

Pursuant to Article 95, item 3 of the Constitution of Montenegro, I hereby pass the following

Decree promulgating the Law on National Vocational Qualifications

I hereby promulgate the Law on **National Vocational Qualifications**, adopted by the 28th convocation of the Parliament of Montenegro at the first session of the First regular (spring) sitting in 2025, on 19th May 2025.

No: 009/25-990/2-01
Podgorica, 20th May 2025

The President of Montenegro,
Jakov Milatović, m.p.

Pursuant to Article 82 paragraph 1 item 2 and Article 91 paragraph 1 of the Constitution of Montenegro, the Parliament of Montenegro, 28th convocation, at the first session of the First regular (spring) sitting in 2025, on 19th May 2025, passed the following

LAW ON NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The Law was published in the "Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 51/2025 of 27th May 2025, and entered into force on 4th June 2025.

I. BASIC PROVISIONS

Subject Matter

Article 1

A national vocational qualification (hereinafter: vocational qualification) shall be acquired under the conditions, in the manner, and following the procedure prescribed by this Law.

Definition

Article 2

A vocational qualification is the work-related or vocational competence required for performing an occupation or specific tasks within an occupation.

A vocational qualification up to the level of higher education is based on the qualification standard and the occupational standard, while a vocational qualification in the field of higher education is based on a special training programme.

Acquisition

Article 3

A vocational qualification up to the level of higher education shall be acquired through:

- completion of a module when a publicly recognised educational programme is based on multiple occupational standards;
- assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences upon completion of an adult education programme, in accordance with the Examination catalogue;
- direct assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences, in accordance with the Examination catalogue;

The acquisition of a vocational qualification referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall not result in the attainment of an education level.

A vocational qualification in the field of higher education shall be acquired through the assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences upon completion of a special training programme, in accordance with the act of the higher education institution.

The vocational qualifications referred to in paragraph 1, items 2 and 3 of this Article shall be acquired in the manner and following the procedure prescribed by this Law and may be recognised in the process of acquiring an education level, in accordance with the educational programme.

Other qualifications shall be acquired in accordance with a separate regulation.

Micro-qualification and Key Competence

Article 4

A micro-qualification refers to the acquired knowledge, skills, and competences obtained by the learner based on one or more learning outcomes, in accordance with this Law, and shall be recognised in the process of acquiring a vocational qualification.

A key competence (in the field of information and communication technologies, foreign languages, etc.) relevant for performing tasks within an occupation shall be acquired in accordance with this Law and shall be recognised in the process of acquiring a vocational qualification.

Scope and Certifications

Article 5

A vocational qualification shall be determined within the scope of 6 to 119 MCTS.

A micro-qualification, or key competence, shall be determined within the scope of 1 to 5 MCTS.

Vocational qualifications referred to in Article 3 of this Law shall be certified by a public document – a certificate of vocational qualification (hereinafter: certificate).

A micro-qualification, or key competence, shall be certified by a public document – a certificate of acquired micro-qualification or key competence.

A part of an acquired vocational qualification shall be certified by a public document – a certificate of the acquired part of the vocational qualification.

Level of Education and Acquisition of Vocational Qualification

Article 6

Upon completion of all modules of a publicly recognised educational programme and passing the final examination prescribed for its completion, the corresponding qualification at a specific level of education shall be acquired.

If a publicly recognised educational programme is based on a single occupational standard, a vocational qualification cannot be acquired.

Use of Gender-Sensitive Language

Article 7

All masculine-gender terms used in this Law to refer to natural persons shall be understood to include the feminine gender.

Definitions

Article 8

The terms used in this Law shall have the following meanings:

- 1) **Occupation** is a set of jobs and tasks that are related and interconnected in terms of content, type, organisation, and technology, performed by one person who possesses the appropriate knowledge, skills, and competences;
- 2) **Occupational standard** is a document that defines the tasks within an occupation;
- 3) **Qualification standard** is a document that defines the learning outcomes for a given qualification and its credit value;
- 4) **Field of work** consists of several content-related occupations;
- 5) **Educational profile** is a more specific orientation within a field of work;
- 6) **Educational programme** is a programme according to which education and upbringing are carried out in accordance with specific regulations;
- 7) **Formal education** is an organised educational process implemented according to a publicly recognised educational programme or study programme (or part of it—module, learning unit, etc.), through which a qualification at a certain education level or one or more vocational qualifications is acquired;
- 8) **Non-formal education** refers to education where individuals have a clear intention to learn, and it has structured objectives, duration, and support, but it is not part of the formal system of upbringing and education;
- 9) **Adult education programmes** are programmes for acquiring specific knowledge, skills, and competences (programmes for vocational training, re-qualifications, further qualifications, professional development, specialisation, foreign languages, information technology, and other programmes of non-formal education);
- 10) **Specialised advanced training programme in higher education** is a specific adult education program accredited by a legal entity responsible for quality assurance in higher education in accordance with special legislation, designed for individuals who have previously completed a relevant study programme.
- 11) **Credit** represents the volume of a qualification and is defined as 25 hours of work required to achieve the learning outcomes specified by the qualification standard.

