

# Recognition - Information by EUA on HEI internal practice

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## 1. Recognition in HEI

„Recognition“ is a truly transversal issue and aspects of this topic are touching most of EUA’s areas of work in one way or another. This short overview is relying mostly on recent publications and aims at giving a snapshot on the situation inside HEI’s. The challenges for HEI in the field of recognition are especially tricky because of the multiple intertwined responsibilities on different levels (international, national, institutional and on faculty or departmental level) and legal prerequisites. Recognition issues are always linked to transparency and quality aspects, both crucial in creating the “trust and confidence” needed in order to facilitate recognition. Recognition takes many different forms; the approaches are diverse from institution to institution, and even between faculties and departments for all kinds of recognition. As recognition practices take place on different, often interlinked levels and by far not being standardised at the moment, practices vary considerably. In many countries, the different levels are not informed about what is going on in the other levels. This has also been shown by the analysis of NAP’s.<sup>1</sup> Recognition furthermore plays a key role in reaching the goals of the Bologna Process: to provide the educational component necessary for the construction of a Europe of knowledge within a broad humanistic vision and in the context of a massified higher education system; with lifelong access to learning that supports the professional and personal objectives of a diversity of learners<sup>2</sup>. The question is “how to keep a loose decision-making and cooperation framework on track and deepen the dialogue with the stakeholders, develop a shared language, and focus on a shared understanding of the underlying objectives rather than the technicalities of the tools<sup>3</sup>”.

However complicated the actual situation might be, it can be noted that regarding recognition, progress has been made in many different areas. In most of the countries and also in the individual HEIs, recognition practises are increasingly being scrutinised and reviewed. Especially the National Qualification Frameworks (NQF’s) in line with the European Qualification Framework for Higher Education (EQF-EHEA) might contribute to more transparency and a clear reference system for qualifications and their recognition. But this process will take time. Furthermore, the challenges of lifelong learning and the opening of the HE offer to diversified learners, increased mobility and internationalisation as well as the challenges of cooperation and competition between institutions with increasing diversification of HE providers and provided forms of education thereof – especially demonstrated in EUA’s Master study for the Master cycle<sup>4</sup> - are pushing recognition issues higher on the agendas of HEI’s.

## 2. Specific recognition topics

### 2.1. Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC)

**Levels preoccupied with recognition practices:** Legal Authority (ministry or other legally binding decision-making body); ENIC/NARIC office; HEI; QA Agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008).

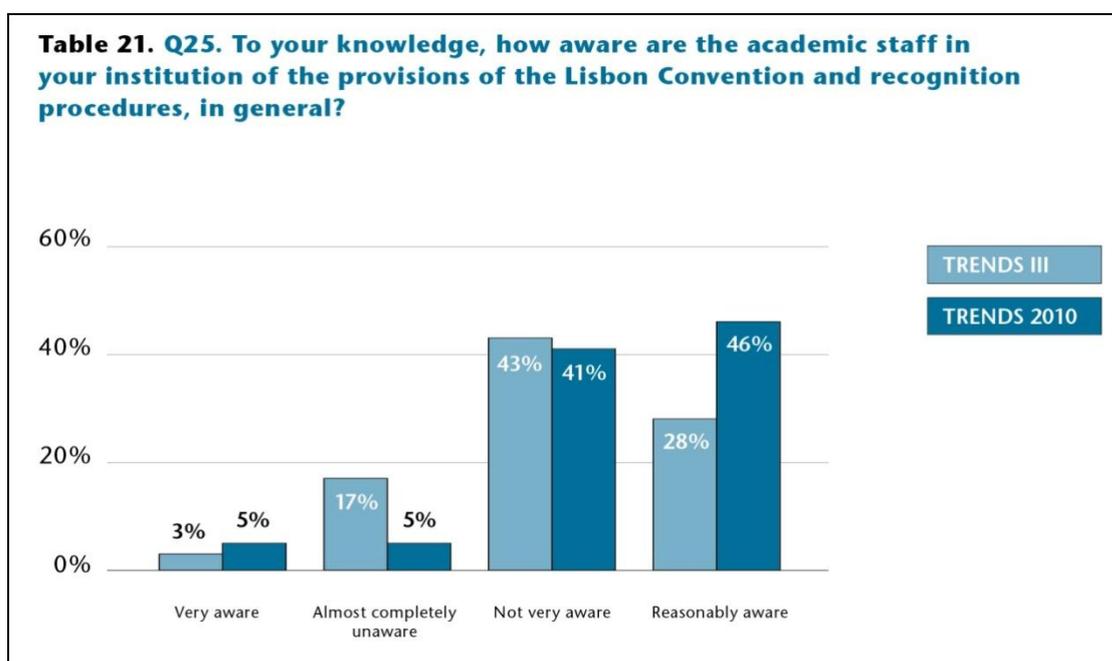
<sup>2</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 33.

