



**The Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF) is a reform instrument for regulating the system of qualifications at all levels in the Republic of Croatia. The core of the CROQF are qualifications standards, based on learning outcomes, which follow the needs of the labour market, individuals and society.**

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CROQF news  
October-December 2017

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Dear readers,

In this newsletter we have prepared a selection of some of the most important activities from the final months of 2017.

The Croatian Qualification Act states that the CROQF serves as an instrument for regulating the system of qualifications in the Republic of Croatia. That is true, but the CROQF is also much more than that. Besides its primary purpose, the CROQF has an added value that can easily be seen through shared experiences and new knowledge acquired by participants in CROQF activities.

Considering the wide variety of our numerous activities, it is easy to forget that those activities do not just have a short term value – each of them is also a long term contributor to the development of society in general.

We hope that the news we prepared for you in this newsletter will help you to better understand the details of the CROQF and maybe also encourage you to join in one of our many activities.

*Activities are being organized with support from the project “Establishment and Management of the CROQF Register as Support to the Work of Sectoral Councils and Other Stakeholders in the Process of Implementation of the CROQF”, co-financed by the ESF under the Operational Programme “Efficient Human Resources 2014-2020” and the European Commission’s grant to support national coordination points for the European Qualifications Framework.*

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## **Creative human potential**

*The National Council for Development of Human Potential (NCDHP) is the central strategic body for the development of the CROQF in the Republic of Croatia.*

### **Conference on „CROQF – opportunity for implementation of comprehensive educational reform“**

**The conference titled “CROQF – opportunity for implementation of educational reform“ organized by the NCDHP and the Ministry of Science and Education, was held in Zagreb on December 4, 2017.**

After Mrs. Ružica Beljo Lučić, PhD, NCDHP Chair, opened the conference, participants were greeted by other dignitaries including the Minister of Science and Education, Mrs. Blaženka Divjak, PhD. In her speech, the Minister pointed out the importance of the CROQF regarding its unparalleled role in regulating the system of qualifications.

After presentations held by Mr. Bebić from the Croatian Post, Mr. Bandelj from the Slovenian Institute for Vocational Education and Training and Mrs. Lukačević from the HRPRO company, the conference shifted from a plenary session into multiple parallel seminary/workshop based modules.

The first module focused its attention on a variety of aspects regarding the VET reform. The second module focused on different ways to improve quality assurance in higher education. The third module focused on the development of adult education system in the context of lifelong learning.

The next part of the conference retained a similar work mode, with two parallel modules – one being about the improvement of the social aspect in higher education and the other one being about the development of the system of recognition of prior learning.

What stood out in this conference was its final part – “the knowledge café”. Participants were free to move about the main conference hall, where ten thematic focal points were placed. At each of the points, participants had an opportunity to discuss relevant topics with representatives of relevant stakeholders.

The conference itself was, as in previous years, marked by interactivity between speakers and participants, therefore once again confirming the words of Mrs. Beljo Lučić who characterized the conference as a forum.

High level of interest in a multitude of conference topics as demonstrated by participants has confirmed the relevance of NCDHP in the development and implementation of the CROQF as an important tool in the reform of the Croatian education system. Numerous constructive questions asked by participants once again confirmed the multilayered value of the conference itself as an integral part of NCDHP's activities, contributing to development of human potential and the Croatian society in general.



Conference on „CROQF – opportunity for implementation of educational reform

## **Creative human potential**

### **Sessions of the NCDHP**

**On November 15, the Ministry of Science and Education hosted the 23rd NCDHP session.**

Assistant Minister, Mr. Vlado Prskalo, and the Head of Sector for Secondary Education, Mrs. Monika Vričko, joined the members of the NCDHP in order to brief the Council about the strategic priorities of the Ministry related to the development of VET, the proposed amendments to the VET Act, as well as the development of VET in line with the CROQF.

Mr. Prskalo pointed out that the key strategic goals of the Ministry include, among others, the implementation of quality assurance in VET, further development of qualifications based on competences and learning outcomes, development of a VET system which would enable lifelong learning and mobility on the labour market and encouragement of student's personal and professional development through further education and lifelong learning.

The session topics also included the preparations for the upcoming NCDHP conference and a briefing by Mrs. Ružica Beljo Lučić, PhD, NCDHP Chair about the work that had been done regarding the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education.

The next NCDHP session is scheduled for January 2018.



