



# Success factors of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

Aurelija Valeikienė, Deputy Director of SKVC  
Head of Lithuanian ENIC/NARIC

6 June 2022

INQA/AHE Forum Mexico

# Presentation outline

---

- ✓ Trust building over time
- ✓ Structures as the backbone
- ✓ Information provision as key
- ✓ Development of best practices
- ✓ Principles of recognition, including for cross-border qualifications
- ✓ Quality assurance system for recognition
- ✓ Monitoring of implementation of the LRC
- ✓ Moving towards the automatic recognition of qualifications

# Lisbon Recognition Convention: development based on trust

- Based on a number of predecessor treaties (concluded between 1953-1990)
- Developed by a group of experts, representing stakeholders of higher education



## Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region

CETS No.: 165

Special conditions of opening for signature

### Opening for signature

Place: Lisbon  
Date : 11/4/1997

### Entry into force

Conditions: 5 Ratifications including 3 member States of the Council of Europe and/or the UNESCO Europe Region.  
Date : 1/2/1999

### Member States of the Council of Europe

	Signature	Ratification	Entry into force	Notes	R.	D.	A.	T.	C.	O.
Lithuania	11/4/1997	17/12/1998	1/2/1999							

# Co-sharing of responsibilities



- Two bodies are to oversee, promote and facilitate the implementation of the LRC:
- **the Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (LRCC)** – meeting at least once every three years to:
    - oversee, promote and facilitate the implementation of the LRC by adopting [by a majority of the Parties], recommendations, declarations, protocols and models of good practice to guide the competent authorities of the Parties in their implementation of the LRC and in their consideration of applications for the recognition of qualifications.
  - **Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee (LRCC) Bureau** – meeting at least on four occasions between each LRCC Session
    - drafts recommendations, declarations, protocols and models of good practice that are submitted to the LRCC for adoption. These aim to support LRC implementation;
    - conducts monitoring exercises on LRC implementation by Parties

# Working together

- **Two networks to promote and facilitate the implementation of the LRC:**
  - the European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Mobility and Recognition (the ENIC Network) – one joint meeting with NARIC per year
  - The National Academic Recognition and Information Centres network (NARIC Network) – meeting once a year



Praha (Czech Republic) 2018 →

← Vilnius (Lithuania) 1999





# Governance of ENIC and NARIC networks

- **ENIC Bureau (EB) and NARIC Advisory Board (NAB) [four yearly meetings]:**
  - provides advice on the design, implementation and monitoring of the workplan, oversees the preparation of meetings, and prepares position papers on the recognition of qualifications and relations with the other stakeholders
  - makes recommendations to UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission on academic mobility and recognition issues
  - may represent the ENIC-NARIC Network at events organised by stakeholders and other entities to improve its function and visibility
  
- **Working Party on Electronic Communication for Recognition (ELCORE Working Group) has the aim to foster capacity building and oversight of the ENIC-NARIC Networks' [three yearly meetings]:**
  - information system management and development (e.g., ENIC-NARIC.net Web site, listserv)
  - strategic communication (e.g., social media channels)

# Lisbon Recognition Convention: Subsidiary texts

---

- [Guidelines For National Online Information Systems](#) 2019
- [Recommendation on Recognition of Qualifications Held by Refugees, Displaced Persons and Persons in a Refugee-like Situation](#), November 2017
- [Revised Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees and Explanatory Memorandum](#), June 2004, revised February 2016
- [Recommendation on the Use of Qualifications Frameworks in the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications](#), June 2013
- [Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and Explanatory Memorandum](#), 2001, revised 2010
- [Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education](#), 2001, revised June 2007
- [The Diploma Supplement](#), June 2007
- [Joint ENIC/NARIC Charter of Activities and Services](#), June 2004
- [Recommendation on International Access Qualifications](#), 1999

# Information provision is key

<https://www.enic-naric.net> + the mailing lists of countries and heads of centres



