

Automatic recognition

Automatic recognition of foreign degrees in Flanders

Peer-Learning Seminar Role of NQFs & QA in Recognition

11 December 2013, Trakošćan (Croatia)



Ministry of Science, Education and Sports



Introduction



- ✚ Legal frameworks
- ✚ Automatic recognition in Flanders
- ✚ Added value EQAR
- ✚ Q & A

Introduction – “recognition”

✚ recognition definition

↗ *“A formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the value of a foreign educational qualification with a view to access to educational and/or employment activities.” (LRC)*

✚ **academic** recognition

- ↗ qualifications giving access to higher education
- ↗ periods of study
- ↗ higher education qualifications

✚ **professional** recognition

- ↗ access to regulated professions
- ↗ European Directive 2005/36
- ↗ European Economic Area (EEA)

Legal frameworks



- ✿ Lisbon Recognition Convention 1997
- ✿ Bologna Process 1999 → EHEA 2010
- ✿ EU Directive 2005/36
- ✿ EQF for LLL 2008
- ✿ National laws and regulations

Lisbon Recognition Convention

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning
Higher Education in the European Region



The screenshot shows the official page for the Lisbon Recognition Convention on the Council of Europe Treaty Office website. The header features the Council of Europe logo and the text 'Council of Europe' and 'Treaty Office'. The main content area is titled 'Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region' with 'CETS No.: 165' and 'Special conditions of opening for signature'. It is divided into two columns: 'Opening for signature' and 'Entry into force'. The 'Opening for signature' column lists the place (Lisbon) and date (11/4/1997). The 'Entry into force' column lists the conditions (5 Ratifications including 3 member States of the Council of Europe and/or the UNESCO Europe Region) and the date (1/2/1999). Below these columns is a section titled 'What do you want to know about this treaty ?' with a list of links: 'Chart of signatures and ratifications', 'List of declarations, reservations and other communications', 'Full text in Html Format', 'Full text in Word Format', 'Summary', and 'Explanatory Report'. At the bottom, it states 'Source : Treaty Office on <http://conventions.coe.int>'.

Council of Europe Treaty Office

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region
CETS No.: 165
Special conditions of opening for signature

Opening for signature
Place: Lisbon
Date : 11/4/1997

Entry into force
Conditions: 5 Ratifications including 3 member States of the Council of Europe and/or the UNESCO Europe Region.
Date : 1/2/1999

What do you want to know about this treaty ?

- ▶ Chart of signatures and ratifications
- ▶ List of declarations, reservations and other communications
- ▶ Full text in Html Format
- ▶ Full text in Word Format
- ▶ Summary
- ▶ Explanatory Report

Source : Treaty Office on <http://conventions.coe.int>

Opening for signature 11 April 1997
Entered into force 1 February 1999

Concept of Substantial Difference



*foreign qualifications shall be recognized **unless** there is a substantial difference between the foreign qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification of the host country*



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Recognition

If you have questions concerning the recognition of your qualifications, please contact the national information centre in the country concerned. You will find a complete list of national information centres on the [ENIC-NARIC website](#).

The purpose of recognition is to make it possible for learners to use their qualifications from one education system in another education system (or country) without losing the real value of those qualifications.

The main international legal text that aims to further the fair recognition of qualifications is the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region ([Lisbon Recognition Convention](#)).

Like any legal text, the Convention must be put into practice. The recognition of qualifications falls within the competence of each country. In most cases, this means that higher education institutions are responsible for the recognition of qualifications for the purpose of further study whereas professional bodies or employers are responsible for recognition for the purposes of the labour market.

The main international legal text that aims to further the fair recognition of qualifications is the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention).

