

Commission Information Points on automatic recognition

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Towards automatic recognition

A Recap

- The “academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study” is one of the explicit aims of European cooperation in education, as defined by Article 165 TFEU.
- The implementation of the Council Recommendation is an essential building block of the European Education Area.
- It is crucial for enabling and increasing mobility of learners in all educational fields and for making the new and reinforced Erasmus+ programme 2021-27 a success.
- Further included in Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards achieving the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030).
- It is highlighted as a priority area for European cooperation in education and training during the first cycle (2021-2025): *“Strengthening automatic mutual recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad for the purpose of mobility and further learning, while ensuring that quality assurance mechanisms provide a strong basis for public trust for further learning and safeguard the autonomy of higher education institutions. Automatic recognition of joint transnational activities and the recognition and portability of short courses, where appropriate, should be developed”*

What is 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 the labour market or a programme of further study in the next level in any other EHEA-country (access)" - 2008 EHEA pathfinder group on AR

Automatic recognition means that there are no separate recognition procedures in place for holders of foreign qualifications from EU Member States to access further learning. The only procedure should be to check that the qualification is genuine and classified at the right level

Right to access ≠
(always)
admission

Recognition of
foreign
qualifications
from 3rd
countries is
subject to LRC

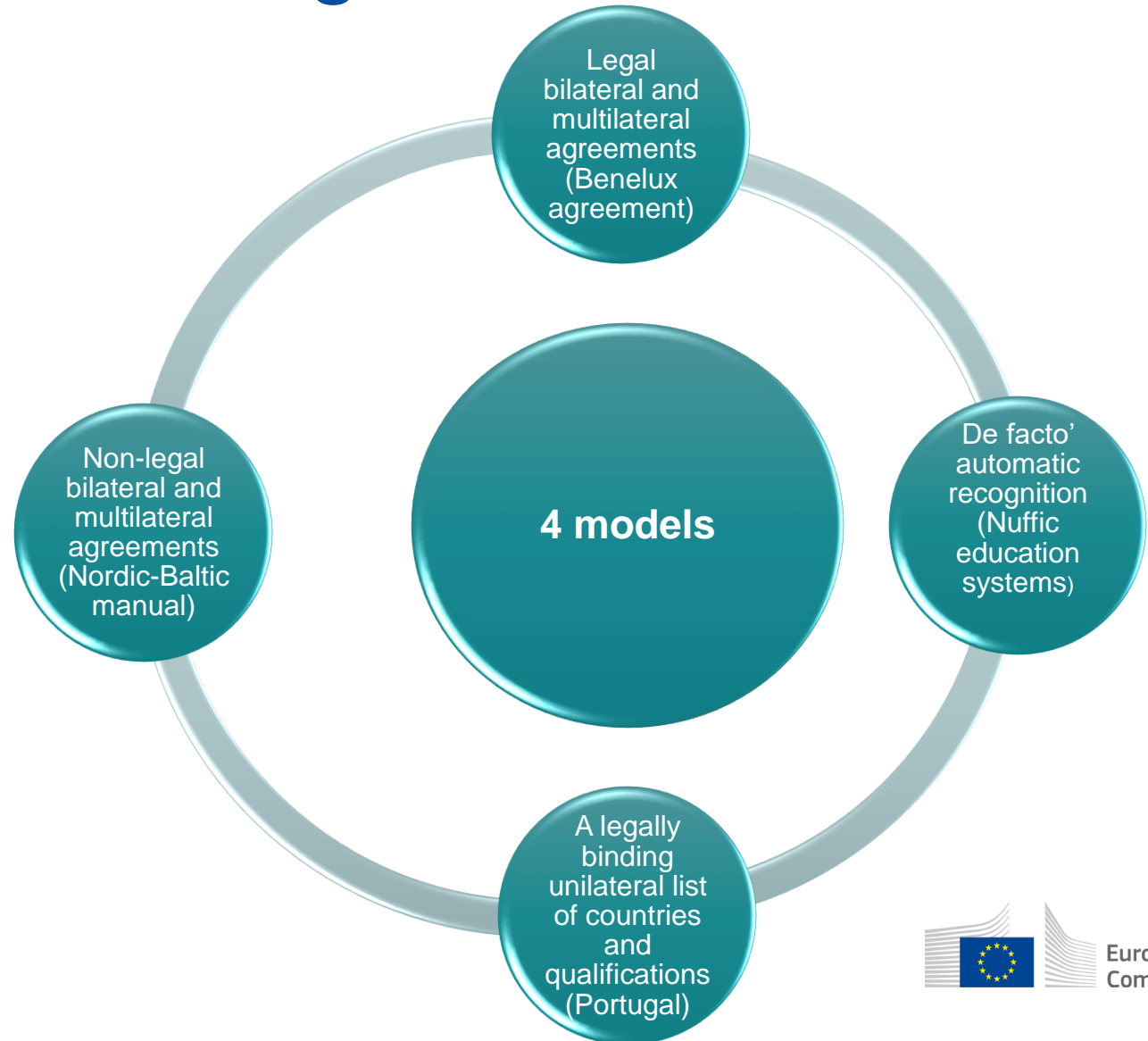
State of play

The Mobility Scoreboard in the field of Higher Education identified **nine education systems** (Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Malta, Poland, Finland, Sweden, Norway) in 2018/19 which report that they operate on the basis of automatic recognition of degrees.

Twelve other countries (Baltic States, Benelux countries, Portugal, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania) report to apply automatic recognition on the basis of bilateral or regional agreements.

At the time of the preparation of the Council Recommendation, recognition of learning periods in the context of the Erasmus+ Programme, where Learning Agreements specify clearly the conditions for automatic recognition, stood at 81.8%, way below the expected close to 100%. In the academic year 2019/2020, it had reached the level of 83.5% (based on self-reporting of students).

Models of automatic recognition





- **Different models of automatic recognition can be applied simultaneously;**
- **Implementation of the LRC, the three-cycle system of higher education with reference to the EQF/EHEA Frameworks and a QA system based on the ESG are important criteria for all forms automatic recognition;**
