# RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

## EUA Update no. 14, February 2016

## Contents

January 18th 2016 marked the deadline for the transposition into national legislation of **Directive 2005/36/EC**, following its amendment in 2014 by Directive 2013/55/EU.

Both Directives had a two-year **transposition period**. In the case of the former, not a single member state (MS) had met the deadline by September 2007. Two years later, the process had been completed everywhere except in Greece, but only 17 of the 27 MSs had progressed to full implementation.

A **study**[1] commissioned by the European Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Affairs Committee (IMCO) put this down to a number of factors: the complexity of legal, professional and educational structures, the fact that the internal market information (IMI) system was not up and running, and entrenched protectionism.

At the beginning of **2016**, IMI has developed significantly, albeit preoccupied with the implementation of the controversial European Professional Card (EPC). In higher education, the scope for mutual trust has increased: the Bologna Process three-cycle qualification system of Bachelor, Master and Doctorate is regarded as being widely implemented, reinforced by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning, to which 21 of the 28 MSs had referenced their national qualifications frameworks by July 2015.[2]

Moreover, the provisions of the amended Directive have moved closer to the **Bologna Process** in a number of respects:

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[1] *Study on Transposition of the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications*, conducted by Ramboll Management Consulting, Aarhus, Denmark; European Parliament IPOL/A/ST/2009-05, Brussels.
[2] http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/european-qualifications-framework

- the availability of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as an additional way of expressing course duration

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- the introduction of the "common training framework" (CTF), allowing an advance-guard of MSs to agree on competence-based curricula into which other MSs may subsequently opt

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- a modest extension of the use of the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in admission to training courses.

**Other points** at which higher education intersects with the amended Directive remain to be clarified and tested in practice:

- the recognition and quality assurance of transnational work placements in architecture and pharmacy

- the identification of the bodies responsible for notifying compliant training courses to the European Commission

- the extent to which MSs "encourage" continuing professional development (CPD) in the sectoral professions

- whether good CPD practice, which the Commission will disseminate, can be used to facilitate its transnational accreditation, quality assurance and recognition

- how far higher education institutions (HEIs) can successfully deliver multi-disciplinary CPD.

There is no doubt the Commission or Parliament, or both, will in due course report on the success or otherwise of the recent transposition. Meanwhile, this Update covers developments in those aspects of the amended Directive which relate directly to **higher education**.

Readers interested in other important features – the European professional card, the alert mechanism, language proficiency, etc – should consult the overviews provided by **Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders**.[3]


# 1 The Bologna Process

1.1 Bologna ministers met in Yerevan in May. Their **communiqué**[4] shows an increasing concern with employability and with post-graduation mobility in the labour market. They duly committed to "establish a group of volunteering countries and organisations with a view to facilitating professional recognition."

1.2 At the same time they endorsed:

- the revised **ECTS Users' Guide;**[5]

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[3] http://www.hpcb.eu/news/update_briefings.aspx
[4] http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/SubmitedFiles/5_2015/112705.pdf
[5] http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/publications/2015/ects-users-guide_en.pdf

- the revised ***Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education*** (ESG);[6]

- the ***European Approach for the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.***[7]

1.3   They also set up **working and advisory groups** to consolidate the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in the 2015-2018 period. One of the working groups will oversee the entry of Belarus. The three working groups (monitoring, implementation, future goals) have now begun work. EUA is represented on all three.

1.4     The **European Quality Assurance Register** (EQAR) has expanded to include 42 quality assurance and accreditation agencies which function in line with the ESG and which, national legislations permitting, operate on a cross-border basis. Most have broad remits, but four are profession-specific.[8]

1.5   In 2007, Austria and Belgium set quotas on the percentage of incoming cross-border students (mainly German and French) in healthcare fields. Known as **"by-pass students"**, they were said to pose a theat to the stablility of the national higher education systems. The Commission instituted infringement proceedings on grounds of freedom of movement. These were subsequently suspended; Austria and Belgium were given until the end of 2016 to support their cases with reliable data. Meanwhile, in a seemingly successful attempt to discourage French applicants, the Belgian authorities have introduced a filter examination at the end of the first year of courses in medicine and dentistry.[9]

