



Automatic Recognition of Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area

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Outline

1. Conceptual basis for development of recognition policies in Europe: from Lisbon recognition Convention to a system level automatic recognition
2. Recognition of higher education qualifications for professional purpose (labour market)

Recognition of higher education qualifications

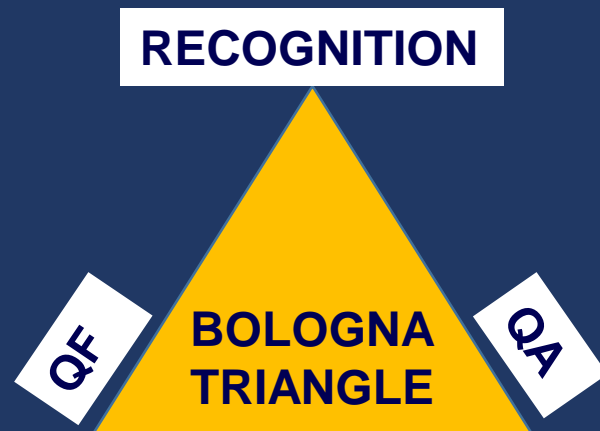
- Bologna process (1999) - EHEA
- Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region - Lisbon Recognition Convention - LRC (1999)

Ratifications:

- Croatia, Macedonia (2002),
- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia (2004)

Recognition of higher education qualifications in European Higher Education Area

- The Convention is designed to streamline the legal framework at European level. It aims to facilitate the recognition of qualifications. It provides that requests should be assessed in a fair manner and within a reasonable time. The recognition can only be refused if the qualification is substantially different from that of the host country.
- Recognition of qualifications is one of the three key commitments of the Bologna Process (together with QF, QA).



Recognition vs admission

There has been considerable conceptual confusion, even among those who may have responsibility for taking decisions, on the difference between recognition and admission. Thus the distinction between a decision on whether or not to admit a student to a particular programme may be conflated with the decision about whether or not a particular qualification is recognised.

Bologna Implementation report, 2018

Bucharest Communiqué (2012)

We are determined to remove outstanding obstacles hindering effective and proper recognition and are willing to work together towards the automatic recognition of comparable academic degrees, building on the tools of the Bologna framework, as a long-term goal of the EHEA.

Yerevan Communiqué (2015)

We commit to review national legislations with a view to fully complying with the Lisbon Recognition Convention...and to ensure that qualifications from other EHEA countries are automatically recognized at the same level as relevant domestic qualifications.