<sup>4</sup> (Davies, 2009).

The actual room for manoeuvre for HEI's often depends on the legal frameworks / prerequisites. This situation is further complicated, as some countries that have signed up to international agreements and this would actually be bound by international law regarding recognition and recognition procedures, do not exercise direct influence on the activities of HEIs.

Trends 2010 data show that awareness of the academic staff of the Lisbon Convention and cooperation with the respective national ENIC/NARIC centre has increased since Trends III. While only 28% of Trends III respondents stated that their academic staff were "reasonably aware" of the Lisbon Convention and recognition procedures, the proportion increased to 46% in Trends 2010, representing more than a doubling of those who are "reasonably aware". However, 41% of institutions across Europe are still "not very aware", and there is a minimal drop of this value since Trends III. The percentage of staff that is "very aware" of the Lisbon Convention (5%) has similarly only increased by the same 2%.<sup>5</sup>



The report on the analysis of the 2007 National Action Plans (NAP's) for Recognition<sup>6</sup> ascertained at the end of 2008, that there are several major problems regarding recognition. These problems were examined in countries (in March 2010 44 of 47 Bologna member countries) that have ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention LRC.<sup>7</sup> The report lists several fields of problems.

The NAPs demonstrate that there are still legal problems to implement the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary texts in those countries that have not amended their legislation adopting the above principles.

In some countries there are difficulties to implement the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary texts due to interpretation of autonomy of higher education institutions. The best way to overcome these difficulties is making recognition process a part of both internal quality assurance of higher education institutions and external quality assurance.

<sup>5</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 64.

<sup>6</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008)

<sup>7</sup> The three countries have not ratified the LRC in April 2010: Greece, the Holy See and Italy (that signed the LRC on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July 1997).

The NAPs clearly demonstrate that the terminology used in different countries with regard to recognition is too diverse and unclear. The same terms have different meanings in different countries and in other cases different terms are used in different countries. It creates misunderstandings and certainly does not improve mutual understanding.

## 2.2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

In the later years of the Bologna Process, with the heightened focus on increasing and widening participation and providing education in a lifelong perspective, the recognition of prior learning has become increasingly important, and has been supported by the introduction of clearer definitions of learning outcomes, modularisation and the development of qualifications frameworks. Expanding the range of learners has become a key strategic issue (cf. Section 2.5 of Trends). It is a challenge for institutions, however, to develop and further improve systems for fair assessment and validation of all forms of prior learning, be it for non-traditional students or international students wishing to continue their educational trajectory.

When the recognition of prior learning was introduced into the Bologna Process in Bergen (in 2005), a rather complicated understanding prevailed, ranging from: accreditation of prior learning (APL), of prior certificated learning (APCL), of prior experiential learning (APEL) and work-based learning (WBL) to the present understanding of having the possibility of recognising prior learning in whatever shape and form it takes:

- as a way to access to higher education
- as elements of a higher education programme
- as recognition for the equivalence of a full degree<sup>8</sup>

The Trends 2010 data indicate that 54% of European HEIs recognise prior learning as a component of a study programme, but neither the Trends data nor the site-visits were able to say much about institutional practice as very little institutional data are collected.