1.6     Partly as the result of these developments, **German medical schools** continue to be hugely oversubscribed. This has led to the creation both of private schools and of franchise arrangements between universities and hospitals. Anxiety surrounding their quality assurance has led the German Rectors' Conference to propose a set of guidelines.[10]


## 2   The European Commission

2.1   The Commission's Work Programme for 2016 is focused on intra-EU capacity building and the push for growth.[11] The **New Skills Agenda**[12] will "promote life-long investment in people, from vocational training and higher education through to digital and high-tech expertise and the life skills needed for citizens' active engagement in changing workplaces and societies." Specifically, this means upping the skills base in the Digital Single Market (DSM), backed by effective recognition procedures, and includes a revamp of the EURES job mobility portal.[13]

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[6] http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/
[7] https://www.eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/bologna/02_European_Approach_QA_of_Joint_Programmes_v1_0.pdf
[8] See the list at https://www.eqar.eu/register/search.html
[9] http://www.letudiant.fr/educpros/actualite/medecine-et-dentaire-le-nombre-d-etudiants-chute-en-belgique.html
[10] http://www.hrk.de/resolutions-publications/resolutions/resolution/convention/franchising-models-in-medicine-and-medical-schools/
[11] http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/cwp_2016_en.pdf
[12] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=958&langId=en
[13] This has now been approved by Council. See http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/12/02-new-eures-green-light/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=New+EURES+%28European+employment+services%29+network%3a+the+Council+gives+the+green+light+

2.2   Much of the burden of this is to be borne by DG EAC and DG EMPL, more closely bound together in the Juncker Commission than previously.[14] The work will involve, for example, achieving greater **alignment of the Bologna and European qualifications frameworks** (QF-EHEA and EQF), absorbing "international qualifications" (e.g. Microsoft certificates) and pushing ahead with ESCO[15], the taxonomy of European skills, competences, qualifications and occupations, which hopes to link EQF to the International Labour Organisation's classification of occupations. All of this implies a higher education policy framework tightly – and controversially – focused on labour market needs, on eliminating skills mismatches, and on the efficient recognition of academic and professional qualifications.

2.3   The Commission's vision is set out in a 2011 Communication[16] which covers the full range of higher education policy strands: research, mobility, quality assurance, governance, labour market access, etc. Its updating of vision and strategy, which it labels "modernisation", will follow its analysis of an ongoing **consultation**, due to close at the end of February.[17]

2.4   In January, the second phase of DG GROW's **evaluation of recognised professions** came to an end. MSs had been asked to supply detailed breakdowns of their regulated professions and the activities covered, together with statements of intent regarding which of them they intended to retain. The professions were divided into two clusters. Of the first cluster, reports on architects and civil engineers have been published[18]. For comments on the architecture report, see page 12 below. The second cluster reports (which include, *inter alia*, physiotherapists, psychologists and dental hygienists) are not yet available. The third phase of the evaluation will be the drafting of action plans at MS level.

2.5   Following the reorganistion of the Commission under Juncker, details of the **Group of Coordinators** have a new internet address.[19] However, no minutes have been published since June 2014.

2.6   DG GROW's web page on **infringements** has also been moved[20], but still not updated since 2014. Press releases nevertheless show that MSs have been dilatory and the Commission active:

- In April, Germany was asked to amend its legislation to accommodate the recognition of Croatian architects and construction engineers; and Hungary was taken to court for excluding foreign notaries;[21]
- In June, Austria was asked to give proper treatment to foreign ski instructors; a number of MSs were asked to comply with EU rules on freedom of movement – Austria, Cyprus, Germany and Malta (architects and engineers), Austria (veterinarians), and Spain (lawyers).[22]

2.7   Worthy of mention in the area of higher education are reports by **EURYDICE**[23] published during 2015:

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[14] As reported in the previous Update, skills-related elements of DG EAC have been transferred to DG EMPL.
[15] https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home
[16] http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0567&from=en
[17] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/consultations/new-modernisation-agenda_en.htm
[18] http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/free-movement-professionals/transparency-mutual-recognition/index_en.htm
[19]
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2061&NewSearch=1&NewSearch=1
[20] http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/infringements/index_en.htm
[21] Details of both are at http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-4871_en.htm
[22] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5199_en.htm
[23] https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Publications

- Adult Education and Training in Europe; widening access to learning opportunities
- The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report
- The Teaching Profession in Europe: Practices, Perceptions and Policies
- National Student Fee and Support Systems in European Higher Education 2015/16
- Structural Indicators for Monitoring Education and Training Systems in Europe – 2015
- The Structure of the European Education Systems 2015/16
- National Sheets on Education Budgets in Europe – 2015.