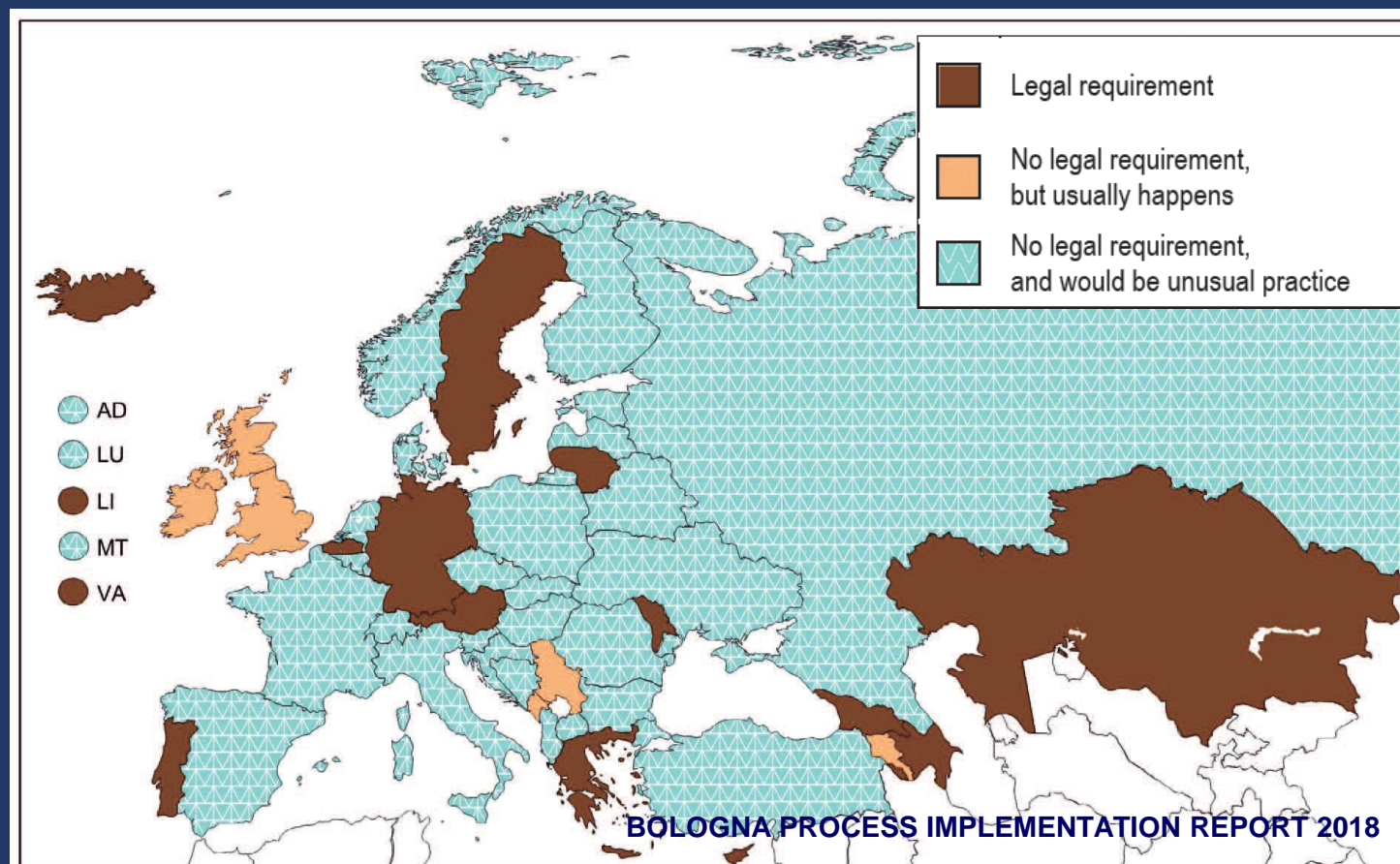
Paris Communiqué (2018)

In order to further develop mobility and recognition across the EHEA, we will work to ensure that comparable HE qualifications obtained in one EHEA country are automatically recognised on the same basis in the others, for the purpose of accessing further studies and the labour market.

To this end we renew our commitment to ensure full implementation of ECTS, following the guidelines laid down in the 2015 ECTS Users' guide. We will work to implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

ESG (2015) – STANDARD & GUIDELINES 1.4

Fair recognition of HE qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the LRC; cooperation with other institutions, QAAs and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.



Automatic recognition

Automatic recognition of a degree leads to the automatic right of an applicant holding a qualification of a certain level to be considered for entry to a programme of further study in the next level in any other EHEA country – access.

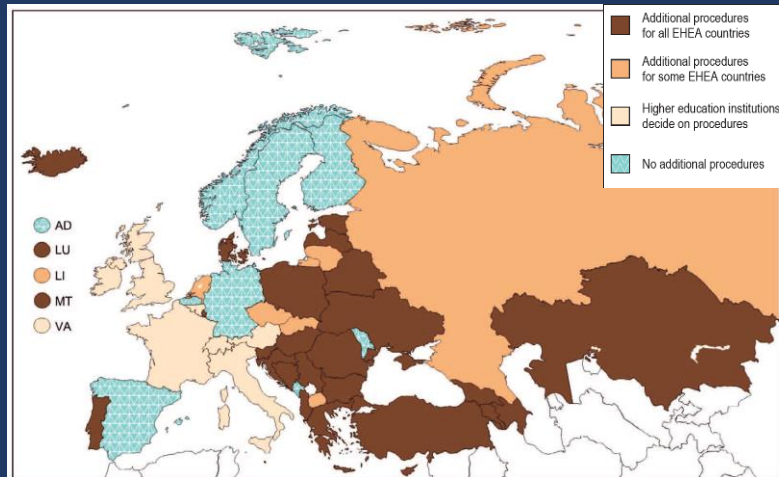
EHEA Pathfinder Group on Automatic Recognition, 2014

A Bachelor is a Bachelor

A Master is a Master

BOLOGNA PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2018

„With regard to the goal of securing more 'automatic recognition' – understood as system-level recognition for the purposes of further academic study – considerable effort is still required to agree on a common understanding of the concept, and to make it a reality.”