Common practices for the recognition of prior learning have been in place in many countries for decades in order to improve higher education access, but new ground still has to be broken when it comes to recognizing formal, informal and non-formal prior learning as part of a study programme or as validation of experience that qualifies as a full degree course. The Trends 2010 data indicate that 54% of European HEIs recognise prior learning as a component of a study programme, but neither the Trends data nor the site-visits were able to say much about institutional practice as very little institutional data are collected. When it comes to validating prior learning as being equivalent to a full degree one country stands out. In France, 68% of HEIs state that they have procedures in place for recognising prior learning as equivalent to a full degree for students without formal qualifications. The practice was first initiated by law in 2002. Other HE systems where HEIs practise such full-degree recognition are, according to the survey, B-Flemish Community (29%) and B-French Community (22%), England/ Wales (14%), Ireland (15%), Norway (15%), and Scotland (23%). Nearly one third of the HEIs in Trends 2010 indicate that they do not recognise prior learning at all.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 57.

<sup>9</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p.57.

The criteria used and their relative importance varies from country to country. The contemporary approaches use quality assurance status, learning outcomes and level as the main criteria; some others first look at contents of the curriculum and length/ duration.<sup>10</sup>

In most countries the recognition procedure includes comparison of the foreign qualification with the relevant qualification in the host country. Some countries have started an 'easier' recognition procedure recognizing the general level of the qualification without comparing it to a particular host country's qualification. While the overall development seems positive, it should be clarified what rights that kind of recognition gives to the holder.<sup>11</sup>

In most countries the recognition procedure involves two steps, but these steps can differ: the first step varying from recognition statement which is advice to the competent authority making decision upon recognition for further studies or 'equivalence' statement. The second step in turn varies from decision upon recognition for further studies to 'full comparability' with issuing of host countries diploma. The steps of the procedure must be discussed at European level and steps should be taken to make procedures more coherent.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.3. Formal and informal learning

In some countries there are separate avenues for different kinds of qualifications, so assessment can be done using different procedures or by different bodies depending on the profile ('academic' or 'applied'/'professional'), level – 'postgraduate' (doctoral and Master degrees) can be treated separately from Bachelor degrees, 'Bologna' degrees – separately from 'pre-Bologna' and finally depending on whether the Master degree has been obtained in the same field (and institution) which awarded Bachelor degree.<sup>13</sup>

The EUA Study on master degrees in Europe identified the following factors that influence the acceptance of 1<sup>st</sup> cycle degree (BA) in order to gain access to a 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle degree:

- Variety of master programmes in Europe
- Various access/selection possibilities to one kind of an MA
- Various access/selection possibilities to different kinds of MA's
- LLL – ("Weiterbildungsmaster"): different access regulations, and mostly self financing

### 2.4. Bologna Tools

The introduction of new degree structures, the 'Bologna tools' and action lines are closely linked with the shift towards a student-centred approach to higher education. A student centred approach embraces flexibility and choice in progression routes and in approaches to learning and assessment, as well as the use of tools such as ECTS (for credit accumulation and transfer as well as recognition of prior learning) and support services for students, all in a European context embracing 46 countries and their higher education systems and in order to respond to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008), p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008), p. 12.

<sup>12</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008), p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008), p. 5f.

<sup>14</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 32.

The [Bologna] tools and action lines are interlinked but this has not necessarily been clear to institutions because of the evolving nature of the policy agenda. As mentioned earlier, the Bologna Process has been characterised by the progressive introduction, over ten years, of a number of tools and ‘action lines’ that had been developed to make the EHEA a reality. In addition, the Bologna Process relied on some tools (e.g. ECTS and the Diploma supplement) and objectives (e.g. mobility, quality and social agenda) that had been developed prior to the Bologna Declaration thus requiring some adjustments.<sup>15</sup>

## 2.5. ECTS/DS

Bologna being closely linked with the shift towards a student-centred approach to HE, embracing flexibility and choice in progression routes and in approaches to learning and assessment as well as the use of tools. One of these tools: ECTS (for credit accumulation and transfer as well as recognition of prior learning).<sup>16</sup> DS is a “Bologna Tool for mobility and recognition”, aimed to create transparency, and therefore foster trust and confidence.

