
- Technology, Communications and Transport

If students want to study social and health care, they must choose studies leading to a qualification in social and health care, practical nurse. In the 1990s this one qualification replaced ten earlier VET-school professions. Practical nurses in Finland work with nursing, care, education and rehabilitation tasks in the social and health care sector. Their wide social and health care competence enables them to move flexibly between different clients and tasks. Every student has to study three compulsory modules: support and guidance of growth, nursing and care and rehabilitation support. The students choose their specialisation in the last of the three years of study.

This specialisation can be a vocational qualification in:

- customer services and information management
- emergency care
- rehabilitation
- children and youth care and education
- mental health and substance abuse welfare work
- nursing and care
- oral and dental care
- care for people with disabilities
- care for the elderly
- chiropodists

2.3. Structure of Ireland's educational system



In Ireland the post-primary education consists of secondary, vocational, community and comprehensive schools. Education includes a three-year Junior Cycle (lower secondary education) and two or three years Senior Cycle (upper secondary education), depending on whether the optional Transition Year (TY) is taken. The Junior Cycle begins at age 12. The Junior Certificate examination is taken after three years.

In The Senior Cycle students are 15 to 18 years old. During the last two years students can take one of following programmes (each one leading to a State Examination):

- The traditional Leaving Certificate
- The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP)
- The Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)

LCVP concentrates on technical subjects and some additional modules, which have a vocational focus. The LCA programme lasts two years and is mostly taken up by students who have not been selected for other programmes. The studies there are person-centred and they are implemented by cross-curricular approach.

Institutes of further education cover education and training that occurs after second level schooling but is not part of the third level system. There are a number of Further and Adult Education and Training schools, organisations and institutions, which are involved in the delivery of continuing education and training for young school leavers and adults. Sectors of the vocational education they provide are:

- Art, crafts and Media
- Agriculture
- Animal care
- Automotive
- ICT and computing
- Humanities and Business
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Education, health and welfare
- Gardening & Landscaping
- Hairdressing and beauty
- Legal

- Media
- Travel, hospitality and tourism
- Sport

The education in further education institutions is in many sectors preparatory studies or a gateway to Universities/Institutes of Technology. So in vocational education in Ireland it is uncommon for students to study internationally.

2.4. Observing issues

In the Netherlands there are three types of secondary education: Pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO), senior general secondary education (HAVO) and Pre-university education (VMO), but students can transfer easily from one type to another.

In Finland lower secondary education is integrated within a single structure. Upper secondary education, after the compulsory education age of 16, students may select either general upper secondary education or vocational upper secondary education.

In Finland there is one basic profession in social and health care sector. In other words, the practical nurses work in both sectors social and health care. That is because the 10 old professions in these sectors united as one in the early 1990s. In Finland many communities have also integrated the administration of these sectors. In other participant countries these sectors are separate and nursing is a health care profession.

Both in Finland and in the Netherlands there are two level of nurses. Second level nurses, Practical Nurses (FI), VZ-IG at level 3 and Nurses at level 4 (NL), graduated from VET-school (MBO in NL) and first level nursing must be studied in university of applied science/polytechnic in Finland, HBO in NL after VET level 4. The difference here is that Practical Nurses (FI) can work at different places both in health care and in social care (health care centres, different hospital departments and wards, medical and occupational health clinics, social welfare units, home care, intermediary forms of accommodation after home care, activity and work centres, workshops, service homes and centres, spas, wards of rehabilitation, day care centres, schools, child welfare units and family work, mental health and substance abuse units, different settings for the care for the disabled, day activities, dementia units and old people's homes.) and VZ-IG and Nurses (NL) may only carry out duties of health care and nurses at hospitals, and other organisations where healthcare is provided. They cannot work at a child care centre as only students who have studied for this specific field of

profession work in these organisations. In Ireland there is only one level of nurses, who have studied in Higher education institutes. So, there are no practical, second level nurses.

