

Qualifications Frameworks as a tool for mobility between different education types.

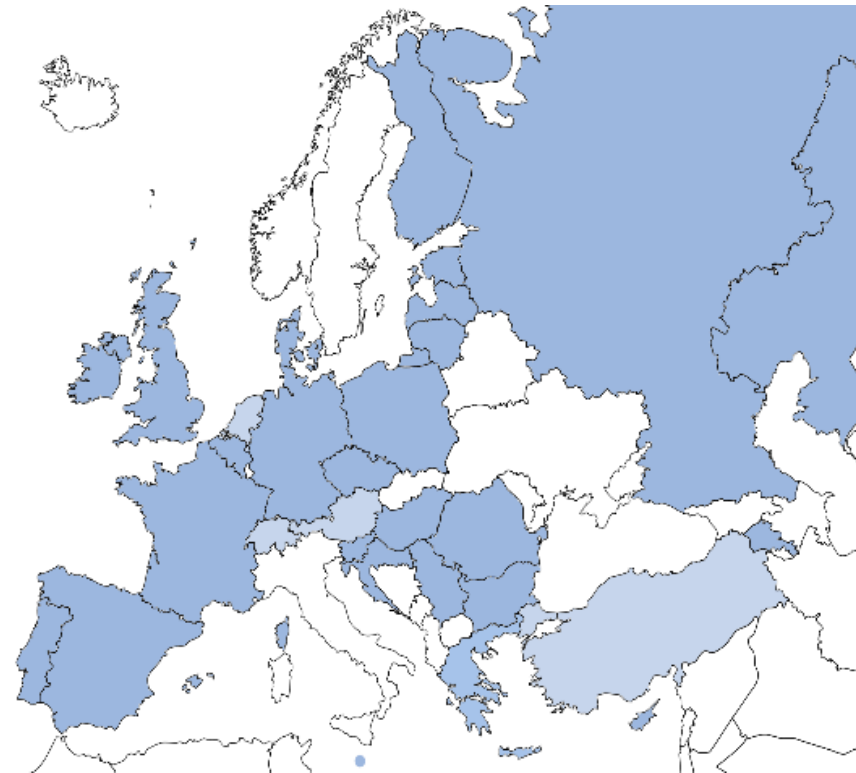
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PLA: Multiple purposes and use of the qualification frameworks by stakeholders, 18-19/11/2019

EURASHE is the **European Association of Institutions in Higher Education** that offer professionally orientated programmes and are engaged in applied research within the Bologna cycles.

EURASHE's mission is to promote, within the EHEA, the interests of professional higher education (PHE), and also:

- Contribute towards policy formulation and development processes within EU (ET2020);
- Consult the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) together with the 'E4-Group' (ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE).



Let me introduce – my name is Vaidotas Viliūnas

Dr. in Chemistry (1988)

Academic and managerial positions at:

- Kaunas University of Technology 1981-2004
- Vytautas Magnus University 2004-2006
- ISM University of Management and Economics 2006-2011
- Marijampole College (UAS) 2011-2018

Policy and project officer at EURASHE since 2018

Worked for Armenian, Estonian, Lithuanian, and Romanian
National QA agencies for institutional accreditation

Qualifications Frameworks (QF) describe the qualifications of an education system and how they interlink.


National QF describe what learners should **know, understand and be able to do on the basis of a given qualification** as well as can also describe how learners can move from one qualification to another within a system.

Every **QF level** is described by the respective **Learning Outcomes** to be achieved by the learners.

Qualification Framework is:

- a reference for the education systems;
- the bridge of trust between education systems and world of work;
- as well as tool for mobility between the different HEI, different countries, and different education types.





**Industry 4.0 and
environmental trends
requested a challenge of all
aspects of our life including
education systems and
policies bringing to the first
priority social responsibility,
environmental sustainability,
and efficient use of resources.**



Transformation of HE towards flexible, adaptable, reasonable education

- Informal → Formal ← Nonformal
- VET → University of Applied Sciences → University



Mobility between the different education types is based on the recognition of the competencies, which should comply with QF requirements

The recognition of informal/non-formal education competences (RPL) depends on their identification in curricula and outside the curriculum, as well as how they are acquired and assessed.

RPL is linked to the learning outcomes, times and places of learning, to university pedagogy, to the concept of lifelong learning and training, to the links between formal, informal, and non-formal training areas.

Pre-conditions and specificities of RPL

- HE Institutions should have a policy, structures, procedures adopted for the RPL and guidance for students/beneficiaries, or rely on lesser formal rules based on trust and academic integrity.
- It is rather customized process, which requires to prepare the personal portfolio of competencies (knowledge, skills and aptitudes) based on evidence.
- The credit which learners achieve by RPL has exactly the same value as credit achieved from completing an assessed learning programme.

Pre-conditions and specificities of RPL

- It requires an additional competences for evaluators (or external expert advice), particularly in case of students/beneficiaries are coming from abroad – like mobile students, but also migrants, displaced people and asylum seekers.
- RPL is not easy and fast process, because it requires a certain efforts from students/beneficiaries and staff of HE Institutions.