Additional procedures to recognise the level of qualifications from other EHEA countries - to verify whether, for example, a first-cycle degree qualification from one European country will be recognised as a first-cycle degree in the destination country

Automatic recognition – SCORECARD INDICATOR

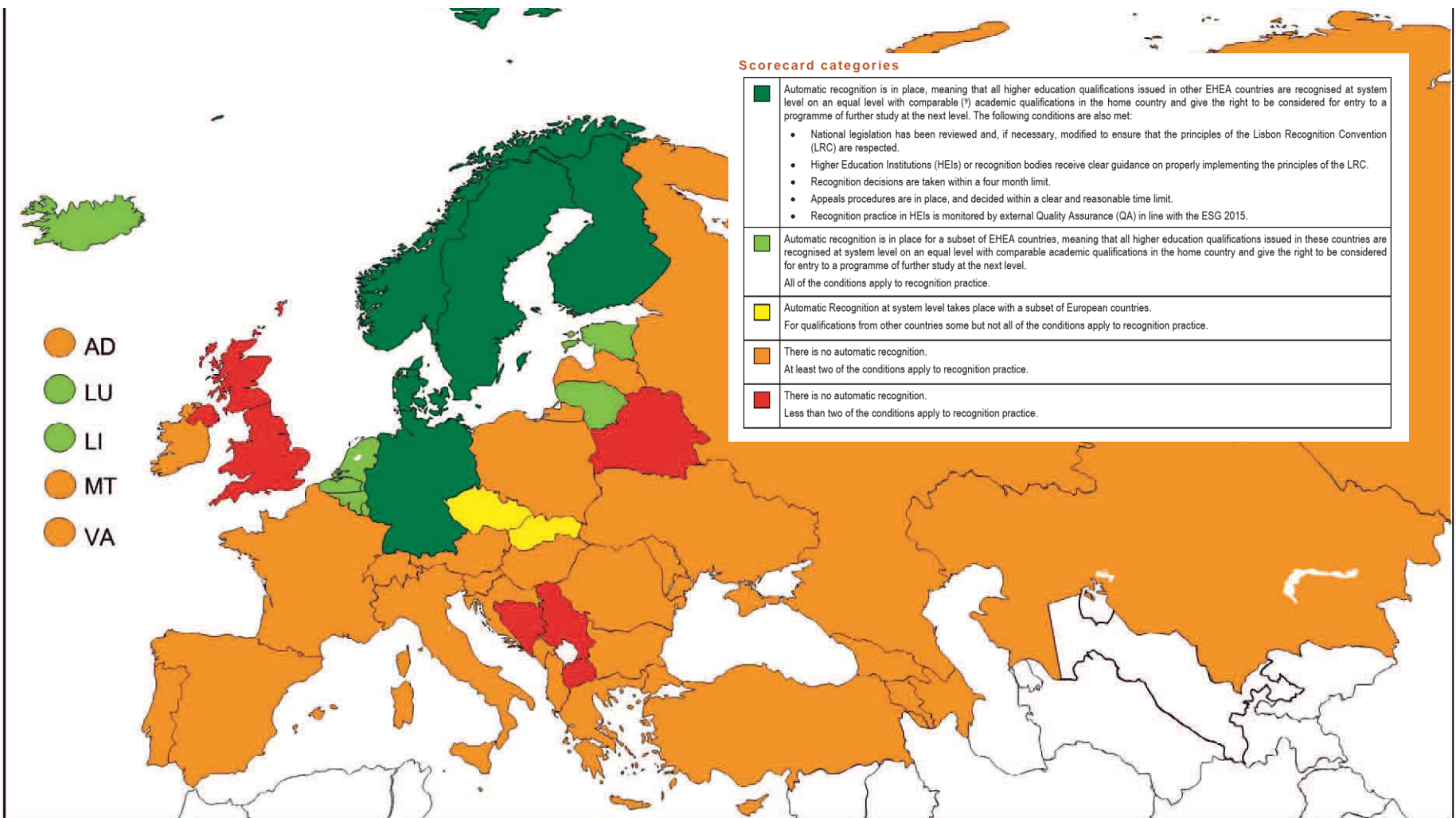
Automatic recognition is in place, meaning that all higher education qualifications issued in other EHEA countries are recognised at system level on an equal level with comparable academic qualifications in the home country and give the right to be considered for entry to a programme of further study at the next level.