The screenshot shows the homepage of the ENIC-NARIC website. At the top, there is a browser address bar displaying "https://www.enic-naric.net". Below this is a navigation bar with an "Accessibility" section containing buttons for "A-", "A", "A+", and "A". The main header features the "enic-naric.net" logo with the tagline "gateway to recognition of academic and professional qualifications". To the right of the logo is a search bar with the text "Search in the site:" and a "Start searching" button. A central image shows a group of five diverse young adults smiling and standing together. On the right side of the header, there is a link for "Contact details - Restricted Area". Below the header, the page is divided into two columns: "ENIC: European Network of Information Centres in the European Region" on the left and "NARIC: National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union" on the right. The main heading is "About the ENIC-NARIC Networks". Below this heading is a paragraph explaining the site's purpose as a joint initiative of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and UNESCO, designed to assist the networks in carrying out their tasks and to help other organizations and individuals find information on international academic and professional mobility. At the bottom of the page, there are four navigation links: "Details about Enic-Naric", "About the governance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention", "About the governance of the ENIC-NARIC Networks", and "Country pages".

Accessibility A- A A+ A

enic-naric.net  
gateway to recognition of academic and professional qualifications

unesco

Contact details - [Restricted Area](#)

Search in the site:  
 [Start searching](#)

ENIC: European Network of Information Centres in the European Region

NARIC: National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the European Union

## About the ENIC-NARIC Networks

This site, a joint initiative of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, has been created primarily as a tool to assist the ENIC-NARIC Networks in carrying out the tasks they have been mandated to accomplish within their own jurisdiction, by directing them to up-to-date information supplied and maintained by the competent bodies in each member country and by each member organisation. It is also its express purpose to help other interested organisations and individuals easily find information on current issues in international academic and professional mobility, and on procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications.


[Details about Enic-Naric](#) [About the governance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention](#) [About the governance of the ENIC-NARIC Networks](#) [Country pages](#)



# Transparency instruments



**European Qualifications Passport for Refugees**  
[www.coe.int/eqpr](http://www.coe.int/eqpr)



**DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT**  
**I. PRINCIPLES AND GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THOSE PRODUCING SUPPLEMENTS**

ECTS Users' Guide



**ESG 2015**



Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area



# Lisbon Recognition Convention: the five main principles

---

- applicants have a right to **fair assessment**
- recognition is granted unless there is a proven **substantial difference**
- encouragement to **compare of learning outcomes** rather than programme contents
- in cases of negative decisions – the **proof of burden** on the competent recognition authority to demonstrate the existence of a substantial difference
- applicant's **right to appeal** of the recognition decision.

# Definition of a substantial difference

---

**LEVEL:** a place of a qualification within an education system or a qualifications framework.

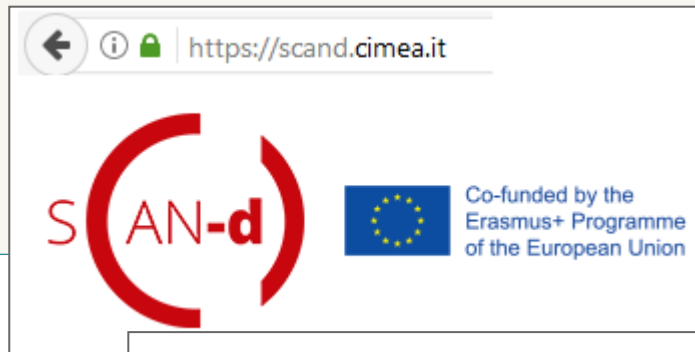
**WORKLOAD:** an amount of work required to successfully complete a unit of a learning, measured in length of time / credits

**PROFILE:** The overall orientation of an institution / programme (academic / professional); also specialisation.

**QUALITY:** status of the awarding institution and/or programme, meeting at least minimum standards.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Knowledge, skills and attitudes; formal structure of the programme; formal rights the qualification gives.