Apart from the Doctoral level, the Trends 2010 study has shown, that ECTS has continued its rise as the European credit system even though it is not the only one used across all the Bologna signatory countries. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, particularly regarding the proper linkage of credits with learning outcomes. In addition, considerable problems still arise in relation to the recognition of credits by the ‘home’ institution upon completion of a period spent by a student at another institution, thus hampering mobility and greater cooperation within Europe.<sup>17</sup>

The Diploma Supplement is implemented in many countries. In some countries it is implemented in just part of the higher education system. It is not always clear whether DS is issued to graduates of all levels of qualifications and whether the ‘national’ diploma supplements are fully following the European Diploma Supplement format.<sup>18</sup>

Implementation of ECTS or compatible national credit systems is progressing. However, credits are not yet linked with learning outcomes. In some countries ECTS is implemented only for the ‘new’ Bachelor and Master programmes. Using quality assurance as a tool for ECTS implementation might help the process.<sup>19</sup>

## 2.6. Regulated professions

It is important to note that cross-border service delivery by most of the regulated professions falls within the scope of Directive 2005/36/EC on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications. The exception is law, which has its own dedicated Directives. Teacher training and engineering are covered by the ‘general system’, according to which EU member states can map the qualification of incoming professionals against a grid of attainment levels, then requiring adaptation periods or aptitude tests as they see fit. The remainders are ‘sectoral’ professions, for which the Directive prescribes the minimum training conditions agreed by member states (Davies 2009).

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<sup>15</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 33.

<sup>16</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010) p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 55.

<sup>18</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008), p. 12.

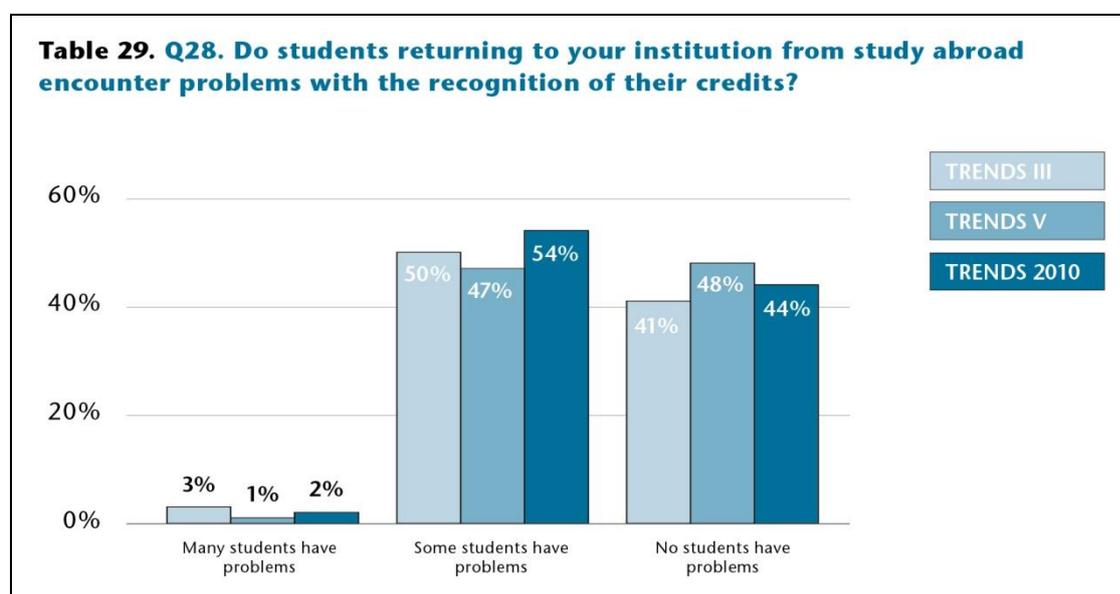
<sup>19</sup> (Andrejs Rauhvargers, 2008), p. 12.

### 3. Other aspects closely linked to recognition

#### 3.1. Recognition of study abroad/ Mobility

If mobility shall be enhanced and not be limited to programme mobility, recognition plays a central role in doing so. Furthermore, “a substantial volume of student mobility in Europe is likely one day to be ‘inter-cycle’”<sup>20</sup>. If Europe is to pay serious attention to recognition issues, it is also important to acknowledge that the problem cannot be solved primarily by tools – even though more thoughtful and coherent use of ECTS in particular is essential. Rather the major breakthrough that needs to be made is attitudinal. Contrary to the principles of international recognition outlined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention, many academic recognition procedures still depend on trusting the learning acquired abroad.