3. EQF versus NQF

“The EQF helps to compare national qualifications systems and enable communication between course providers, students and employers. The core of the EQF are eight common European reference levels, which are described in learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences. This makes it easier to understand what a learner with a qualification related to the EQF knows, understands and is able to do. This approach also makes it possible to compare qualifications awarded in all types of education, training and qualifications, from school education to academic, professional and vocational at each of its levels”. <https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/content/how-does-eqf-work>

In Finland the education system does not have an actual classification of levels. The relationships between qualifications are demonstrated in the fact that lower level studies usually confer the right to pursue higher level education. Provisions on the qualifications and goals of education are laid down in the legislation for each form of education. So the Finnish national framework is just built based on the European Qualifications Framework and, therefore, the national framework is the same. Right now the work is not going on, because Finland renew curriculums almost every level.

In Ireland and also in Netherlands most teachers and workers in on-the-job-learning places used NQF –levels while describing the student’s level so there could be some misunderstanding with regard to the actual level of students’ vocational skills. The levels are very different and can be difficult for Finnish people to get used to.

Students normally attend school and work at the same time while training in The Netherlands. So, it is natural to be given tasks to do in workplace. In Finland in every module the students study the theoretical part first and after that they have an on-the-job-learning period.

In each country, there are modules with almost the same name, but the content is different and also the level of studies.

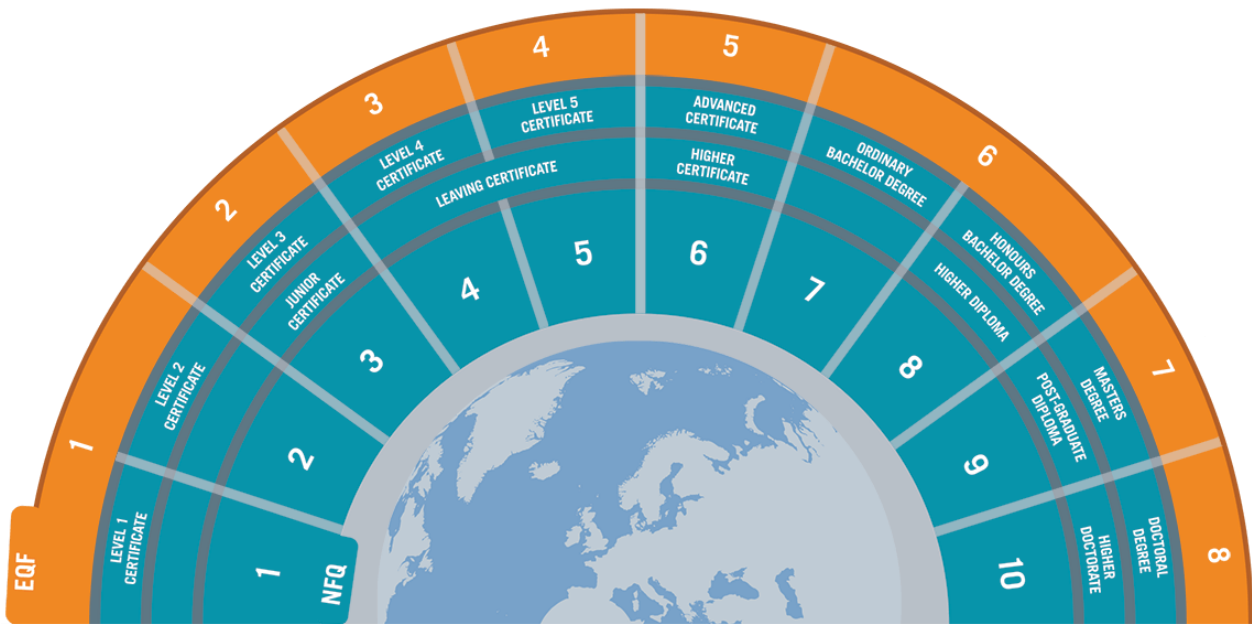
The table below will show information on the levels of modules and also professions and modules chosen for the report

- Ireland; Early childhood care & education, NQF levels 5 and 6
- Netherlands: Child care worker and Specialised child care worker