# 3  The European Parliament

## 3.1  CULT  Culture and Education

Work in progress in CULT includes the following:

➢ own-initiative report on "Erasmus+ and other tools to foster mobility in VET – a lifelong learning approach"; the rapporteur is the Spanish Green, Ernest Maragall. The draft report[24] will be voted in February and should reach the plenary in April. *Inter alia*, it:

> notes that although the Bologna process has spearheaded significant achievements, it has also led to the fragmentation of university programmes and the standardisation of inefficient processes; takes the view that, without prejudice to the concept of single-tier unified programmes, studying at a European university should be based on a two-tier model, with the initial phase lasting no less than three years, and that educational institutions should be given more flexibility in the use of modules and the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

➢ own-initiative "Follow-up of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020)"; rapporteur Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Polish Conservative. The draft report[25] will be voted in February.

## 3.2  IMCO  Internal Market and Consumer Protection

3.2.1  IMCO has produced an "onoing work plan" for 2015-16,[26] which envisages no own-initiative reports on the recognition of professional qualifications. On the other hand, it promises a **public hearing** (date to be confirmed), presumably to consider the transposition of the amended Directive.

3.2.2  In January, the report "**Towards a Digital Single Market Act**"[27] was approved in plenary session. It:

> encourages the member states to integrate the acquisition of digital skills into school curricula, to improve the necessary technical equipment and to promote cooperation

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[24] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fNONSGML%2bCOMPARL%2bPE-569.848%2b02%2bDOC%2bPDF%2bV0%2f%2fEN

[25] Available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=COMPARL&reference=PE-573.113&format=PDF&language=EN&secondRef=02

[26] https://polcms.secure.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/upload/94006f23-e78c-4763-8142-a11f82c0057b/IMCO%20WORK%20PLAN%202015-2016%20December%202015.pdf

[27] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P8-TA-2016-0009+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN

> between universities and technical colleges with the aim of developing common e-learning curricula that are recognised in the ECTS system;
> […]
> encourages the Commission and the member states to create the basis for mutual recognition of digital skills and qualifications by establishing a European certificate or grading system, following the example of the European common framework of reference for language learning and teaching.

3.2.3   Also in January, IMCO gave a first consideration to a draft report[28] by Lara Comi (Italy, EPP) on the **Single Market Strategy**. Among other things, it:

> supports the Commission proposal to introduce a services passport to help service providers demonstrate that they satisfy the requirements applicable to them in the member state where they wish to provide their service on a temporary basis; considers that this initiative should be aimed at reducing administrative burden for service providers and simplifying the procedures applicable to cross-border service provision.

3.2.4   In November the committee voted down a draft report[29] by Virginie Rozière (France, S&D) on recommendations to the Commission on the **Trade in Services Agreement** (TiSA). This was largely because of the much broader spread of disagreement regarding the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism. The report had urged the Commission "to ensure reciprocity in the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, in particular by establishing a legal framework, and that mobility is promoted by making it easier for professionals in the sectors covered by the agreement to obtain visas."[30]

## 4  New comitology

4.1   Over the last year, professional bodies have lobbied the Commission intensively on the changes to **Annex V** of the amended Directive. Annex V spells out the detail of the bodies of knowledge, skills and competences that constitute the agreed minimum training specifications. Bringing it on stream involves the drafting and approval of delegated acts, which – along with implementing acts – are relatively new[31] legislative mechanisms still unsupported by stakeholder consensus. Comitology experts regard them as complex and controversial. It is worth rehearsing the main issues.[32]

> ➢ **Implementing acts** create the legal authority necessary for MSs to enshrine particular requirements in their own national legislation. Examples are the mechanics of the European Professional Card (EPC) and the putting in place of the alert mechanism.[33] The Commission