RECOGNITION

8. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

Green (5)

The Lisbon Recognition Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention. The later Supplementary Documents⁹ have been adopted in appropriate legislation and applied in practice, so that the five main principles are fulfilled and:

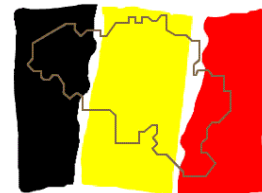
- applicants have a right to fair assessment,
- there is recognition if no substantial differences can be proven,



**Ratification and national implementation of the LRC
=
crucial indicator implementation Bologna Process**

Light green (4)	complies with the Convention but further amendments of legislation are needed to apply the principles of the Supplementary Documents ⁹ in practice.
Yellow (3)	The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with three or four of the five abovementioned principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
Orange (2)	The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with one or two of the five abovementioned principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.
Red (1)	<p>The Convention has been ratified but appropriate legislation has NOT been reviewed against the legal framework of the Lisbon Convention or the Supplementary Documents⁹.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>The Convention has not been ratified</p>

LRC & Belgium



- ✿ 1 February 1999: LRC entered into force
- ✿ 22 July 2009: Belgium ratified RC
- ✿ 1 Sept 2009: LRC entered into force in Belgium
- ✿ How?
 - ↗ 7 March 2005: *signature* Belgium
 - ↗ 15 Dec 2006: ratification Flemish Community
 - ↗ 19 July 2007: ratification French Community
 - ↗ 10 July 2008: ratification Federal Government
 - ↗ 25 May 2009: ratification German Community
 - ↗ 22 July 2009: *ratification* Belgium
- ✿ 1 July 2011: adaptation Flemish Law 4 April 2003
- ✿ 14 June 2013: 2 Flemish Governmental Decisions
 - ↗ all levels of education
 - ↗ all countries



Bologna Process

✿ Convergences at macro level & structures

- ↗ ratification LRC
- ↗ degree structure,
- ↗ ECTS,
- ↗ Diploma Supplement,
- ↗ Quality Assurance, ...




✿ Mutual trust at micro level: insufficient

- ↗ differences & substantial differences
- ↗ individual specific qualifications


New initiatives



Bucharest Communiqué

 ... we must make further efforts to consolidate and build on progress

QA is essential for building trust and to reinforce the attractiveness EHEA

 Recommendation use of qualifications frameworks in the recognition of foreign qualifications (CoE & UNESCO)

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Legal Framework & Background

[The Lisbon Recognition Convention](#) (The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region), 1997 (ETS No. 165)

- o [Explanatory Report to the Lisbon Convention](#)
- o [List of Ratifying States](#)

Documents adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee

- o [Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education](#) [PDF], June 2007
 - [\(version française\)](#) [PDF]
- o [The Diploma Supplement](#) [PDF], June 2007
 - [\(version française\)](#) [PDF]
- o [Joint ENIC/NARIC Charter of Activities and Services](#) [PDF], June 2004

Events & Activities

Other Regions

- o [Africa](#)
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- o [Latin America and the Caribbean](#)
- o [Mediterranean Region](#)

International Organizations

- o [Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications](#) [PDF], June 2013
 - [\(version française\)](#) [PDF]
 - [Explanatory Memorandum](#)
 - [\(version française\)](#) [PDF]

New initiatives & Flanders



- ✚ Pathfinder Group on Automatic Recognition

- ✚ Benelux initiative

- ✚ Automatic recognition

The Netherlands and Flanders

- ↗ update NVAO Treaty

- ✚ new legal framework automatic recognition in Flanders



Automatic recognition HE qualifications



The Netherlands & Flanders



✚ NVAO treaty Flanders & The Netherlands

➤ direct access to Master and Doctorate

✚ Flemish Governmental Decision

17 September 2010

➤ Bachelor, Master & Doctor of

The Netherlands are automatically declared equal with the Flemish ones

✚ NVAO Treaty update 2013

➤ Ba = Ba & Ma = Ma



Netherlands		Flanders
Bachelor	↔	Bachelor
bacheloropleiding in het hoger beroepsonderwijs		professioneel gerichte bacheloropleiding
bacheloropleiding in het wetenschappelijk onderwijs		academisch gerichte bacheloropleiding
Master	↔	Master
masteropleiding in het hoger beroepsonderwijs		masteropleiding
masteropleiding in het wetenschappelijk		masteropleiding