- Finland: support and guidance of growth (compulsory module all practical nurse students) and Specialisation in children and youth care and education

EQF		NQF	NQF	NQF
Level	Description	Level Ireland	Level Netherlands	Level Finland (not use)
Level 0: Early childhood education (01 Early childhood educational development)	Education designed to support early development in preparation for participation in school and society. Programmes designed for children below the age of 3.			
Level 0: Early childhood Education (02 Pre-primary education)	Education designed to support early development in preparation for participation in school and society. Programmes designed for children from age 3 to the start of primary education.		Basic education	
Level 1: Primary education	Programmes typically designed to provide students with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics and to establish a solid foundation for learning.	Level 1 and Level 2	Level 1 Basic education Vmbo bb mbo 1	
Level 2: Lower secondary education	First stage of secondary education building on primary education, typically with a more subject-oriented curriculum.	Level 3	Level 2 Basic education mbo2	
Level 3: Upper secondary education*	Second/final stage of secondary education preparing for tertiary education and/or providing skills relevant to employment. Usually with an increased range of subject options and streams.	Level 4	Level 3 mbo 3 - Child care worker	- support and guidance of growth
Level 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education*	Programmes providing learning experiences that build on secondary education and prepare for labour market entry and/or tertiary education. The content is broader than secondary but not as complex as tertiary education.	Level 5 -Early Childhood care and Education	Level 4 havo mbo4 vavo-havo - Specialised child care worker Level 4+ vwo havo-vwo	Specialisation in children and youth care and education
Level 5: Short-cycle tertiary education	Short first tertiary programmes that are typically practically-based, occupationally-specific and prepare for labour market entry. These programmes may also provide a pathway to other tertiary programmes.	Level 6 -Early Childhood care and Education	Level 5 associate degree	
Level 6: Bachelor or equivalent	Programmes designed to provide intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies leading to a first tertiary degree or equivalent qualification.	Level 7 and Level 8	Level 6	
Level 7: Master or equivalent	Programmes designed to provide advanced academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies leading to a second tertiary degree or equivalent qualification.	Level 9	Level 7	
Level 8: Doctoral or equivalent	Programmes designed primarily to lead to an advanced research qualification, usually concluding with the submission and defence of a substantive dissertation of publishable quality based on original research.	level 10	level 8	

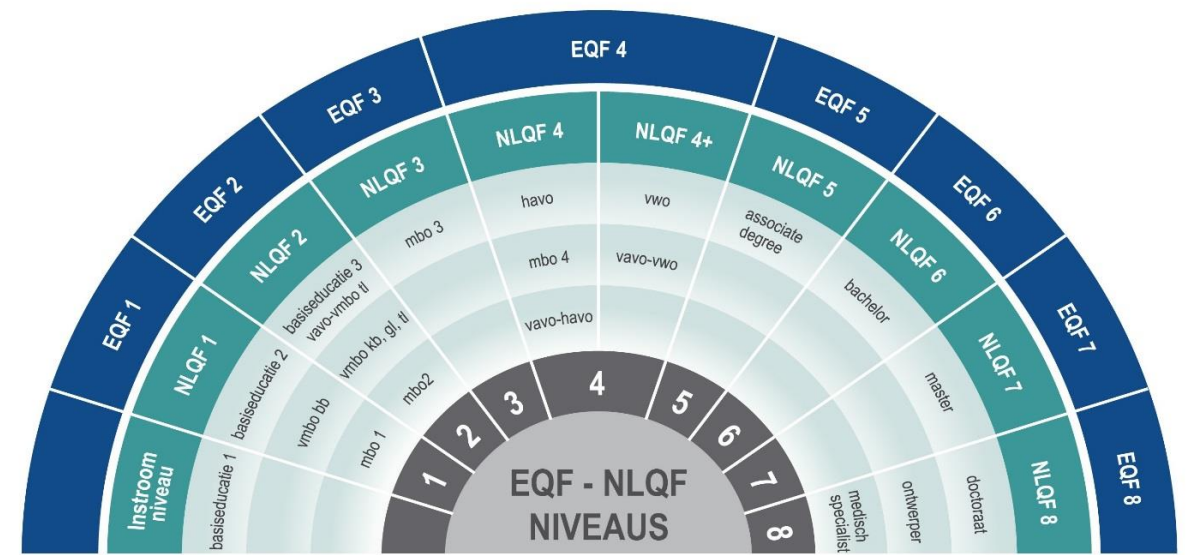
NQF/EQF in Ireland:



