

EQF-Timber Vocational education and training in timber construction: Making qualifications transparent



Baseline situation

in European vocational education and training in timber construction

Timber construction – a traditional craft with a bright future

In some parts of Europe, timber construction has developed significantly over the past 30 years, increasing its economic weight and social recognition.

This has been driven by well-organised companies, constantly evolving quality and technical standards, and highly trained workers.

Companies are only as good as their employees

The market potential of timber construction as a culture driving sustainable building can be most effectively tapped if sufficient numbers of highly qualified workers are available through continually improving training opportunities. This is necessary both regionally and with maximum coverage at European level.



Need for action

in European vocational education and training in timber construction

Current situation in Europe

Transparency regarding the development status and methods of delivering European carpentry training has long been lacking.

The ERASMUS+ project “Progress through collaboration – Advancing education in timber construction”¹ initially sought to document, structure and shed light on the existence and spread of educational systems and the associated vocational education and training (VET) in timber construction in Europe.

According to findings at the end of the project period (2016–2018), vocational training provision in Member States and various partner nations is highly diverse.

Conclusion

On closer examination, the project participants found that formal basic vocational education on timber construction is only available in around half of European Union Member States. Continuing and advanced training schemes are even scarcer.

Knowledge, skills and competences are passed on at varying rates and training systems and structures differ significantly. It is therefore difficult to compare vocational experience at European level based on training qualifications or vocational profiles.

Therefore, in order to increase the transparency and comparability of qualifications, a consortium of partners¹ from six European countries was formed and the “Development of a European Qualifications Framework in Timber Construction (EQF-Timber)” scheme was launched. Measures were scheduled for implementation between January 2020 and August 2022.



¹ The project partners are listed on the back page. Further information can be found at www.timber-construction.eu/vet-eu

Structure and content of “EQF-Timber”

Timber construction qualification system

The consortium sought to develop an appropriate qualification system for timber construction. This is based on the existing European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that include eight competence levels.

In future, the qualifications system may help improve classification of skilled workers’ vocational competence profiles and vocational qualifications. This will be achieved by clearly linking skills acquired formally or informally to comparable competence levels.

Using any available national curricula and training plans, the EQF-Timber was developed as a competence scale providing an international representation of skills and competences.

Company process structures were divided into four fields of work in a four-level framework of reference to present basic and advanced training competences. This identifies competence fields, learning outcome fields and the associated learning outcomes from the vocational training process in an increasing level of detail.

A comprehensive presentation of project outcomes will be available to download from the Timber Construction Europe website www.EQF-Timber.eu from September 2022



Benefits and examples of application

Prospects

The EQF-Timber should provide extensive prospects for checking and presenting the content structures of vocational education systems and skills without reference to existing basic national parameters. It presents numerous benefits and opportunities for various users to fulfil different requirements in terms of status assessment and development planning.

Skilled workers

A standardised process for classifying competences provides a variety of benefits for current and future skilled workers pursuing careers in timber construction. It gives them an idea of their general career prospects, how their current skills are classified, and what opportunities are available for them to develop their competences.

Companies

The initiative will improve opportunities for companies to assess new employees more effectively and thus make informed decisions on any continuing and advanced training initiatives.

Educational institutions

The EQF-Timber generates opportunities for VET institutions to realign their educational provision to cater for development potential and European standards.

This will enable them to develop and implement new educational opportunities in cooperation with institutions in other countries. This is particularly relevant for European countries where carpentry training is currently non-existent or insufficient.

In such countries, the move towards a “European Qualifications Framework in Timber Construction” offers new training opportunities and excellent prospects for economic development.

Opportunities for exchange and project collaboration

Analysis

Like the general “European Qualifications Framework (EQF)”, the “EQF-Timber” could adopt the role of a meta-framework in this area. Among other things, this would provide each European country with the opportunity to determine the current situation regarding its national education system and make any potential improvements to vocational competence transmission with reference to the EQF-Timber.