Among the explanations for the popularity of joint programmes is that recognition of mobility periods ceases to be a problem, as curricula are jointly planned and developed, mobility is an integral aspect of the experience, and recognition of assessed learning outcomes is automatic. Another advantage of joint programmes is that students are not “lost” to other institutions.<sup>21</sup>



Data collected on how institutions organise the recognition of study abroad periods are coherent with the unchanged institutions’ expectations regarding short-term mobility. Problems with the recognition of credits obtained after a short-term mobility seem to have fluctuated insignificantly over time despite this having been one of the original objectives for the Bologna Process. In Trends III, 41% of institutions said that none of their students had problems; the figure in Trends V went up to 48%; in Trends 2010, the figure has dropped down to 44% (cf. Table 29 above). A close examination of the responses to the recognition of study abroad periods reveals that:

“ In universities, study abroad periods are most often recognised at the faculty level, while recognition of degrees takes place in the central office. Although the other types of higher education institutions also seem to depend on a central office, they turn also to the faculties and the departments to handle this caseload.

<sup>20</sup> (Davies, 2009), p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> (Crosier)

- “ The centralised way of handling recognition issues seems to be preferred by the smallest institutions especially, while the mid-size and large institutions are more likely to favour the faculty (and departmental) level.
- “ Institutions with a local focus are clearly in favour of the departmental level, while institutions with a European focus are most likely to prefer a central office.
- “ The older the institution, the more likely it is that the recognition may take place at faculty level; the younger the institutions, the more likely it is to take place at departmental level.
- “ Unsurprisingly, the larger the institution, the more likely it is that its students have some problems with the recognition of their credits obtained abroad. While 63% of small institutions stated that none of their students has problems with the recognition of credits earned abroad, the corresponding figure for the largest universities was only 26%. Whether the institution has balanced or imbalanced mobility between outgoing and incoming students makes no difference to the level of recognition problems.

Most interestingly, however, and of importance to institutional management, the more centralised the recognition of the period of study abroad is, the more likely students will not encounter problems with the recognition of transfer credits probably because centralisation provides a consistent and coherent way of dealing with credit transfer. As discussed in previous sections the main recognition and ‘transparency’ tools that should facilitate mobility (Lisbon Convention, ENIC/NARIC, ECTS and Diploma Supplement) are increasingly being used by institutions. There remain, however, persistent obstacles to staff and student mobility (both short-term and full-degree), which emerged from the Trends site visits in particular from discussions with academic staff and students.<sup>22</sup> The perceived growing competition within the sector is mentioned as leading each institution to try to be unique or different thus creating further obstacles to recognition. This is most evident at the Master level.<sup>23</sup> Recommendation in Trends: Institutions should create a central recognition unit, to support effective and coherent recognition of study abroad periods and foreign degrees, including also other types of recognition such as formal and informal learning, and locate this unit within the student service functions.<sup>24</sup>

#### **4. Overview strategies for LLL, widening participation and access to HE**

The following table of Annex 6 of the Trends report indicates that 12 countries have national policies in place for recognition of prior learning, and that 19 are developing such a policy according to the Draft 2008 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the “Education & Training 2010” work programme (2008). In practice, institutions in a majority of European countries have limited (legal) opportunities to enhance diversity by accepting students from non-traditional learning paths (cf. Section 2.5 of the trends report).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 80

<sup>24</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 82.

<sup>25</sup> (Andrée Sursock, 2010), p. 58.

## Works Cited

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## Overview of national and institutional strategies for lifelong learning, widening participation and access to higher education

Country-by-country overview of access to higher education, universities' possibilities to select their students, legislation and policies for widening participation, recognition of prior learning, and of national and institutional LLL strategies in 2007/2008

### Adapted from material contained in:

- Trends 2010 National Rector Conferences' Questionnaire (NRC)
- Trends 2010 Institutional Questionnaire (T2010)
- Key Data on Higher Education in Europe, EUROPEAN COMMISSION 2009 Edition (KD),
- Draft 2008 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education & Training 2010" work programme "Delivering lifelong learning for knowledge, creativity and innovation" 2008 based on 2007 data (JPR),
- University Autonomy in Europe, EUA (2009) (A)
- Bologna Process Stocktaking report 2009 (SR)
- Access to success, EUA questionnaire 2009 (AS)