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[28] See the meeting documents at
http://www.emeeting.europarl.europa.eu/committees/agenda/201601/IMCO/IMCO%282016%290125_1/sitt-1575345
[29] See the meeting documents at
http://www.emeeting.europarl.europa.eu/committees/agenda/201511/IMCO/IMCO%282015%29119_1P/sitt-1270703
[30] More information on TiSA and other trade deals is available in EUA's series of Updates posted at
http://www.eua.be/policy-representation/higher-education-policies/trade-agreements
[31] They were introduced in the Lisbon Treaty of 2011.
[32] This section owes much to the newsletters published by http://www.comitology.eu/, as well as to the *Handbook on EU secondary legislation,* by Daniel Guéguen and Vicky Marissen (PACT European Affairs, 2013).
[33] The implementing act for the EPC and the alert mechanism was published in June and can be found at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015R0983&from=EN

is subject to the oversight of a Committee composed of MS representatives. Although the Commission chairs the meetings, it has no vote.[34]

➢ **Delegated acts** allow the Commission to modify so-called non-essential elements of the amended Directive. Both Council and Parliament have power of veto over whatever measures the Commission might propose – and both can revoke the decision to delegate. The Commission is committed "to carry out appropriate and transparent consultations well in advance, in particular with experts from competent authorities and bodies, professional associations and educational establishments of all the member states, and where appropriate with experts from social partners."[35] Delegated acts are required for: amending Annex V; introducing new medical and dental specialties; and introducing CTFs. These are "non-essential" in the sense that they make the Directive more relevant to the circumstances which it is designed to address, without changing its core logic.

4.2   In what respects have these instruments proved **complex and controversial**?

➢ Commission, Council and Parliament may fail to agree on whether a particular measure should be undertaken by implementing act or by delegated act: such a case could require recourse to the ECJ.
➢ The procedure for delegated acts is said to be insufficiently transparent. There has been no obligation on the Commission to publish draft delegated acts; neither is there a register of delegated acts.[36]
➢ There is dispute over what degree of control MSs can exert over their content.
➢ There is a distinction between implementing and delegated acts which have "significant impact" and those which do not. It is not clear who or what makes the distinction.
➢ Monitoring the content of delegated acts and their relationship to the Directives has placed heavy strain on the resources of Parliament.

4.3   The **draft Inter-institutional Agreement** (IIA), published by Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans last May, addressed some of these issues. It proposed that draft delegated acts be posted on the Commission website, triggering a four-week stakeholder consultation period. It also set out the criteria for better determining the difference between implementing and delegated acts.

4.3.1   What, according to the draft IIA, is the likely **legislative trajectory of a delegated act?** Following the adoption of a Directive, an act is put on the Commission's agenda, with a 12-month lead-in time if an impact assessment shows it be "significant". An Expert Group is consulted on the draft, whereupon it is opened up to stakeholder comment during the four-week consultation window. When adopted by the Commission, it is forwarded to Council and Parliament for consideration.

4.3.2   By the turn of the year, Commission and Council were said to have agreed that a **register of delegated acts** would be set up by the end of 2017 and that Council and Parliament would have access to Expert Group meetings. However, the criteria distinguishing the delegated from the implementing acts have been shelved. Parliament is now expected to pronounce on the IIA in March.

4.4   The question of **Expert Groups** was taken up by Emily O'Reilly, the European Ombudsman. She launched an own-initiative investigation (OI/6/2014/NF) into their composition and transparency.

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[34] The Committee's rules of procedure are accessible via the Comitology Register at
http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm?do=List.list
[35]  Commission "statement" appended to text of the amended Directive.
[36] There is, however, a register of implementing acts. See http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regcomitology/index.cfm

The Commission responded by adopting a number of her suggestions.[37] It agreed, *inter alia*, to set up a register of experts early in 2016. The Ombudsman is now pushing harder on two particular fronts: a clear definition of the "balance" that the Commission strives to reach when selecting experts; publication of the minutes of Expert Group meetings.[38] She has asked for a response by the end of April.