Cooperation

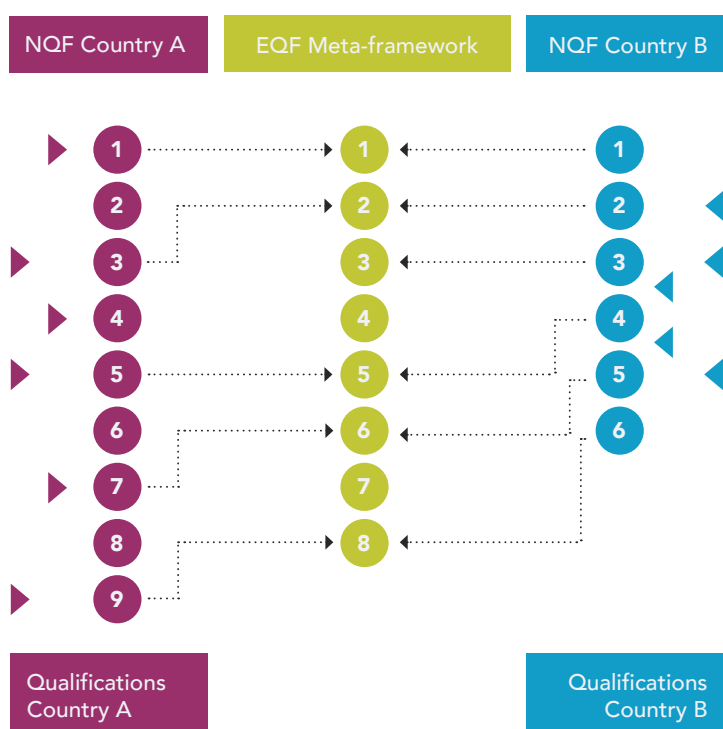
Overall, the outcomes of the EQF-Timber provide a variety of opportunities for involvement in bilateral and multilateral project cooperation initiatives. Tangible ideas regarding promising next steps for a follow-up project are already being formulated based on the current project outcomes.

Partners

Timber Construction Europe is interested in pursuing appropriate activities in close partnership and in detailed exchange with European timber construction companies, educational institutions and associations. This should enable highly practical approaches proving the EQF-Timber’s usefulness to be put into practice.

It will also be necessary to involve partners that are appropriate to the chosen project orientation. Timber Construction Europe will be contacting suitable partners throughout 2022, with a view to forming a consortium.

System for comparability of qualification standards (meta-framework)



Cooperation within a European VET network

Participation

As well as raising any specific questions and projects, interested individuals and organisations are urged to join the European vocational training network for timber construction. This provides opportunities for an exchange of expertise and assessment of specific project collaborations.

In order for long-term contact to be maintained, please specify any priorities and interests you may have in relation to vocational training in timber construction in addition to any specific requests.

By providing your contact details, you will enable us to reply to you immediately and also contact you at a later date if required.

Contact

Please email any queries to the following address:
info@timber-construction.eu,
Subject: “VET network”



The "Development of a European Qualifications Framework in Timber Construction (EQF-Timber)" Project Consortium



Partner organisations

Association Ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir du Tour de France

(France)

www.compagnons-du-devoir.com

Berner Fachhochschule Architektur, Holz und Bau / BFH-AHB

(Switzerland)

www.bfh.ch

Centre de Compétences Parachèvement Centres de Compétences

Génie Technique / Parachèvement

(Luxembourg)

www.cdc-gtb.lu

Fachhochschule Salzburg GmbH

(Austria)

www.fh-salzburg.ac.at

Bildungszentrum

Holzbau Baden-Württemberg

(Germany)

www.zimmererzentrum.de

Holzbau Schweiz

www.holzbau-schweiz.ch

Jokkmokk Log AB

(Sweden)

www.facebook.com/jokkmokkslog



Berner
Fachhochschule



CENTRE DE COMPÉTENCES
Parachèvement



FH Salzburg



holzbaus Schweiz



Jokkmokk
log
EST 1997

Contact details for further enquiries

If you have any questions regarding past projects or are interested in an ongoing partnership in projects within the field of vocational training in timber construction, please contact Timber Construction Europe.

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