

# CARDS 2002

**Higher Education Mobility:**

***Diploma Recognition Policy and  
Legislation***

## **Recognition issues – Lisbon Convention**

Zagreb Seminars – Library Based: 18-20 October 2005

Zagreb – UniZ – Faculty of Law

P. Debreczeni



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# Some features of the desired EHEA:

- degrees/diplomas earned in one part of the area are accordingly recognised in other parts
- graduates are employable in the European labour market
  - obstacles for free mobility of students and teachers are removed
  - European higher education is attractive in the World market



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# Prague communique:

... **'facilitating**

**academic and professional recognition,  
so that citizens can effectively use their  
qualifications throughout the EHEA'**

- Potential for mobility:
  - Labour force (employees)
  - Academics
  - Students



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# Problem

*How we understand each other's qualifications?*

*How do we recognise them for what they are?*



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# Who reads qualifications?

Who needs to be able to “read” foreign qualifications?

- Universities
- Employers
- Professional bodies responsible for regulated professions



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# A working definition

## ***Recognition is***

evaluation of a foreign qualification  
with a view to find it's right pathway  
in the host country's

- education system or
- employment system



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# What is it about?

- **Academic recognition:** is the holder of a degree qualified to **continue studies** in/for the next stage as he/she requests?
- **Professional recognition:** is the holder of a degree/qualification qualified to **pursue the professional activities** as he/she wishes?



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# *De facto* professional recognition

(i.e for non-regulated professions)

*Is a potential employer prepared to consider the foreign qualification held by an applicant for a post to be a relevant qualification?*

The decision rests with the potential employer.



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# *De jure* professional recognition

The decision rests with the professional authority in the host country.

“.....where the... education and training received ... **differ substantially** from those covered by the diploma required in the host Member State” a person who has qualified elsewhere may have to complete aptitude test or adaptation period.

(EC Directive 89/48/EEC Article 4 b)



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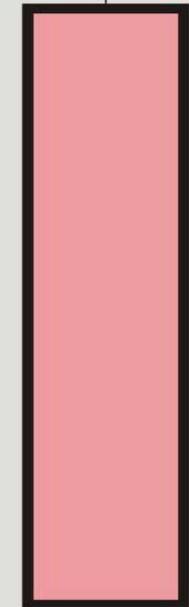
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# Typology of education

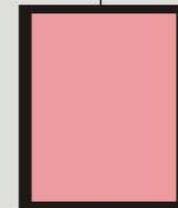
Admission to doctoral studies



One-tier unitary



One-tier binary



Two-tier unitary



Two-tier binary



Secondary education qualification



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# N.B.

even within a given education system  
Qualifications may vary in their

- Orientation,
- Profile and
- Workload (duration)



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# Solutions

## EU, CoE and UNESCO urged:

- Greater transparency (e.g. through the use of the Diploma Supplement)
- A move towards a common pattern of degrees (Bologna process)
- Better understanding of the variations (the Lisbon Convention)



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# Principles of Lisbon Convention

- **Mutual trust** in the universities which the signatories of the Convention each recognise as their own
- **Non-discrimination**
- **Transparency** in the process – complete **explanation** of any **non-recognition** decision and the **right of appeal**



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# Lisbon Convention

## Preconditions

- the qualification must belong to a national system and
- it has to be *recognised* in that system

## Recognition

- ***equal level*** qualifications are recognised if there are ***no substantial differences***



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# Directive 89/48/EEC Article 4 b)

A foreign professional has to complete aptitude test or adaptation period is applied:

“where the... education and training received ... **differ substantially** from those covered by the diploma required in the host Member State”



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# Where are substantial differences?

- learning outcomes and competencies,
- access to further activities
- key elements of the programme,
- quality of the programme



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# What if differences are substantial?