	Netherlands		Flanders
F	<i>kunstonderwijs in het hoger onderwijs</i>		
i	Bachelor	↔	Bachelor
n	bacheloropleiding		professioneel gerichte bacheloropleiding
e			academisch gerichte bacheloropleiding
A			
r	Master	↔	Master
t	masteropleiding		masteropleiding



Legal framework Flanders



Article 87 Law 4 April 2003

- ↗ completely replaced by Law 10 July 2013
- ↗ creation legal framework auto recognition

Goal: creation win-win situation

- ↗ individuals & recognition body
 - no academic recognition application & procedure anymore
- ↗ individuals
 - before starting to study: it will be recognized
 - no time wasted: direct access to labour market

Legal framework Flanders



✚ Goal: creation win-win situation

⚡ recognition body

- no burden of proof of possible substantial difference
- no time wasted: (easy cases) auto recognized
- focus on tough cases
- tackling fraud

⚡ HEIs are still autonomous regarding admission (not access)

Two ways of automatic recognition

2

⊕ **Level recognition** (*“niveaugelijkwaardigheid”*)

general

- ↗ foreign qualification declared equal to
- ↗ Associate degree, Bachelor, Master or Doctor



⊕ **Full recognition** (*“volledige gelijkwaardigheid”*)

specific

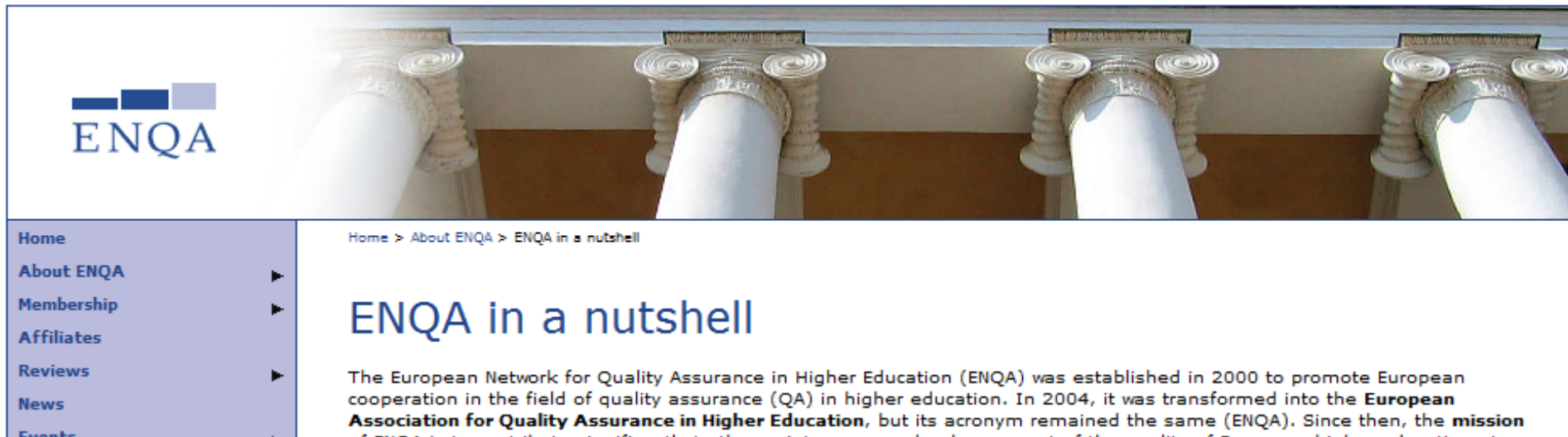
- ↗ foreign qualification is declared equal to
- ↗ e.g. Master in Mathematics

Check list level recognition



- ✓ Foreign QA system  Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance EHEA
 - ✓ + proof it guarantees the achievement of the LO
- ✓ HE **programme** structure  EHEA structure
 - ✓ compatible & integrated in NQF
- ✓ NQF  overarching framework for Q in EHEA
 - ✓ well-matched
 - ✓ internationally verified
 - ✓ Bergen conference 2005 of European Ministers responsible for HE

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance EHEA



European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was established in 2000 to promote European cooperation in the field of quality assurance (QA) in higher education. In 2004, it was transformed into the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

<http://www.enqa.eu/>₂₀

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ENQA and the Bologna
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Main Documents

The main ENQA documents are listed and accessible here.