## 5 The seven sectoral professions

**Medical doctor**

The requirement that medical doctors undergo at least 5 500 hours of theoretical and practical training is retained in the amended Directive, but is set within a minimum five-year, rather than six-year, period. This is to accommodate the practice in those MSs that have effectively operated five-year programmes for some time. That they were able to do so is partly attributable to the wording of the previous Directive, which specified a number of hours "or" a number of years. The syntax has been changed to remove all ambiguity.

➢ The previous EUA Update reported the concern expressed by the Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE) on the need for more reliable **quality assurance** of training programmes. It has held various workshops designed to carry the idea forward.[39]

➢ AMSE's preoccupation with the proliferation of new training providers is shared by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). HRK has called for franchised programmes to be "appraised" and for private providers to be "accredited". [40]

➢ The European Network of Competent Medical Authorities (ENMCA) has indicated its opposition to **common training frameworks**, on the grounds that proposals will emanate from professional rather than regulatory bodies, that the comitology (i.e. a delegated act) lacks transparency, and that there is no guarantee of reliable quality assurance.[41]

➢ The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), along with eight other professional bodies, has issued a declaration on **CPD**, calling for the strengthening of formal accreditation systems, while avoiding "over-regulation" at the European level.[42]

**Dentist**

The amended Directive leaves the basic training requirements for dentists unchanged. It simply, in a move welcomed by the Council of European Dentists (CED), expresses the five-year minimum course duration also as 5 000 hours (Article 34).

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[37] See http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/cases/correspondence.faces/en/60019/html.bookmark
[38] See http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/press/release.faces/en/63520/html.bookmark
[39] http://www.amse-med.eu/sub/news
[40] http://www.hrk.de/resolutions-publications/resolutions/resolution/convention/franchising-models-in-medicine-and-medical-schools/
[41] http://www.enmca.eu/enmca-position-paper-common-training-frameworks-and-tests-224
[42] http://doc.cpme.eu:591/adopted/2016/FINAL.EMOs.consensus.statement.CPD.December.2015.pdf

- Like other professional bodies, CED has been in discussion with DG GROW regarding the drafting of **Annex V**. In conjunction with the Association for Dental Education in Europe (ADEE), it has pressed the Commission to replace the "subject list" with a "learning outcome/competence" list.[43]

- CED has also come out strongly against **common training frameworks**.[44] In its view, the measure fails to assure quality and public safety and offers no guarantees that proposals would come from representative bodies. The Directive, says the CED, already contains sufficient scope to allow the introduction of new dental specialties.

- ADEE, meanwhile, is preparing a European Dental Education best practice guide. This will support the recently founded LEADER[45] programme of **peer-reviewed self-assessment** by dental schools, which ADEE prefers to training provider accreditation at the European level.

**General care nurse**

In the amended Directive, 4 600 hours remains the required minimum duration of the basic training programme. The major change concerns the length of successfully completed general education which must precede it. Previously it was at least 10 years. Now, thanks to sustained pressure for nursing to become a graduate profession, the requirement becomes 12 years in those MSs which deliver nursing training in HE institutions. In a minority, where it is located in the vocational sector, the 10-year requirement is retained; in these VET institutions, the ECTS option is not available as an additional way of expressing course duration. Wherever training takes place, general care nurses must now acquire the competences detailed in Article 31.7. These are in addition to the list of knowledge and skills set out in the previous Directive.

- The declared priority of the **European Federation of Nurses Associations** (EFN) is to monitor the implementation of the Directive, specifically to ensure that mobile general care nurses from countries which have inadequately transposed it do not fall into the General System.[46]

- EFN has also set out the principles on which it believes MSs should base **CPD** policy and provision.[47]

- The European Federation of Nurse Educators (FINE), for its part, is working towards the codification of the **competences of nurse educators**.[48]

- Meanwhile, a consortium led by the Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL) has been contracted by DG SANCO to explore the feasibility of a common training framework focusing on the **core competences of healthcare assistants** (CC4HCA).[49] Following in the footsteps of PHAR-QA (see below) the consortium is embarking on a Delphi consultation of stakeholders. EFN has doubts about the viability of a CTF, given the wide range of discrepant practice in MSs.[50]