<http://www.nfq-gqi.com/qualifications-frameworks.html>

NQF/EQF in Netherlands;

Schematisch overzicht generieke inschaling in NLQF en EQF van door de overheid gereguleerde kwalificaties.



4. Comparison of the curricula of childcare in the Netherlands, Ireland and Finland

In Finland further vocational qualifications involve proof of vocational skills required for skilled workers. There are also some further vocational qualifications in social and health care sector, e.g. Further Qualification for Child Minders and Further Qualification in Morning and Afternoon Activity Instruction for Schoolchildren. We decided to omit them from our comparison, because most courses of study for them, can also be found in compulsory modules of support and guidance of growth or specialisation module of children's and youth care and education.

In the Finnish education system in the sector of Humanities and Education, vocational qualifications in childcare and education and family welfare, children's instructor may be chosen. That is not possible in Sataedu and in Finland it is not within the Social services, health and sport sector, so it not necessary to include to the comparison of modules.

The module of support and guidance of growth is in the Finnish vocational education the compulsory module, which all practical nurse student have to carry out. It not gives alone any vocational profession. Last year the practical nurse student can specialised in children and youth care and education, EQF level 4.

In Ireland can be studied Early childhood care and education in two level. NQF level 5/EQF level 4, student gets certificate of childcare and NQF level 6/EQF level 5 certificate of supervision in childcare. In the Netherlands there is also two level studies, NQF/EQF level 3 child care worker and NQF/EQF level 4 specialised child care worked.

These modules were chosen, because they place in VET-education in social and health care basic studies. And because they are provided in partner schools.

5. Conclusions

5.1 About modules

After reviewing all ECVET curricula and tasks combined with our experience during the Blended Programme, which is limited to three countries' (The Netherlands, Finland and Ireland) curricula and assessment criterias, we found out next:

In all the countries there is an idea of lifelong learning and humanities. The aims that students have to study and understand meaning and/or use are:

- problem solving skills
- interaction and cooperative skills
- vocational ethics
- health, safety and ability to function
- sustainable development
- aesthetics
- communications skills, team work
- Information and communication technology
- reflection skills
- giving and receiving feedback
- active citizenship and different cultures
- foreign language
- entrepreneurship
- legislation and social and health care service system

Furthermore we found next similar courses/subjects in every countries modules :

EQF Finland and Netherland level 3, Ireland level 4

- respects the child's values and cultural background
- recognizes the strengths and needs, related to the growth and development of different children and their backgrounds
- has knowledge of target groups: babies, toddlers and young child
- sets goals that support growth and development

- acts on the basis of a plan which supports the client's growth and development
- assesses his/her actions and the implementation of a plan which supports the child's growth and development
- promotes and supports the child's growth and development, health, security and well-being
- guides and supports the child in daily activities
- guides different children groups
- abides with the principles, regulations and provisions concerning the field of social and health care
- abides with the principles and recommendations concerning different client groups
- has knowledge on protocols related to hygiene, safety, labour conditions, environment, quality care, ergonomic labour
- assumes responsibility for his/her own learning and assesses his/her vocational development
- searches for information and exploits information technology and different means of documentation
- complies with the rules of a working group and abides with the occupational health and safety instructions of his/her workplace.

