

Making the European Process of Recognising Academic Titles – acquired within the European Union – more transparent, clear and time-cost effective

Adopted at the YEPP Council Meeting in Zagreb (23/09/2023)

Scope: This resolution applies to the recognition of academic titles and higher qualifications awarded within the member states of the European Union. In particular, we are aiming to obtain a clearer, more transparent and time-cost effective formal validation of the value and equivalency of an academic title obtained in one-member state by another member state.

Definitions for the purposes of this resolution:

- "Academic title" refers to any degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal qualification awarded by recognised higher education institutions within the EU;
- "Recognition" refers to the formal validation of the value and equivalency of an academic title obtained in one member state by another member state;
- "Competent authority" refers to the official body designated by each member state responsible for the recognition of academic titles.

Having regard that:

- It is important harmonizing recognition procedures for academic titles to facilitate intra-European mobility and the development of a knowledge-based society;
- The ECTS and EQF are "translation tools", there is no automatic EU-wide recognition of academic diplomas;
- Graduated students will need to go through a national procedure to get their degree or diploma recognised in another EU country, which is cost and time consuming and in many cases the certificates are not recognised by the desired Member States;
- If ECTS credits are not available for courses you have done in the past, you might have to apply for credential evaluation/recognitions.

Recognizing that:

- EU Member States have their own individual higher education system, but all are part of the EHEA;
- The EHEA system ensures the harmonization of higher education systems throughout Europe, facilitating seamless collaboration, study, and work opportunities for students, researchers, and academics across the continent;
- Higher education follows structured three-tier model encompassing: Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and Doctorate/PhD, with qualifications being comparable through the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
- To make this easier, the EU has developed a credit system that shows the relative levels of credits obtained in different EU countries: the ECTS;

Acknowledging that:

- The principles of academic freedom, mobility, and cooperation among the member states of the European Union (EU),¹
- The diversity of educational systems and practices within the EU, and the need to balance this diversity with the necessity for transparent and reliable recognition of academic qualifications across borders;
- The significance of fostering a competitive and integrated European Higher Education Area (EHEA), driven by the principles of quality assurance and mutual trust among member states;²
- The commitment to upholding the values of fairness, equity, and non-discrimination, as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;³
- The role of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as a reference framework that enhances transparency and comparability of qualifications;⁴

YEPP calls on:

- Recognition of academic titles shall be based on clear and transparent criteria, which consider the level, content, learning outcomes and skills of the qualification. The EU Members should work in closing partnerships with Universities, which shall provide assistance to graduated students, making sure, with the financial support from Member States, that graduates will receive all the necessary notary and administrative documentations, for free. Ensuring that through a fast check, graduated students will have their titles more easily recognised by their national Member State.
- Recognition shall be granted without prejudice to differences in the duration and structure of study programs, provided that the essential knowledge, skills, and competencies are met.
- Recognition decisions shall be made in a timely manner, automatically, upon obtainment of certificate and applicants shall be informed of the decision and any required documentation.
- Member states shall provide accessible and up-to-date information on recognition procedures and requirements.
- The EU shall establish a cost-free information point to support individuals seeking information on recognition procedures and assistance in cases of difficulties.

¹ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/740231/EPRS_STU\(2023\)740231_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/740231/EPRS_STU(2023)740231_EN.pdf)

² <https://www.ehea.info/>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12012P%2FTXT>

⁴ <https://europa.eu/europass/en/europass-tools/european-qualifications-framework>