12) **Qualification** is the formal result of assessment and evaluation, awarded when a competent institution determines that an individual has achieved the prescribed learning outcomes in accordance with established standards.

13) **Qualifications framework** is a document outlining existing qualifications within a field of work, their classification by complexity levels, and the relationships between different qualifications.

14) **Licence** is an official document granting an institution or individual the right to practice a profession upon meeting established standards;

15) **Licensing** is the formal process of determining whether an institution or individual meets prescribed standards in accordance with the law;

16) **Examiner** is a licensed professional authorised to conduct assessments;

17) **Publicly recognised education** refers to education acquired through programmes either approved by the state administration body responsible for education (hereinafter: the Ministry), or accredited by the legal entity responsible for quality assurance in higher education under special legislation;

18) **Adult education provider** (hereinafter: education provider) means a legal or natural entity organising education and training in accordance with specific regulations;

19) **Competence** refers to the ability to apply knowledge and skills in routine and/or changing work situations;

20) **Skill** means the capacity to effectively perform activities based on acquired knowledge and experience;

21) **Classification of occupations** is a national document used for recording, collecting, processing, analysing, and reporting data required for monitoring labour market conditions and trends. It serves to classify jobs in official or administrative databases (records, registers, data collections) and in statistical processing;

22) **Module** is a programme and organisational unit of an educational, study, or training programme, consisting of a set of functionally related knowledge, skills, and attitudes — that is, competences — expressed through learning outcomes, and delivered through various forms of learning activities (theoretical instruction, exercises, practical training);

23) **Examination catalogue** is a document developed based on the qualification standard, in accordance with the methodology established by the National Council for Education, and serves as the basis for the process of acquiring a vocational qualification;

24) **Learner** is an adult person enrolled in education programmes;

25) **Candidate** is a person who has initiated the process of acquiring a vocational qualification or the recognition of a foreign certificate;

26) **Further qualification** refers to means further schooling or the innovation of knowledge within the framework of the same occupation and the level of education;

27) **Re-qualification** refers to education and training for a different occupation, at the same or a lower level of education, for the purpose of employment.

II. OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD AND EXAMINATION CATALOGUE

Occupational Standard

Article 9

A vocational qualification up to higher education level shall be based on an occupational standard developed following an established methodology, which is created and monitored by the Centre for Vocational Education (hereinafter: the Centre).

Examination Catalogue

Article 10

An examination catalogue shall be developed for each vocational qualification that the relevant sectoral qualifications framework designates as obtainable through a knowledge, skills, and competences assessment procedure.

The examination catalogues referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be adopted by the National Education Council (hereinafter: the Council), upon proposal by the Centre.

Examination catalogues shall be published on the official websites of both the Council and the Centre.

Content of the Examination Catalogue

Article 11

The examination catalogue shall contain the following: the title of the vocational qualification, eligibility requirements for candidates, examination content, difficulty level,

assessment methods and criteria, alignment with formal education programmes, credit value, educational profile and qualification level of Examination Commission members, material and technical requirements for knowledge, skills, and competences assessment and other relevant information on the vocational qualification.

Candidates with Special Educational Needs

Article 12

For a candidate – a person with special educational needs – the form and duration of the assessment, as well as the composition of the Examination Commission, shall be adjusted in accordance with special regulations.

III. EUROPASS DOCUMENTS

Europass

Article 13

Europass is a set of templates aimed at enhancing the transparency of qualifications and skills acquired through formal and non-formal education, promoting lifelong learning and mobility.

Europass is based on a common model established for the European Education Area.

Europass Documents

Article 14

The Europass consists of the following documents:

- 1) Europass Certificate Supplement;
- 2) Europass Diploma Supplement;
- 3) Europass Mobility;
- 4) Europass Language Passport; and
- 5) Europass Curriculum Vitae (CV).