***alternative or partial* recognition should be considered, e.g.**

- recognition of the foreign qualification as comparable to another qualification, but not to that indicated by the applicant;
- recognition partial of the foreign qualification as part of the national qualification in question



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# Central focus of recognition

- Understand the learning outcomes,
- Compare them to the ones of the national qualifications (NQF)

BUT

- credentials' evaluators could only try to estimate learning outcomes knowing the duration and contents of programmes



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# Therefore

- **Describe levels** (level descriptors: Helsinki, Dublin descriptors)
- **Define learning outcomes** (benchmark statements, TUNING program)

Directly support **RECOGNITION**



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# The relationships

## National Qualifications' Frameworks

- describe qualification level and
- learning outcomes

## Quality assurance mechanisms (not accreditation!)

- confirm that the desired learning outcomes are really achieved

## EA Qualifications' framework (future)

- accommodates the national frameworks,
- is used to translate information between national QFs



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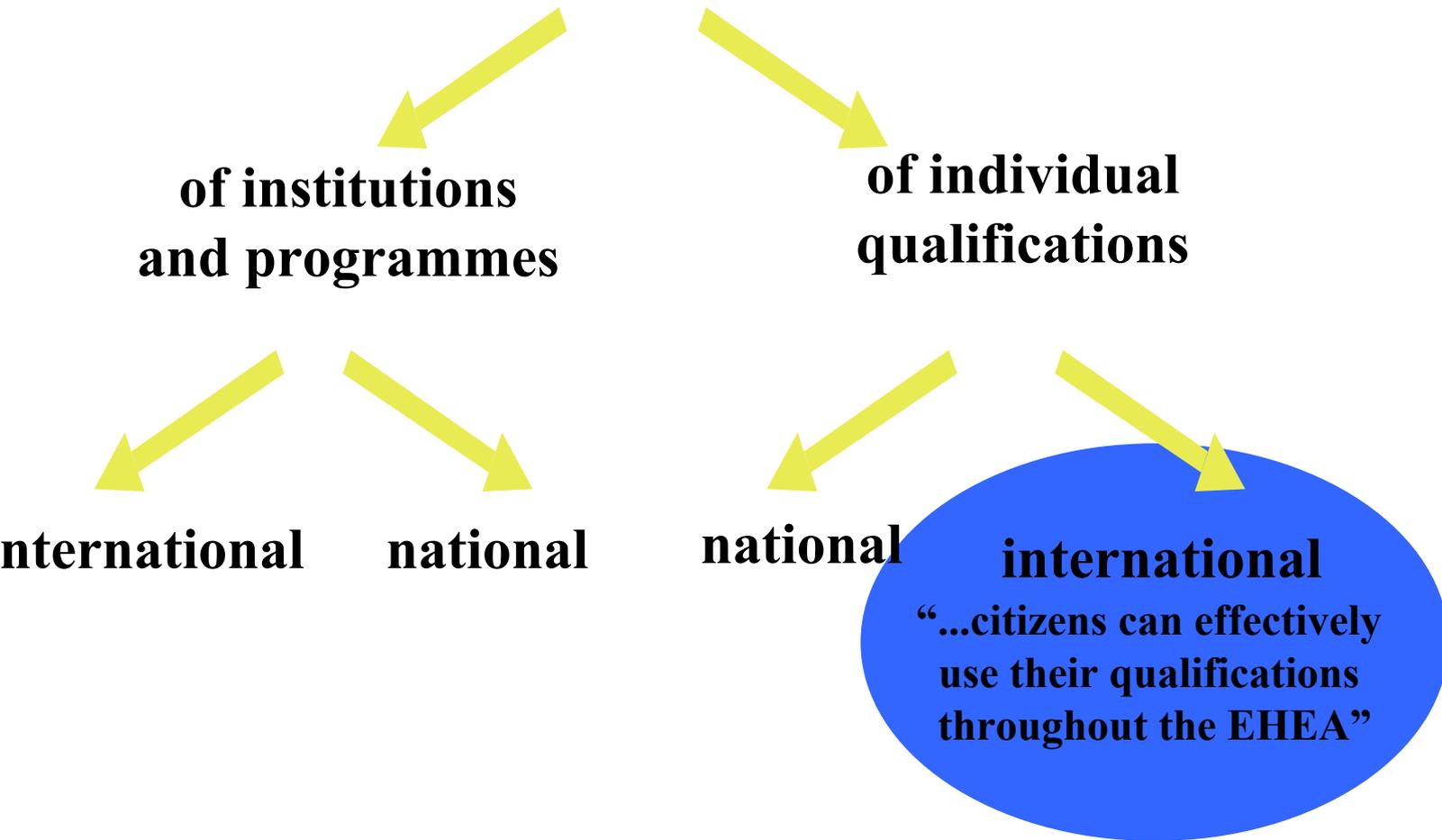