The evaluation process of RPL

- Responsibility for delivering qualifications is assumed collectively (jury). But the RPL developed outside their field requires a dialogue between academics and experienced practitioners as well as students/beneficiaries need to be involved in this process.
- External stakeholders, for their part, are in a position to recognize, validate or certify the competences mobilized in their field of action (different kind of volunteering, civic service, military activities in the operational reserve, etc.).

The RPL integration and QA

- RPL it is not a standard procedure, therefore each HE Institution can have their own policies, structures and procedures, based on the legal requirements of the country.
- Recognition of prior learning should be integral part of the processes in HE Institution and compliant with the requirements of European Standards and Guidelines (ESG 2015).

The financial aspects of RPL

- Usually RPL is rather costly procedure, because it requires a certain administrative and academic staff time and efforts.
- The costs of the RPL, in case of tuition fees, can be a serious obstacle for the people from the disadvantaged groups.
- It is rather unstable process, problematic for planning, and for implementation in case of limited number of beneficiaries .

Let's share your experience of RPL

- Could you please shortly present the RPL situation of informal/nonformal education in your country and/or your institution?
- What is your personal experience related to RPL?
- What are the main obstacles for RPL development and how they can be removed?



From the EP report on modernisation of education in the EU (17.5.2018):

“Stresses the importance of guaranteeing the mutual cross-border recognition and compatibility of qualifications and academic degrees, thus strengthening the system of quality assurance at EU level and in all countries that have joined the EHEA;

Underlines the need to offer proper learning and training content and decent working conditions for traineeships and apprenticeships so as to ensure their crucial role in the transition from education to professional life with the necessary core competences for successful entry into the labour market.”

Academic (AHE) and Professional (PHE) Higher Education in Europe

- European Qualification Framework defines Higher Education as levels 5-8 and maps them to the framework for qualifications of EHEA.
- In all EU countries the systems of AHE and PHE are integrated into the National Qualifications Frameworks (or in the process of being integrated), which in turn are mapped to the EQF.

Country	PHE level			
	EQF5	EQF6	EQF7	EQF8
BE (FL)				
CZ				
DE				
DK				
EE				
FI				
FR				
HR				
IE				
LT				
MT				
NL				
PL				
PT				
SI			EQF levels of PHE by country, HAPHE project	

PHE is not (fully) equivalent to AHE across Europe

- The Berlin Communiqué (2003) states that “First cycle degrees should give access, in the sense of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, to second cycle programmes. Second cycle degrees should give access to doctoral courses.”
- According to the Convention, access is defined as the right of qualified candidates to apply and to be considered for admission to HE.

Transition from PHE to AHE	Countries of study*
Full equivalence of PHE and AHE (automatic transition)	DE, EE, PT,
Easy transition between profiles and levels with bridging programmes or other institution dependent validation	BE (FL), CZ, FI, FR, IE, MT, NL, PL
Difficult transition between profiles and levels with extremely demanding bridging programmes	DK, HR, LT
No transition possible (particularly from level 7 to 8 of the EQF)	SI

* Professional Higher Education in Europe. Characteristics, Practice examples and National differences. HAPHE project, EURASHE, 2014.

R&D funding in PHE in term of legislation

Countries of study*

There are no restrictions on research funding

DK, IE, LT, MT, NL

There are difficulties in obtaining research funding compare to AHE

BE (FL), DE, CZ, EE, FI, PT, SI

Research is not considered as part of the default role of the PHE Institutions

HR, PL

* Professional Higher Education in Europe. Characteristics, Practice examples and National differences. HAPHE project, EURASHE, 2014.

“A Bachelor is a Bachelor” EURASHE statement on recognition of qualifications

We recommend that:

- *countries which share common features endeavor to agree on mutual automatic recognition of degrees and qualifications across EHEA;*
- *there should be no distinction in principle between an academic and professionally oriented qualification as regards recognition.*

“A Bachelor is a Bachelor” EURASHE statement on recognition of qualifications

We call for:

- *cross-national alignment of academic and professional recognition, and for an enhanced support for capacity development and shared learning at institutional level.*
- *a full adoption of the short cycle qualification as a specific, stand-alone qualification level within the Qualification Framework of EHEA and its recognition for the transfer to further levels.*

What is your opinion regarding automatic recognition of qualifications and the equivalence AHE and PHE?

- *Does the different focus between AHE (research) and PHE (profession) is the basic reason to complicate the way for students wishing to change from professional to academic profile?*
- *What should be done to remove an existing obstacles?*

***VET → PHE permeability barriers**

- Underdeveloped permeability tools and provisions as well as sphere of RPL.
- Different approaches to QA and accreditation.
- Lack of mutual understanding and trust between stakeholders.

*EURASHE position paper on permeability between PHE and VET: Making the learners' journey possible. Le Havre, France, March 29, 2017



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