The documents referred to in paragraph 1, items 1, 2, and 3 of this Article shall be completed by an educational institution or another competent institution.

The documents referred to in paragraph 1, items 4 and 5 of this Article shall be completed by the document holder.

The coordination regarding the implementation of Europass documents shall be carried out by the Ministry.

The content and format of the documents referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, as well as the manner of their completion, shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

IV. REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE FOR ACQUIRING VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS, MICRO-QUALIFICATIONS AND RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL CERTIFICATES

Requirements

Article 15

A person who is at least 15 years old, who has completed compulsory elementary education, and who meets other conditions prescribed by the examination catalogue may acquire a vocational qualification.

A person who is at least 15 years old may acquire a micro-qualification or a key competence.

The Right to Acquire a Vocational Qualification, Key Competence, or Micro-Qualification

Article 16

The right to acquire a vocational qualification, key competence, or micro-qualification shall be granted to citizens of Montenegro, as well as to citizens of other countries, foreigners seeking international protection, asylum seekers, foreigners under subsidiary protection, foreigners under temporary protection, and stateless persons.

Recognition of Foreign Educational Certificates or Credentials

Article 17

Recognition of foreign educational certificates or credentials means the formal acknowledgment of foreign certificates for acquired vocational qualifications or credentials for acquired micro-qualifications.

Recognition referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be carried out by the Centre in accordance with this Law, unless otherwise regulated by an international agreement.

The Centre shall issue a decision on the recognition of a foreign educational certificate or credential, based on the recommendation of a commission it appoints, by the law governing administrative procedures.

An administrative dispute may be initiated against the decision referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article.

Recognition of foreign educational certificates or credentials in the field of higher education shall be carried out by the higher education institution in accordance with its internal regulations.

Criteria for the Recognition of Foreign Educational Certificates and Credentials

Article 18

In the procedure for recognising a foreign educational certificate or credential, the following criteria shall be applied:

- 1) the validity and authenticity of the foreign educational certificate or credential;
- 2) the rights granted by the foreign educational certificate or credential in the country where it was issued, in terms of employment and further training within the certification or vocational education system; and
- 3) other circumstances relevant to the recognition of the foreign educational certificate or credential (e.g., the fact that the foreign educational certificate or credential has already been recognised in another country).

A more detailed manner and procedure for recognising foreign educational certificates or credentials shall be prescribed by the Ministry or the higher education institution.

Clause

Article 19

The content of the decision on the recognition of a foreign educational certificate or credential shall be written on the copy of the translation of the educational certificate or credential (recognition clause).

Information and Counseling

Article 20

The Ministry, the Centre, and the higher education institution shall inform and advise a person about the possibilities, conditions, methods, and procedures for acquiring vocational qualifications or micro-qualifications, as well as about the recognition of foreign educational certificates or credentials.

Within their competences, the Ministry, the Employment Agency of Montenegro (hereinafter: the Agency), the Centre, higher education institutions, the Examination Centre, the Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, representative trade union organisations, representative employers' associations, employment agencies, the Montenegro Chamber of Skilled Crafts and Entrepreneurship, and education providers shall monitor and analyse labour market needs and individual needs for occupational advancement, and inform and advise interested individuals or employers about the possibilities, conditions, methods, and procedures for acquiring vocational qualifications, recognising vocational qualifications or micro-qualifications, as well as recognising foreign educational certificates or credentials.

Education and Training

Article 21

Education and training of candidates for acquiring vocational qualifications or micro-qualifications shall be conducted by education providers licensed by the Ministry, in accordance with special regulations.

The licence referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be issued to a higher education institution if it has an accredited specific programme for acquiring vocational qualifications or micro-qualifications.

Training for Employment at a Specific Workplace

Article 22

Training of individuals for work at a specific workplace may also be conducted by a legal entity that does not hold a licence referred to in Article 21 of this Law.

An individual referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article may acquire a vocational qualification through direct assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences at the Examination Centre, in accordance with this Law.

Procedure Initiation

Article 23

The procedure for acquiring a vocational qualification, micro-qualification, or key competence, as well as for the recognition of a foreign educational certificate or credential, shall be initiated at the request of the candidate.

The application for the assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences to acquire a vocational qualification up to the level of higher education shall be submitted to the Examination Centre by the education provider.

Exceptionally, if there is no licensed education provider, the application for direct assessment shall be submitted to the Examination Centre.

In the case referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, the assessment shall be conducted by the appropriate legal entity operating in accordance with the law, which is proposed to the Examination Centre by the candidate.