[ENQA Annual report 2012 \(pdf\)](#)

[ENQA Work plan 2013 \(pdf\)](#)

[ENQA Statutes \(pdf\)](#)

[ENQA Strategic Plan 2011-2015 \(pdf\)](#)

[Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(pdf\)](#)

[Guidance for Agencies](#)

[Guidelines for external](#)

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Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance
in the European Higher Education Area



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Framework of Qualifications in the Europe and North America Region

- [Overarching Framework for Qualifications in the EHEA](#) [PDF],
adopted at the Bergen Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education,
19-20 May 2005
- [A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area](#) [PDF]
Report of the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks,
February 2005

National Frameworks

in Europe

Within the Bologna Process — whose aim it is to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010 —, participating countries have committed to elaborating national qualifications frameworks by 2010 and to launch this work by 2007. Countries have been invited to carry out self-certification exercises to verify the compatibility with the overarching framework of qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. As these self-certification exercises are completed, the self-certification reports will be published here.

Self-certification reports

- Belgium: [Flemish Community](#), February 2009, [PDF]

Events & Activities

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International Organizations

Bologna Process - *Dublin Descriptors*



	Outcomes	ECTS Credits
Third cycle qualification	<p>Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field; • have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity; • have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication; • are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas; • can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise; • can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society. 	Not specified

in Europe

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Self-certification reports

- Belgium: [Flemish Community](#), February 2009, [PDF]
- [Denmark](#), 2009, [PDF]
- Germany, September 2008, [PDF], [\[English\]](#) [\[German\]](#)
- [Ireland](#), November 2006, [PDF]
- [Lithuania](#), 2012 [PDF]
- [Netherlands](#), February 2009, [PDF]
- [Portugal](#), May 2011, [PDF]
- [Romania](#), November 2011, [PDF]
- United Kingdom
 - [England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#), November 2008 [PDF]
 - [Scotland](#), December 2006 [PDF]

Check list specific recognition

- ✓ e.g. Master of Science in Mathematics
- ✓ All above mentioned conditions
- ✓ + comparison LO of the programmes

http://nvaao.com/learning_outcomes



... the so-called Dublin descriptors.

These are essential to identify the level of a programme, e.g. Bachelor or Master's level.

Next to these, subject-specific learning outcomes are defined.

Added value



- ✚ European Quality Assurance Register for HE
- ✚ Listing QAA that substantially comply with a common set of principles for quality assurance in Europe



European Quality Assurance Register for HE

www.eqar.eu



European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education

About ☐

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FAQ ☐

In most European countries, higher education institutions or study programmes are subject to regular external review by a quality assurance agency. The **European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)** is a [register of such agencies](#), listing those that substantially comply with a common set of principles for quality assurance in Europe. These principles are laid down in the [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance](#). The register is web-based and freely accessible for everyone. [Read more...](#)



[Register of QA Agencies](#)

//// News

7 May 2013: Two Agencies admitted to Register



At its meeting in Berlin on 2/3 May 2013, the Register Committee renewed the registration of the **National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA)** and admitted the **European Council on Chiropractic Education (ECCE)** to the Register.

Information for:

- Institutions
- QA agencies
- Students
- Employers
- Governments
- Press and media

Added value EQAR

- ✓ Programme leading to
 - Associate degree
 - Bachelor
 - Master
- ✓ accredited by accreditation organisation
- ✓ accreditation organisation listed in EQAR



⊕ Flanders declares these degrees

↗ automatically

↗ in general or specific

↗ equal to

✗ Associated Degree

✗ Bachelor

✗ Master



erwin.malfroy@ond.vlaanderen.be



Department
of Education and Training
HIGHER EDUCATION