### National Access/student selection systems as defined in Key data on higher education in Europe:

1. Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level for all or almost all fields of study (numerus clausus)
2. Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level for all or almost all fields of study
3. Free Access = with regulations for prior qualifications: secondary school leaving certificate, entrance exam (?) to almost all fields
4. Free access combined with institutional input depending on field

### EUA Autonomy Report:

1. Access, free access, numerus clausus
2. HEI set add. selection criteria = Basic requirements set by government (secondary school leaving certificate) + additional criteria defined by HEI
3. Special quotas = No quotas, state sets quotas, university sets quotas

### Country-by-country overview, as it was in 2007/2008

Country	National Access/student selection system/determination of number of students = autonomy of institutions to select students	National/Institutional Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning as access Average: T2010 = 30%	National strategy/legislation for widening participation	National strategy for Lifelong Learning	HEI strategy for Lifelong Learning Average: T2010 = 39%
 <b>AT</b> Austria	NRC: Free Access A: Free access, No quotas for specific groups of students KD: Open access combined with complex regulations	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No, because of open access T2010 = 48% SR: Yellow	NRC: Open Access by law AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: No, problems with the relationship between institutional autonomy and LLL strategy	NRC: Yes T2010 = 16% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>BE-FR</b> Belgium Wallonie	A: Free Access, No quotas for specific groups of students T2010: Incentives for WP	JPR: Yes T2010 = 22% SR: Green	NRC: Legislation and activities T2010: Plan for WP	JPR: Yes T2010: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 30% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>BE-NL</b> Belgium Vlaanderen	A: Free Access, No quotas for specific groups of students T2010: Incentives for WP	JPR: Yes T2010 = 86% SR: Green	NRC: Yes, strategy for WP T2010: Plan for WP AS: regional legislation + funding	NRC: Yes JPR: Yes	NRC: No Info T2010 = 36% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>BG</b> Bulgaria	A: Student numbers decided by state, HEI set add. selection criteria, HEI sets quotas KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at Institutional level	JPR: Developing strategy T2010 = 0% SR: Light green	NRC: No info	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No info	NRC: No Info T2010 = 75% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>CH</b> Switzerland	A: Free Access, state set quota for specific groups	NRC: No national regulations, but Institutional practices T2010 = 44 % SR: Yellow	NRC: No info	NRC: No	NRC: Yes T2010 = 19% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>CY</b> Cyprus	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, state set quotas for specific groups KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level for all or almost all fields of study (numerus clausus)	JPR: Developing strategy T2010 = 0% SR: Red	No info	JPR: Yes	NRC: No Info T2010 = 33% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>CZ</b> Czech Republic	A: HEI can decide on number of fee-paying students, HEI set add. selection criteria KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at Institutional level for all or almost all fields of study	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No T2010 = 10% SR: orange	NRC: Yes AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: No T2010 = 67% of Institutions have strategy
 <b>DE</b> Germany	A: Limited open access, HEI negotiate student numbers with government, HEI sets quotas KD: Open access combined with complex regulations	JPR: No general validation system NRC: Yes, in ANKOM project T2010 = 40% SR: Light green	NRC: Yes AS: Reform of access regulations to HEIs, social dimension action plan + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: No – not for HEI and not for all	NRC: No T2010 = 12% of Institutions have strategy