The following conditions are also met:

1. National legislation has been reviewed and, if necessary, modified to ensure that the principles of the LRC are respected
2. HEIs or recognition bodies receive clear guidance on properly implementing the principles of the LRC
3. Recognition decisions are taken within a four month limit.
4. Appeals procedures are in place, and decided within a clear and reasonable time limit.
5. Recognition practice in HEIs is monitored by external Quality Assurance (QA) in line with the ESG 2015.

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Figure 4.17: System level (automatic) recognition for academic purposes



Automatic recognition based on trust

The automatic recognition can be achieved only if quality assurance procedures are aligned with the **ESG** and **NQFs** referenced to the EQF and the QF – EHEA.

- The automatic recognition is possible only with full and trustful implementation of the ESGs and the NQFs referenced and self-certificated to the European meta-frameworks, complying with the common quality standards and common referencing criteria. Automatic recognition is possible only if we all have good and functioning quality assurance systems that we can trust.
- Converging towards common principles could lead towards a full implementation of NQFs and mutual trust based on common approach to quality assurance and eventually towards automatic recognition.
- If there is a clear set of criteria and standards as well as a transparent procedure put in place for assessing compliance with those criteria and standards, national qualifications should be put at the NQFs levels and respectively referenced and self-certified to the meta frameworks.

Only then, an automatism in recognition of foreign qualifications becomes a realistic goal.

Recognition of higher education qualifications in European Higher Education Area (to sum up)

- Within the framework of the Bologna process and the development of recognition policies the participating countries aim to dismantle administrative and legal obstacles to mobility and to work towards automatic recognition of qualification levels.
- The scope of the Bologna policy framework covers academic recognition and recognition for employment in the non regulated labour market only, whereas national legislations regulate access to the national labour markets.
- Automatic system level recognition can only be achieved if there is a mutual trust in the quality assurance systems that include a full implementation of the qualifications frameworks.
- It is under the competence of HEIs to make informed and evidence-based decisions on admission to further studying at the respective HEI.

Recognition of professional qualifications

The scope of the Bologna policy framework covers academic recognition and recognition for employment in the non regulated labour market only, whereas national legislations regulate access to the national labour markets.

In the EU

Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005, on the recognition of professional qualifications as amended by the Directive 2013/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on the recognition of professional qualifications;

+ a set of sectoral laws and bylaws to transpone the Directive into national legislation !

Regulated labour markets

Sectoral legislation (e.g. Law on Teachers) sets requirements for:

- the higher education qualification (study programmes);
 - the professional experience (internship, work placement);
 - the professional qualifications (professional exams)
- ... in order to allow for access to a profession (licence).

Such requirements can be prescribed in terms of:

- level and type of a study programme (e.g. graduate degree in mathematics) or
- Concrete learning content / learning outcomes or
- workload in terms of years of study / number of hours / ECTS or
- specific training requirements (duration and/or content of internship).

Regulated labour markets

EU Directive

*Freedom of movement and the mutual recognition of the evidence of formal qualifications of doctors, nurses responsible for general care, dental practitioners, veterinary surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and architects should be based on the fundamental principle of **automatic** recognition of the evidence of formal qualifications on the basis of coordinated minimum conditions for training.*

Bologna Process

Automatic recognition of a degree should lead to the automatic right of an applicant holding a qualification of a certain level **to be considered for entry to a programme of further study in the next level in any other EHEA-country.**

Report by the Pathfinder Group on Automatic Recognition (2012)

Recognition of professional qualifications (to sum up)

- Within the framework of the EU policies the EU aims to dismantle administrative and legal obstacles to labour mobility and to free movement of workers between the EU Member States (transnationally).
- The Professional Qualifications Directive covers recognition of professional qualifications for the purpose of access to a profession on the regulated labour market.
- The labour market is being regulated by setting requirements both on education qualifications and training - professional experience (professional qualifications).

Renewed role of ENIC/NARICs

- With the automatic recognition, the work of the ENIC/NARIC centres becomes much more demanding and complex. Bureaucratic procedures are replaced with quality interpretations of the rights a person has gained in one country and wants to transfer to another.
- ENIC/NARIC centres should enhance their role in providing support to the HEIs in order to allow for automatic system level recognition and ensure consistency in approach and equal treatment at different HEIs.
- This requires a thorough understanding of qualifications systems (not only higher education) and competent staff understanding related policies within the Bologna Process.

*Internationalisation
of higher education
-building open and
inclusive societies,
founded on
democratic values
and human rights*