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[43] http://www.adee.org/documents/newsletter/ADEE_Newsletter_Vol11_No1_April_2015.pdf, p.3
[44] http://www.eudental.eu/library/policy.html?filter_id=65
[45] http://www.adee.org/leader/ADEE-Leaders-15.08.pdf
[46] See http://www.efnweb.be/?p=7582
[47] http://www.efnweb.be/wp-content/uploads/EFN-Position-Paper-on-CPD-Final042015.pdf
[48] See the outcomes of its recent conference at http://www.fine-europe.eu/?portfolio=1137&lang=en
[49] See the project website at https://www.nivel.nl/en/cc4hca
[50] See http://www.efnweb.be/wp-content/uploads/EFN-Position-Paper-on-Principles-Underpinning-the-Development-of-HCAs-Final-Oct.2015.pdf

- Irish, Spanish and UK competent authorities met recently with a view to re-establishing a **network of European nursing regulators**.[51]

## Midwife

For midwives, there has long been more than one route to qualification. In the amended Directive, Route 1 (three full-time years of theoretical and practical study) must now be preceded by at least 12, rather than 10, years of successfully completed general education. Routes 2 and 3 remain open, as before, to intending midwives who have already qualified as general care nurses and who may or may not have completed one year of professional experience. For all three routes, ECTS is now an additional tool for expressing course durations. As for the content of the training, the Article 40.3 adds elements of pharmacology, as well as a much more elaborated specification of the competences of the midwife and of the legal limits of the midwife's clinical responsibility.

- At its annual meeting in Bucharest in 2015, the European Midwives Association (EMA) used the venue to press for better recognition of **midwives in Romania** and to highlight the predicament of pregnant refugees. Its 2016 meeting will be held in London.[52]

## Veterinary surgeon

Article 38.3 of the amended Directive lists the knowledge and skills required of veterinary surgeons, putting greater stress on competences than previously.

- The Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), pressing for the revision of Annex V, has drafted an elaborated set of **"day 1" competences**, i.e. those that should have been acquired by the end of the basic training programme.[53] Meanwhile, FVE's partner organisation, the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), will continue to press its application for membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

## Pharmacist

The amended Directive changes little in the requirements laid on basic training programmes in pharmacy. It specifies that the mandatory six-month traineeship may be undertaken during or after the four-year course and, in Article 45.2, it sets out a longer and more detailed list of the activities which a qualified pharmacist may be expected to undertake.

- As the PHAR-QA project draws to its conclusion in spring 2016, it is working to complete its survey of **how professionals rank their competences**.[54]

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[51] http://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/regulators/nursing-competent-authorities-meeting-communique-10-september-2015.pdf
[52] For details, see http://www.cvent.com/events/european-midwives-association-conference-2016/event-summary-6324523e71b943d28e37a6e769108f53.aspx
[53] http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/eccvt_d1c_annex_v_2015__adopted.pdf
[54] The first report of the first round of the survey is posted at http://www.phar-qa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/pharqa_netw_delphi_anal_round1_intro_201504.pdf

> ➤ The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) is most advanced, at least in the healthcare sector, in the planning of a **common training framework** (CTF) at EQF level 7.[55] It is currently surveying its members' views on labour mobility.

## Architect

The qualification route for architects (a four-year training programme or equivalent) has been replaced in the amended Directive by two possibilities: five full-time years of study OR four years plus a two-year traineeship which cannot be undertaken before the end of year three (Article 46.1).

Many in the profession will nevertheless continue to lobby for a single route of five plus two years. The Architects Council of Europe (ACE), notably, laments the fact that the traineeship is effectively optional. "Professional practical experience equips the architectural graduate with the skills to function effectively in the complex and challenging practice environment dealing with contracts, regulations, finance, contractors, other professionals, site supervision, consumers and clients. These skills, which can only be delivered in a live practice environment, are essential."[56]

- ACE also bemoans the breakdown of the **notification** arrangement by which the Commission lists the titles and providers of compliant courses in Annex V of the Directive. Recent press reports in Portugal illustrate the problems that arise when MSs fail to notify.[57] Architecture is the only one of the seven sectoral professions in which academic programmes are not legally obliged to be compliant in the automatic recognition regime. Hence the need to list those which are.