EQF Finland and Netherland level 4, Ireland level 5

- plans, implements and assesses the care and education of children, before and during school-age
- promotes children's health and well-being and recognizes related threats
- guides an individual child, as well as different groups
- actively supports interaction between children
- takes the child's growth milieu into account and understands its significance for the child's growth and development
- has knowledge of children's diseases, of disabilities, of delay in language and/or development
- finds out the means how to support the child and family.
- complies with social and health care legislation and official instructions, observing vocational ethics
- exploits his/her language skills and communication in customer service
- plans the development of his/her competence

- develops his/her action on the basis of given feedback and assesses his/her know-how

5.2 Advices

VET-schools in every partner country, we more and more aspire toward personal study plans. With every student will be made a plan which pay attention to his/her already existing competence. We also know from the reports and studies that employers in every country appreciate the experience of working and studying in other country. So one of study path must be made possible to go to the other country and continue studies there. The student leave to the foreign country easier if she/he knows that the studies don't delay because of exchange.

The basic principle must be that every school proves variations, which were found from curriculums. Every national curriculum, and also the criterions of competence, have taken the shape in the long run. The countries and schools have developed they VET-education together with work life and their needs. As a result of this we cannot find or create one study unit or module, which is same in every country, because of the different school system, education and levels and also work culture. But in Europe, basic idea of work, moral, humanity, equality, appreciation of science it is mostly the same, so also the criterias of competence are similar in many ways. Also the employers appreciated same qualities of workers.

An idea which we have now experienced because of Blende Programme and which we greatly support is that in VET- schools more courses/modules in English have to be offered in the future, so the students during the mobility can also take part of academic studies. That is big challenge to the teachers in many countries. After all many workplaces even in social and health care, are already multinational.

The meaning of a clear Learning Agreements is huge. It is not enough that only the substance teachers and students think about the description of the learning outcomes to be achieved during mobility carefully. Also the substance teachers in host schools must read those and contact the sending school if there is any obscurity of content. And that discussion create for it part the similar concepts of VET education. This kind of discussion with substance teachers are very much needed. By Blended Programme we have noted that substance teachers as well language teachers have a similar point of view that learning started from student and also willingness and understanding and competence to guide, tutoring and assess the student from differ countries.

This brings up another topic which is about the supervising and assessing of foreign students in host countries. There should be an EU general way of assessing students and the sending country must trust that the supervising and assessment is of high quality and that the outcomes are realised when well informed in advance. The sending country must trust the assessment even if when carried out in the way of the host countries.

The supervising teacher in host country also has to ensure that on –the –job-learning place know the learning outcomes. And they have to motivate the instructors at workplaces, that they take the targets of mobility seriously.

Europass-training should be arranged to every VET-school teachers, that they are coming to know every possibilities that includes to it. This is also useful after students are graduated and find a job, in a neighbour country. Teachers cannot guide students if they themselves do not know how use this. The tutors influence to students more than maybe strange international contact person of school.

Appendice

NL1 Overview of Qualification File of Nursing & Care and Community Education

NL2 Process competencies which go with the key duties Child Care (Netherlands)

FI assessment criteria modules of regarding a Child Care

Sources of information for the comparison

NL1 Overview of Qualification File of Nursing & Care and Community Education

NL2 Process competencies which go with the key duties Child Care (Netherlands)

http://www.oph.fi/download/140436_vocational_qualification_in_social_and_healthcare_2010.pdf,

pages 29 – 36 and 109 – 122 (Finland)

<http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProgrammeDetails?programmeCode=PG13996>

<http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/ProgrammeDetails?programmeCode=PG14816>

Other sources

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Netherlands:Overview>

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Finland:Overview>

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Ireland:Overview>

<http://www.nfq-qqi.com/qualifications-frameworks.html>

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<http://www.ecvet-team.eu/en/system/files/documents/13/ecvet-recommendation.pdf>

<https://www.government.nl/topics/secondary-vocational-education-mbo-and-higher-education/contents/secondary-vocational-education-mbo>

http://www.oph.fi/english/curricula_and_qualifications/vocational_upper_secondary_education

http://www.oph.fi/download/121526_NQF-muistio_EN_02_10.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/docs/nurses/2000-study/nurses_nederland_en.pdf

<https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/>

Discussions with colleagues, students and workers in Netherlands, Ireland and Finland