The application for acquiring a vocational qualification in the field of higher education shall be submitted to the higher education institution.

The application for the assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences to acquire a micro-qualification or key competence shall be submitted to the education provider or the higher education institution.

The application for recognition of a foreign educational certificate or credential shall be submitted to the Centre or the higher education institution.

Examination Commission

Article 24

The assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences for obtaining a vocational qualification shall be conducted by the Examination Commission, which consists of examiners.

The Examination Commission shall be constituted by the Examination Centre from among licensed examiners listed on the official register.

Exceptionally, if there are no licensed examiners for the relevant vocational qualification, the Examination Commission shall consist of licensed examiners from a related field.

The list of examiners shall be compiled for each vocational qualification.

The Examination Centre shall determine the list of examiners based on a public call.

The manner and procedure for the assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences in the process of acquiring vocational qualifications, micro-qualifications, or key competences, as well as the composition, method of work, and other matters of importance for the work of the Examination Commission, shall be prescribed by the Ministry or the higher education institution.

Commission for Knowledge Assessment for Acquiring Micro-qualifications or Key Competences

Article 25

The assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences for acquiring a micro-qualification or key competence shall be conducted by a commission established by the education provider.

The commission referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall comprise:

- 1) for micro-qualifications – examiners who meet the programme requirements, where the education provider appoints two members and the Centre appoints one member;
- 2) For key competences - licensed examiners.

The assessment of knowledge, skills and competences for acquiring micro-qualifications or key competences in higher education shall be conducted in accordance with the higher education institution`s regulations.

Conflict of Interests

Article 26

An examiner serving as a member of the Examination Commission, or a member of the Commission referred to in Article 25(1) of this Law shall not be any person who, at the time of assessment:

- is the candidate's employer;
- is a co-owner or business partner of the candidate;
- is employed by the education provider (except when serving on the Commission for Assessment of Micro-qualifications);
- is related to the candidate by blood or marriage within three degrees of consanguinity.

Examiner's Work Licence

Article 27

An examiner's work licence shall be issued by the Ministry following the proposal of the Examination Centre.

An examiner may be granted a licence if they meet the following requirements:

- possess the educational profile and level of education prescribed by the examination catalogue;
- have at least five years of work experience in relevant positions within the occupational field;
- have completed a training programme for examiners.

An examiner's work licence cannot be issued to a person employed by the Ministry, the Centre, or the Examination Centre.

The examiner's work licence shall be issued for five years.

Training of candidates for examiners shall be conducted by the Examination Centre based on a public call.

The training programme for examiners shall be adopted by the Ministry upon the proposal of the Examination Centre.

Revocation of Examiner's Licence

Article 28

Should it be found that an examiner fails to conduct his/her duty in accordance with the Law and other regulations, the Ministry shall pass the Decision on revoking the examiner`s work licence even prior to the expiration of the licence validity period.

A justified proposal for revoking the examiner`s work licence may be submitted by a candidate or other interested natural or legal entity.

A more detailed manner and procedure for issuing and revoking an examiner`s work licence, as well as the form and content of the examiner`s work licence, shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

Place of Examination

Article 29

The examination for the assessment of knowledge, skills, and competences (hereinafter: the examination) for acquiring a vocational qualification, micro-qualification, or key competence shall be conducted at the premises of the education provider.

Notwithstanding paragraph 1 of this Article, the examination for acquiring a vocational qualification may also be conducted at the Examination Centre.

Assessment procedure

Article 30

The assessment of knowledge, skills and competences for acquiring a vocational qualification shall be conducted pursuant to the Examination Catalogue.

Issuance of Certificates

Article 31

A candidate who has successfully passed the examination for acquiring a vocational qualification shall be issued a certificate by the Examination Centre.

A candidate who has successfully passed the examination for acquiring a micro-qualification or key competence shall be issued a credential by the education provider or the higher education institution.

The form and content of the certificate or credential shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

V. PROTECTION OF A CANDIDATE`S RIGHTS

Objection

Article 32

A candidate acquiring a vocational qualification, micro-qualification, or key competence shall be entitled to file an objection to the examination results within three days from the date of result notification.

Objections regarding vocational qualification examination results shall be submitted to the Examination Centre, while objections concerning micro-qualification or key competence examination results shall be submitted to the education provider.

Notwithstanding paragraph 2 of this Article, objections related to vocational qualifications, micro-qualifications, or key competences in higher education shall be submitted to the higher education institution.