- Architecture is one of the two professions (the other is accountancy) which, in the framework of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)[58], is pursuing the possibility of an **EU-US mutual recognition agreement** (MRA). ACE is working with the US National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) to see how their 2005 agreement might be updated.[59]

- Under the aegis of the European Association for Architectural Education (EAAE), a consortium led by the **Oslo School of Architecture and Design** is running a three-year ERASMUS-funded project to gather best practice in architectural education and to consolidate links with CPD.[60]

- The European Network of Heads of Schools of Architecture (ENHSA) has set up an **observatory website** designed to boost vertical mobility between Bachelor and Master programmes.[61]

- Horizon 2020 is funding the PROF/TRAC project, set up to develop an "open training and qualification platform for professionals dealing with **near zero energy buildings** (nZEB)."[62] Two of the intended outcomes are skills mapping in the various professions which together

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[55] http://www.eahp.eu/practice-and-policy/common-training-framework-0
[56] http://ace.mmwcrm.com/en/public/webview/show/48/9861
[57] See, for example, https://www.publico.pt/sociedade/noticia/jovens-arquitectos-sem-reconhecimento-para-trabalhar-no-reino-unido-1718478
[58] As indicated in footnote 30, EUA publishes Updates on TTIP and other trade agreements in which higher education might figure. See http://www.eua.be/policy-representation/higher-education-policies/trade-agreements
[59] http://www.ace-cae.eu/uploads/tx_jidocumentsview/ACE_Info_February.pdf
[60] http://www.eaae.be/activities/wicked-problems/
[61] http://www.enhsa.net/masterobservatory/
[62] http://proftrac.eu/open-training-platform-for-nzeb-professionals.html

work in the field of nZEB, together with the development of a CPD-focused training and qualification platform. Professional bodies dominate the project, which also includes two higher education institutions: the Czech Technical University of Prague and Aalborg University (Denmark).

As mentioned above (para.2.4), DG GROW's **evaluation of recognised professions** came to an end in January. Its summary of MSs' submission regarding architecture drew a reaction of (perhaps feigned) surprise.[63] It revealed substantial variation in the length and content of architectural training, in the definitions of the profession and the activities reserved to it, the role of professional bodies, CPD, and such matters as insurance and fees. DG GROW notes the difficulty in finding rational explanations for such diversity, given the largely shared public policy objectives. It concludes that MSs show "little appetite to seek improvements" and asks that national action plans give due consideration to the issues raised.

# 6  The European University Association

**EUA** engages in a range of activities on a number of policy fronts: the Bologna Process, of which it is a consultative member, research, higher education governance and funding, quality assurance and capacity building.

6.1   As mentioned earlier, Bologna ministers meeting in Yerevan adopted the revised version of the **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area** (ESG). Part I deals with internal quality assurance and raises the question of how higher education institutions should adapt. A paper published by EUA provides some of the answers.[64]

6.2   EUA has organised a programme of follow-up webinars and workshops in the framework of the **EQUIP** project (Enhancing Quality through Innovative Policy and Practice). These kick off in February and run through to June.[65]

6.3     The **10th European Quality Assurance Forum** (EQAF) held in London also focused on the revised ESG.[66] The 2016 event will take place in Ljubljana in November.[67]

6.4     EUA's **UNI-SET** project (UNIversities in the SET-Plan) is working with employers on the identification of new professional profiles in the context of the EU's Strategic Energy Technology Plan.[68]

Please feel free to forward this update to any other interested parties.

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[63] The report has been posted at http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/free-movement-professionals/transparency-mutual-recognition/index_en.htm
[64] See http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications-homepage-list/eua_occ_papers_esg_web.pdf?sfvrsn=4
[65] http://eua.be/activities-services/news/newsitem/2015/12/17/registration-open-for-equip-events
[66] Presentations are available at http://www.eua.be/activities-services/events/event/2015/11/19/default-calendar/10th-european-quality-assurance-forum-taking-stock-and-looking-forward
[67] Details will be posted at http://www.eua.be/activities-services/events/event/2016/11/17/default-calendar/11th-european-quality-assurance-forum
[68] See http://uni-set.eu/index.php/project/timeline