Country	National Access/student selection system/determination of number of students = autonomy of Institutions to select students	National/ Institutional Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning as access Average: T2010 = 30%	National strategy/ legislation for widening participation	National strategy for Lifelong Learning	HEI strategy for Lifelong Learning Average: T2010 = 39%
 DK Denmark	A: HEIs can decide on student numbers, no quotas for specific groups of students, to some extent HEIs can set add. selection criteria, KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes T2010 = 25% SR: Green	NRC: No T2010 site-visit: Yes AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 50% of Institutions have strategy
 EE Estonia	A: HEI can decide on student numbers, HEI set add. selection criteria No quotas for specific groups of students KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level for all or almost all fields of study	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No info T2010 = 40% SR: Light green	NRC: No info AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: No info	NRC: No info T2010 = 40% of Institutions have strategy
 GR Greece	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, state set quotas for specific groups KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No, but planned discussions T2010 = 0% SR: Orange	NRC: Yes, but HEI don't want WP because of a great number of inactive students	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 36% of Institutions have strategy
 ES Spain	A: Free Access, university sets quotas In certain fields HEI sets quotas KD Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level for all or almost all fields of study (numerus clausus)	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No but planned for the non-university sector T2010 = 20% SR: Green	NRC: No policy AS: regional legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: No	NRC: Yes T2010 = 40% of Institutions have strategy
 FI Finland	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, university sets quotas, HEI set add. selection criteria, HEI sets quotas KD: Combination of limitation of places/ selection of students at national and institutional level	JPR: Yes NRC: No, but planned. Recommendations made T2010 = 33% SR: Green	NRC: Yes WP concerns both incentives to attract younger students, immigrants and foreign students AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 58% of Institutions have strategy
 FR France	NRC: Free access for universities A: Free access, No quotas for specific groups of students KD: Open access combined with complex regulations	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes, part of the LLL agenda T2010 = 34% SR: Green	NRC: Yes, possibilities to improve financial conditions	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 60% of Institutions have strategy
 HR Croatia	A: University can decide on student numbers, HEI set add. selection criteria, HEI sets quotas	JPR: No validation system T2010 = 0% SR: Yellow	No info	JPR: Yes	No info
 HU Hungary	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, HEI sets quotas KD: Government limitation of places/	JPR: No validation system, but one in progress NRC: Yes, formal, employment and life experiences T2010 = 10%	NRC: Yes, mentor programme and financial support system AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 35% of Institutions have strategy
 IE Ireland	A: HEI can decide on student numbers, university sets quotas, HEI set add. selection criteria KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes T2010 = 85% SR: Green	NRC: Yes, 4 target groups: soc.-eco disadvantaged, students with disabilities, mature students, ethnic minorities	JPR: Updating the LLL strategy NRC: Yes, the strategy is being updated to make better use of the LLL tools	NRC: Yes, all HEIs involved in LLL T2010 = 60% of Institutions have strategy
 IS Iceland	A: Free Access, HEI negotiate student numbers with government, HEI set add. selection criteria, No quotas for specific groups of students KD: Free Access = with regulations for prior qualifications: secondary school leaving certificate, entrance exam (?) to almost all fields	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Will be included in strategy T2010 = 67% SR: Green	NRC: Yes, linked to RPL	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 33% of Institutions have strategy
 IT Italy	A: Free Access, HEI sets quotas KD: Open access combined with complex regulations	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No T2010 = 3% SR: Light green	NRC: No	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy NRC: No strategy	NRC: No T2010 = 43% of Institutions have strategy
 LV Latvia	A: HEI can decide on number of fee-paying students, HEI sets quotas KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level for all or almost all fields of study	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Will be included in strategy T2010 = 13% SR: Yellow	NRC: Yes, but it only marginally mentions higher education	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes, but it only marginally mentions higher education	NRC: Yes, HEI interested in developing LLL even without a policy T2010 = 38% of Institutions have strategy
 LT Lithuania	A: HEI can decide on number of fee-paying students, state set quotas for specific groups KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level for all or almost all fields of study	JRC: No validation system NRC: HEI have their own system T2010 = 39% SR: Orange	NRC: No	JPR: Yes NRC: In principle the strategy covers both	NRC: No T2010 = 61% of Institutions have strategy
 LU Luxembourg	A: HEI can decide on student numbers, university sets quotas, HEI set add. selection criteria KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level for all or almost all fields of study (numerus clausus)	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Yes T2010 = 0% SR: Green	NRC: No	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy NRC: No strategy	NRC: No – too early T2010 = 0% of Institutions have strategy
 MT Malta	A: Free Access, no quotas for specific groups of students KD: Free Access = with regulations for prior qualifications: secondary school leaving certificate, entrance exam (?) to almost all fields	JPR: Validation system = The Malta Qualifications Council T2010 = 100 %	+ WP, WP for equity	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy	No info
 NL The Netherlands	A: Free Access, No quotas for specific groups of students KD: Free Access to almost all fields of study	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes T2010 = 53% SR: Green	NRC: New incentives to attract/include disabled students and non-Western immigrants AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy NRC: Yes, but universities not really involved except for OU	NRC: No, except OU T2010 = 17% of Institutions have strategy
 NO Norway	A: Student number decided by state, HEI set add. selection criteria, state set quotas for specific groups KD: Cannot decide on number of students, state sets quotas	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes T2010 = 75% SR: Green	NRC: Student loans and grants gives possibilities for WP. New legislation for setting up agency for WP AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: White paper. Open University set up in 1998. LLL is defined as core activity in law of 2005.	NRC: HEIs in Norway supports the Open University (appoint board members) and many institutions have a lot of LLL activities. T2010 = 40% of Institutions have strategy
 PL Poland	A: HEI can decide on student numbers, no quotas for specific groups of students KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No T2010 = 4 % SR: Yellow	NRC: Yes, creating HEIs in remote areas to bring education to non-urban areas and incentives to admit disabled students AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Is expected to be developed in 2010	NRC: Yes, in 60% of university-level HEIs T2010 = 47% of Institutions have strategy

