



# **Lisbon Recognition Convention and Subsidiary Documents – Future Developments**

Nacionalni posvet v visokem šolstvu: Priznavanje izobraževanja

Brdo pri Kranju

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## Convention

- **Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region**  
(The Lisbon Convention), 1997 - *Council of Europe and UNESCO*
- 53 ratifications/accessions



## Some key concepts

- Applicants are entitled to a fair recognition of their qualifications
- Reasonable time limit
- Transparent, coherent and reliable procedures
- Right to appeal
- Recognition unless substantial differences can be shown
- Importance of information
- Recognition information centres (national ENIC)
- Implementation mechanisms



# Subsidiary documents

- Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (revised 2010)
- Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications (2013)
- Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (revised 2007)
- Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004)
- Recommendations on International Access Qualifications (1999)



**Revised Recommendation on  
Criteria and Procedures for the  
Assessment of Foreign  
Qualifications (adopted in 2010)**



# General principles

- Holders of foreign qualifications shall have adequate access, upon request, to an assessment of their qualifications
- Procedures and criteria should be transparent, coherent and reliable, periodically reviewed
- In case where the recognition decision is different from the recognition requested by the applicant, the competent recognition authority should inform the applicant of the reason for the decision
- Where learning outcomes are clearly documented, assessment should take these into consideration



# Assessment procedures (sections)

- **Information to applicant**
  - Standardised information on the procedures and criteria, automatically should be given to all applicants
- **Information on the qualification for which recognition is sought**
  - The responsibility for providing information on the qualification is shared by applicants, HEIs and competent authorities
- **Fees**
- **Translation**
- **Verification of the authenticity of documents**
- **Time**
- **Right to appeal**





# Assessment criteria (sections)

## Status of the institution

## Assessment of individual qualifications

- **Assessment of learning outcomes**
  - Learning outcomes – focus attention on what is to be learnt and what is actually learnt rather than the process of learning
  - It is important to know what an holder of qualification can do with the qualification
  - Generic learning outcomes (NQF)
  - Specific learning outcomes (profile description)
  
- **The outcome of the assessment**





# Recommendation and national regulations

## National legal acts and internal regulations

- The international and national legal frameworks should applied in a flexible way with a view to making recognition possible. In cases where existing national laws conflict with the Recommendation, it is encouraged carefully to consider whether national laws may be amended.



**Criteria and Procedure – good,  
not so good and unacceptable  
practice**



## Criteria and procedure – good and not so good or unacceptable practice (analysis of national action plans)

- **GOOD PRACTICE**

- National legislation has been adopted or amended on the basis of principles laid down in the LRC and its subsidiary texts

- **NOT SO GOOD OR UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE**

- National legislation is not amended after ratification of the LRC. National legislation uses outdated terminology linked to such concepts and approaches in recognition which the LRC aims to abolish (*nostrification, equivalency*)



**Criteria and procedure – good and not so good or unacceptable practice (analysis of national action plans)**

- **GOOD PRACTICE**

- If necessary, authenticity of credentials is verified through the correspondence with the country of origin

- **NOT SO GOOD OR UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE**

- Requesting that all documents have *apostille*
- (requesting that an applicant have to receive and bring a confirmation issued by the authorities of country of origin)



**Criteria and procedure – good and not so good or unacceptable practice (analysis of national action plans)**

- **GOOD PRACTICE**

- Acknowledge differences between educational systems and programmes
- Moving away from seeking full comparability of the foreign qualification – towards comparing only these aspects relevant to the rights and functions

- **NOT SO GOOD OR UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE**

- Seek for full comparability of programme contents
- Using programme duration and content details as main criteria for recognition



**Criteria and procedure – good and not so good or unacceptable practice (analysis of national action plans)**

- **GOOD PRACTICE**

- Whenever possible, basis recognition on comparison of learning outcomes and competences

- **NOT SO GOOD OR UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE**

- Assessment involves detailed comparison of curricula and material studied



**Criteria and procedure – good and not so good or unacceptable practice (analysis of national action plans)**

- **GOOD PRACTICE**

- Countries monitor observation of the principles of the LRC and its subsidiary texts are followed by HEIs

- **NOT SO GOOD OR UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE**

- Countries consider that state cannot influence or monitor recognition procedures at HEIs due to institutional autonomy





**Recommendation on the Use of  
Qualifications Frameworks in the  
Recognition of Foreign  
Qualifications (adopted in 2013)**



## Scope and General Considerations

- Focuses on the use of QFs as important information and transparency tools
- QFs can also facilitate the recognition of prior learning, since QFs describe qualifications in terms of learning outcomes
- QFs may be helpful in establishing similarities between foreign and national qualifications



# Recommendations

- QFs should be used while considering the five key components in recognition:
  - Level
    - If a NQF has been self-certified or referenced, there is usually no need to investigate the level of qualifications further
    - When level discrepancies occur, the formal rights should be taken into account
  - Learning outcomes
  - Quality
  - Workload
  - Profile



# Future Developments

- **Promoting fair recognition**
- **Full implementation of LRC and subsidiary texts at national level**
- **Revision of Recommendation on Recognition of joint Degrees**
- **Oversee the implementation of LRC (monitoring)**
- **Global dimension and cooperation**



# Fair recognition

- **Judge only value of qualification, not external factors**
- **Less attention to formal structures (inputs)**
- **Less administrative obstacles**
- **No detailed comparison of curricula**
- **More emphasis on learning outcomes: what a person knows and is able to do (knowledge, skills and competence)**
- **Use of qualifications framework in comparison**
- **Recognition of formal rights (what a person can do with the qualification in home country). Recognition of a qualification is a recognition of a function.**



# PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

- **European Area of Recognition Manual**
  - Practical guidelines for fair recognition
- **The European Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions (EAR HEI)**
  - Practical guidelines for credential evaluators and admission officers to provide fair and flexible recognition of foreign degrees and studies abroad



# EAR HEI

- **Key areas**

- The five elements of a qualifications
- Practical guide on how to implement LRC and subsidiary texts at institutional level
- Assessment criteria
- Institutional recognition practices
- Information sources and tools
- Specific types of qualifications (ie TNE; JD)
- Credit transfer in context of student mobility





**Thank you!**