The Examination Centre, education provider, or higher education institution shall establish an objection committee to review and either uphold the original assessment results or conduct a complete re-evaluation of the candidate`s demonstrated knowledge, skills, and competences.

The objection committee for vocational qualifications or key competences up to higher education level shall be composed exclusively of licensed examiners, while the objective committee for micro-qualifications at this same level shall consist of two representatives appointed by the education provider and one representative designated by the Centre.

The Objection Committee for vocational qualifications, micro-qualifications, or key competences in higher education shall be constituted in accordance with the regulatory act of the relevant higher education institution.

No examiner or individual involved in the prior assessment may be appointed to the objection committee referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this Article.

The decision of the objection committee shall be final.

The law on administrative procedure shall not apply to the examination grading process, nor the objection procedure against examination results.

VI. FUNDING

Provision of Funds

Article 33

The development of occupational standards and the examination catalogue shall be financed from the budget of Montenegro.

Costs of the procedure

Article 34

The costs of the assessment procedure for acquiring a vocational qualification, micro-qualification, or key competence, as well as the issuance of the certificate or credential, shall be borne by the candidate.

The candidate shall also bear the fee for the costs incurred in the procedure for recognition of foreign educational certificates or credentials, which shall be determined in accordance with the law governing administrative fees.

The decision on the amount of actual costs referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be rendered by the Ministry.

VII. RECORDS

Types of Records

Article 35

The records kept under the procedure of acquiring vocational qualifications, micro-qualifications, or key competences, or when recognising foreign educational certificates or credentials shall be those of:

- 1) Occupational standards and qualification standards;
- 2) Examination catalogues;
- 3) Approved educational programmes and special adult education programmes;

- 4) Licensed education providers;
- 5) Examiners;
- 6) Registered candidates;
- 7) Recognised foreign educational certificates or credentials; and
- 8) Issued certificates or credentials.

The records referred to in paragraph 1, items 1 through 5 of this Article shall be kept by the Ministry.

The records referred to in paragraph 1, items 6 and 8 of this Article shall be kept by the Examination Centre, the higher education institution, or the education provider.

The records referred to in paragraph 1, item 7 of this Article shall be kept by the Centre or the higher education institution.

The data from the records referred to in paragraph 1, items 7 and 8 of this Article shall be entered into the register maintained by the Ministry.

A more detailed content and manner of keeping the records referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, as well as the content and manner of maintaining the register referred to in paragraph 5 of this Article, shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

VIII. SUPERVISION

Supervision over the Implementation of the Law

Article 36

The Ministry shall supervise the implementation of this Law.

Inspection Supervision

Article 37

Inspection supervision over the procedures for acquiring vocational qualifications, micro-qualifications, or key competences, as well as the procedure for recognition of foreign educational certificates or credentials, shall be carried out by the Education Inspection in accordance with the law.

IX. PENAL PROVISIONS

Penalties for Violations

Article 38

A legal entity shall be fined from 1,000 to 5,000 euros for a violation if it establishes an Examination Commission that is not composed of licensed examiners from the official list of examiners (Article 24).

For the violation referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the person responsible within the legal entity shall also be fined from 50 to 500 euros.

X. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Adoption of Secondary Legislation

Article 39

Secondary legislation for the implementation of this Law shall be harmonised with this Law within six months of its entry into force.

Until the adoption of regulations under paragraph 1 of this Article, the regulations in force before this Law enters into force shall apply, provided they are not in conflict with this Law.

Previously issued certificates and other documents

Article 40

Certificates and other documents obtained or recognised under previous regulations shall be recognised in accordance with this Law.

Recognition of certificates for acquired key competences

Article 41

Certificates for acquired key competences issued before the entry into force of this Law shall be recognised in accordance with this Law.

Ongoing Procedures

Article 42

Procedures for the assessment leading to the acquisition of a vocational qualification, issuance of a certificate, or recognition of a foreign certificate, initiated before the entry into force of this Law, shall be completed in accordance with the regulations under which they were initiated.

Repeal of Existing Legislation

Article 43

Upon the entry into force of this Law, the Law on National Vocational Qualifications ("Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 80/08, 14/09, and 40/16) shall cease to be valid.

Entry into Force

Article 44

This Law shall enter into force on the eighth day following its publication in the "Official Gazette of Montenegro".

Reference No.: 26-1/25-13/4

EPA - Registered Parliamentary Act: No.: 481 XXVIII

Podgorica, 19th May 2025

The Parliament of Montenegro
28th Convocation

President of the Parliament,
Andrija Mandić, m.p.