23rd NCDHP session

## **Sectoral approach of the CROQF**

*Sectoral councils are advisory and professional bodies responsible for ensuring the development of human potential in line with labour market needs. They are established pursuant to the CROQF Act and the Ordinance on the CROQF Register. Their core task is to validate proposals for occupational standards, units of learning outcomes and qualifications standards, i.e. requests for their inclusion in the CROQF Register. Since the CROQF methodology provides that educational and study programmes shall be aligned with the standards included in the CROQF Register, sectoral councils play an important role in the education system reform.*

### **4th session of the Sectoral Council no. VI Mechanical Engineering, Shipbuilding and Metallurgy**

The session was held on the premises of the Ministry of Science and Education on October 3, 2017.

In accordance with the task given to all sectoral councils by the Ministry of Labour and the Pension System, council members discussed the necessary alterations to the list of individual occupations from the National Classification of Occupations, related to the Mechanical Engineering, Shipbuilding and Metallurgy sector, and finalized their proposal.

Moreover, the Sectoral Council discussed and recommended occupations in the sector that should be given a priority in preparation of occupational standards.



*4th session of the Sectoral Council no. VI Mechanical Engineering, Shipbuilding and Metallurgy*

## **Sectoral approach to the CROQF**

### **Continuous education of key stakeholders in CROQF implementation**

**Multiple workshops were held on the premises of Ministry of Science and Education for a wide spectrum of key stakeholders included in the implementation of CROQF.**

The first set of workshops held during October 2017, was organized for sectoral experts, foremost representatives of various employers and advisors from the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education engaged in improvement of proposals of occupational standards according to the CROQF.

Occupational standards that were being worked on in the workshop were developed earlier and needed to be improved in compliance with the CROQF methodology. After an introductory lecture, sectoral experts worked in groups to analyze key jobs and competences related to specific occupations in their corresponding sectors. After the group work, each of the teams presented their work to other sectoral experts.

*The inclusion of sectoral experts in the development of the CROQF is an essential part of continuous quality assurance in the process. Continuous education of key stakeholders represents a clear*

*dedication to high standards of expertise and overall quality of work being done within the development of the CROQF.*

**After the workshops for sectoral experts involved in improvement of proposals of occupational standards in October, multiple consultation workshops followed in November 2017.**

Within consultation workshops, representatives of the teams composed of sectoral experts presented the improved proposals of occupational standards to relevant sectoral councils. Fourteen consultation workshops were held in nine sectors.

Team leaders, representatives of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, presented the councils with the proposals for nineteen occupational standards that were improved in compliance with the CROQF methodology. Council members familiarized themselves with the proposed occupational standards and gave suggestions for further improvement of the proposals before the formal submission of requests for their entry into the IT system of the CROQF Register begins.

**The final workshop in 2017 was held in December for teachers and advisors from the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education involved in the process of improvement of qualification standards in VET in compliance with the CROQF methodology.**

The aim of the workshop was to prepare relevant experts to improve proposals of qualifications standards in VET in line with the improved proposals of occupational standards and in line with the CROQF methodology.

Workshop participants were greeted by Assistant Minister, Mr. Vlado Prskalo. Mr. Prskalo expressed his personal and professional gratitude for the contribution of teachers to the CROQF and pointed out the importance of teaching as a calling that has a profound impact on the society. After the presentation of the methodology of development of qualifications standards according to the CROQF, units of learning outcomes in qualifications standards were analyzed in relation to competences defined in occupational standards. After the group work, the results of the analyses were presented to other participants.



*Education of key stakeholders in CROQF implementation*

## International perspective

### Study visit by a delegation of the Republic of Serbia

The Ministry of Science and Education hosted a delegation from the Republic of Serbia on a study visit from 4 to 6 December, 2017.

The delegation from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia came to Zagreb on a study visit that was organized as part of the project “European Qualifications Framework – National Coordination Points (EQF-NCP) 2017”.

Within the study visit, delegates were briefed on various selected topics regarding the development and implementation of the CROQF by the representatives of the Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of Labour and Pension System, Zagreb University's Computing Centre, Agency for Science and Higher Education, Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education, Croatian Employment Service, Croatian Employers' Association, as well as the representatives of Croatian universities.

The delegation participated in the NCDHP's conference on “CROQF – opportunity for implementation of educational reform” and visited several of the key institutions for development and implementation of the CROQF.

Special attention was given to the presentation of processes in the development of legal and institutional framework for implementation of the CROQF. Other presented topics included the implementation of the CROQF in VET and adult education, the role of different institutions and key stakeholders in the implementation of the CROQF, as well as the specifics regarding the IT System of the CROQF Register.

The study visit showed that the educational systems of Croatia and Serbia have many similarities, therefore allowing for an easier comparison and implementation of solutions that were learned during the visit.



*Study visit by a delegation of the Republic of Serbia*