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# Recognition



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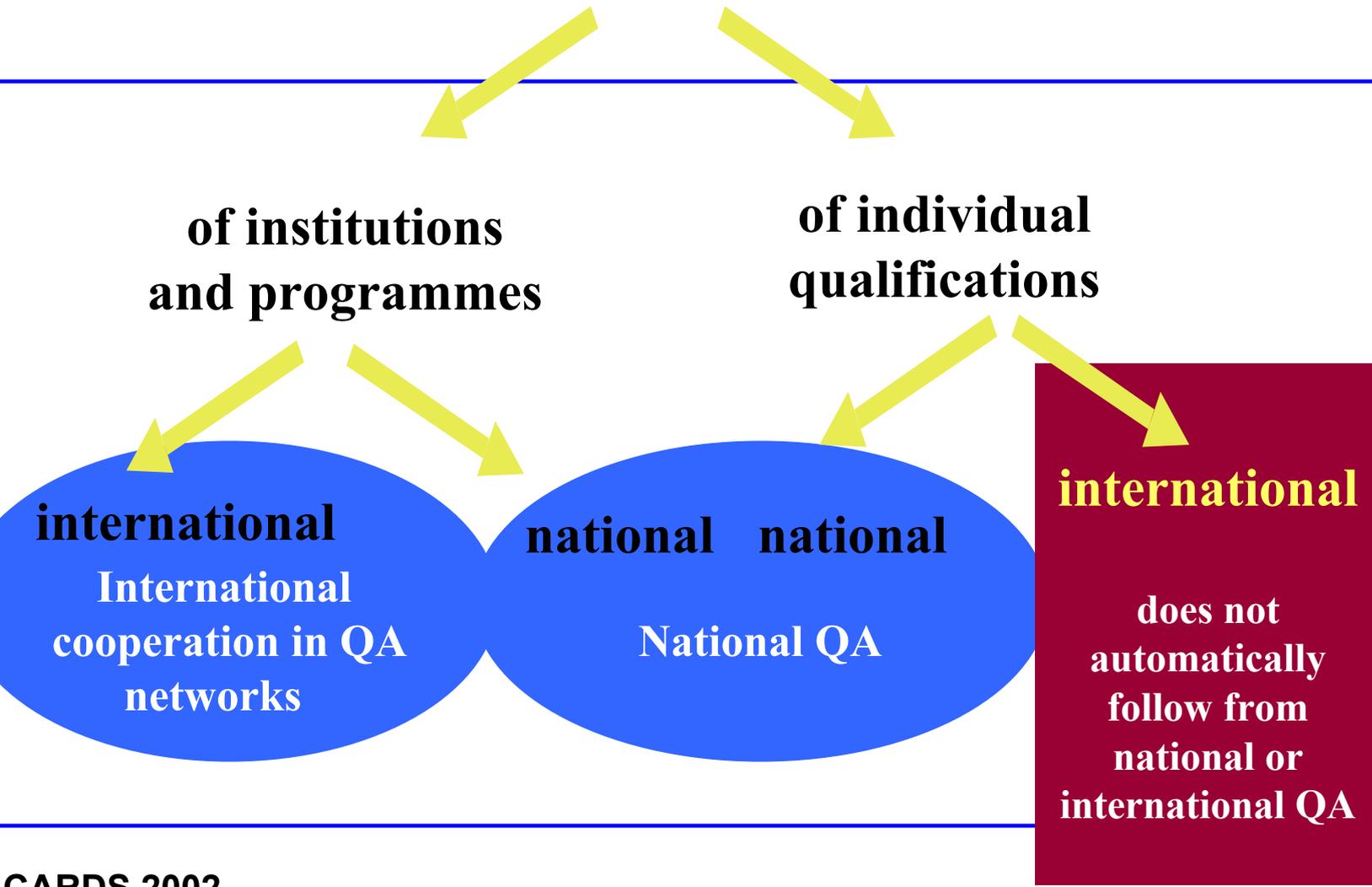


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# Recognition and QA



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