- **Some HEI already apply automatic recognition without requiring formal criteria. When this has proven to be successful in practice, there is no reason to alter these policies.**



Challenges linked to recognition

Current tools available

**Council
Recommendation on
promoting automatic
mutual recognition**

**The Bologna and EU
transparency tools**
European Qualifications
Framework, the Europass
Platform, the Diploma
Supplement, the European
Credit Transfer and
Accumulation Systems

**Standards and Guidelines for
Quality Assurance (ESG)**

**The Erasmus Charter
for Higher Education (ECHE)**

**Lisbon
Recognition Convention 1997**
Convention on the Recognition
of
Qualifications concerning Higher
Education
in the European Region

Reality on the ground: challenges and obstacles faced

**Automatic
recognition
implemented
only by 9
EU countries**

**Non-
implementatio
n of the
Bologna tools**

**Difficulties in
recognising
virtual and
blended
learning or
short-term
mobility**

**Recognition of
prior learning
often done
case by case
scenario**

Case study

	Country A	Country B	Country C	Country D
Recognition of qualifications	Automatic recognition applied for the whole EHEA (e.g Finland, Malta, Poland, Italy)	Automatic recognition applied for some countries of the EHEA (e.g. Benelux agreement, Baltic Agreement, Czechia, Slovakia)	Automatic recognition applied in theory, but in practice obstacles are reported (e.g. France, Croatia)	No automatic recognition (e.g. Spain, Bulgaria)
Recognition of micro-credentials	Yes (e.g. Sweden, Finland)	Yes, partially (e.g. Italy)	No recognition (e.g. Romania)	
Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	Legal framework exists and applied automatically (e.g Ireland)	Legal framework exists, and limits the number of credits awarded based on recognition of prior learning (e.g. Sweden, Hungary, Portugal, Italy, Spain, Lithuania)	Legal framework exists and recognition of RPL is done case by case (e.g. Belgium, France, , Germany, Portugal, Romania Hungary)	
Recognition of online learning and virtual mobility	Yes (e.g. Netherlands, Italy)	No (eg. Denmark)	Yes, but only with conditions, e.g. the online course has to follow certain teaching loads or syllabus (e.g. Spain, France, Portugal, Romania, Cyprus)	
Technical and administrative tools for recognition	Existence of online databases of HEIs and of online recognition processes (eg. Denmark, Italy)	Lack of online management that fully works online (eg. Bulgaria, France)	Lack of online platforms and problems with online credit transfers (eg. Czech Republic, Poland, France)	
Automatic issuance of the Diploma Supplement	Yes, free of charge, in different languages, automatically and issued in digital format (eg. Italy)	Yes, free of charge, automatically, in different languages (eg. Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland Belgium)	Partially, 2 out of the 3 criteria are met (eg. Greece, France, Spain, UK)	



**Thank you for
your attention!**



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