Country	National Access/student selection system/determination of number of students = autonomy of institutions to select students	National/ Institutional Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning as access  Average: T2010 = 30%	National strategy/ legislation for widening participation	National strategy for Lifelong Learning	HEI strategy for Lifelong Learning  Average: T2010 = 39%
 PT Portugal	A: HEI can decide on number of fee-paying students, HEI set add. selection criteria, state sets quotas for specific groups KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level for all or almost all fields of study (numerus clausus)	JPR: Yes NRC: No info T2010 = 80% SR: Green	NRC: No info AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Policy in place, but considered a strategy NRC: No info	NRC: No info T2010 = 40% of institutions have strategy
 RO Romania	A: HEI can decide on number of fee-paying students, HEI set add. selection criteria, state set quota for specific groups KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at institutional level for all or almost all fields of study	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No info T2010 = 3% SR: Green	NRC: No info	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No info	NRC: No info T2010 = 42% of institutions have strategy
 RS Serbia	A: HEI can decide on number of fee-paying students, state set quota for specific groups	No info SR: Orange	No info	No info	No info
 RU Russia	No info, HEI set add. selection criteria	No info T2010 = 25 % SR: Orange	No info	No info	No info T2010 = 63% of institutions have strategy
 SE Sweden	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, HEI set add. selection criteria, no quotas for specific groups of students KD: Combination of limitation of places/ selection of students at national and institutional level	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Yes, is widely used by HEIs T2010 = 35% SR: Green	NRC: A policy, requiring each HEI to work and report on widening participation AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: The system is already an LLL system, no need for a strategy	NRC: Yes T2010 = 35% of institutions have strategy
 SL Slovenia	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, university propose quotas, HEI set add. selection criteria KD: Combination of limitation of places/ selection of students at national and institutional level	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Yes T2010 = 0% SR: Green	NRC: NA AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Strategy NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 25% of institutions have strategy
 SK Slovakia	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, HEI set quotas, HEI set add. selection criteria	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: Developing strategy T2010 = 7% SR: Red	NRC: Included in LLL strategy AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes T2010 = 50% of institutions have strategy
 TR Turkey	A: Student numbers decided on by state and selection done by state KD: Limitation of places/selection of students at national/regional level for all or almost all fields of study (numerus clausus)	JPR: No validation system NRC: No info T2010 = 18% SR: Red	NRC: No info	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: No info	NRC: No info T2010 = 44% of institutions have strategy
 UK - EWN United Kingdom – England, Wales, Northern Ireland	A: HEI negotiate student numbers with government, HEI set add. selection criteria, no quotas for specific groups of students KD: Overall numbers determined by government, but selection of students at institutional level	JPR: Developing strategy NRC: HEIs can set different criteria for recognition of prior learning to gain access T2010 = 75% SR: Green	NRC: Aim higher AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes, for most institutions T2010 = 64% of institutions have strategy
 UK United Kingdom - Scotland	No info	JPR: No info NRC: Yes, developed and published guidelines for RPL T2010 = 92% SR: Green	NRC: Yes, well developed and has been extended to soc.-eco-disadvantaged students Will include financial incentives AS: legislation + funding	JPR: Yes NRC: Yes	NRC: Yes LLL is a priority for all HEIs T2010 = 69% of institutions have strategy