# Capacity building and development of practice



Support LRC compliant recognition practices in HEIs

Outcomes of the I-Comply Peer Learning Activity

26 November 2019, IUAV, Palazzo Badoer, Venice, Italy



world higher education database

# WHED

International Association of Universities' Worldwide Database of Higher Education Institutions, Systems and Credentials



TPG-LRC

TPG-LRC - Thematic Peer Group on the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in EHEA countries

June 2020

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



# nuffic

The Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education

## Foreign education systems

Download extensive descriptions of foreign education systems.

Select a country...

The documents provide information about the main qualifications issued in a specific country, as well as how these qualifications are evaluated in the Netherlands.

[Dutch versions of these documents](#)

# EAR Manual + EAR-HEI Manual

Adopted by Ministers of Education of the European Higher Education Area countries  
<http://ear.enic-naric.net/emanual/index.aspx> (2012)

## eManual

- 1. SCHEMATIC OUTLINE
- 2. TRANSPARENCY AND INFORMATION PROVISION
- 3. ACCREDITATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE
- 4. AUTHENTICITY
- 5. PURPOSE OF RECOGNITION
- 6. DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT
- 7. QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS
- 8. CREDITS
- 9. LEARNING OUTCOMES
- 10. SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCES
- 11. ALTERNATIVE RECOGNITION
- 12. REFUGEES
- 13. NON-TRADITIONAL LEARNING
- 14. TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION
- 15. JOINT PROGRAMMES
- 16. NON-RECOGNISED INSTITUTIONS
- 17. DIPLOMA AND ACCREDITATION MILLS
- 18. SOURCES
- 19. GLOSSARY

## The European Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions



Practical guidelines for credential evaluators and admissions officers to provide fair and flexible recognition of foreign degrees and studies abroad

Third edition, February 2020

**nuffic**  
meet the world

# Recognition of transnational education (EAR Manual) [1]



Two types of situations possible:

- **collaborative arrangements**, where study programmes of the awarding institution are delivered or provided by another partner institution (e.g. an institution from country x allows an institution from country y to deliver its programme and the qualification is awarded by an institution from country x); or
- **non-collaborative arrangements**, where study programmes are delivered or provided directly by an awarding institution (e.g. a university from country x has a branch in country y; it provides the programme and awards the qualification).

# Recognition of transnational education (EAR Manual) [2]

---

**Competent recognition authorities should recognise qualifications and credits** from transnational providers as long as the following conditions are met:

- these are **accredited** in the country where the institution offering the programme and awarding the qualification is located
- the provider is **permitted** (by home and host authorities) to operate in the host country
- the provider adheres to the **principles** outlined in the ["Revised Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education" June 2007](#) and in the [Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education](#).

When assessing qualifications obtained through transnational education it is recommended to check:

- **the status** (i.e. recognised or accredited) of the institutions involved in the transnational education programme and/or the status of the programme leading to the qualification
- whether the transnational arrangements - through which the transnational education programme was established - **comply with the legislation in both receiving (host) and sending (home) countries** (incl. monitoring of quality provision)

# Quality Assurance of Recognition

The ENIC-NARIC quality assurance system is based on two parts:

1. **A self-evaluation tool** for ENIC-NARICs to objectively assess their recognition practice according to a set of **Standards & Guidelines** that are based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC), the EAR manual and the joint ENIC-NARIC Charter (see below);
2. **A peer review mechanism**, involving external experts who will review a centre based on its self-evaluation.

enic-naric.net

Version as of August 2019

## The ENIC-NARIC Networks' Quality Assurance System

*Self-evaluation & peer review protocol*

Authored by the networks under coordination of Nuffic

Adopted by the ENIC-NARIC networks





# LIREQA Recommendations

## Address four types of target audiences:

- higher education institutions,
- quality assurance agencies
- ENIC/NARIC centres
- other stakeholders - public authorities and networks

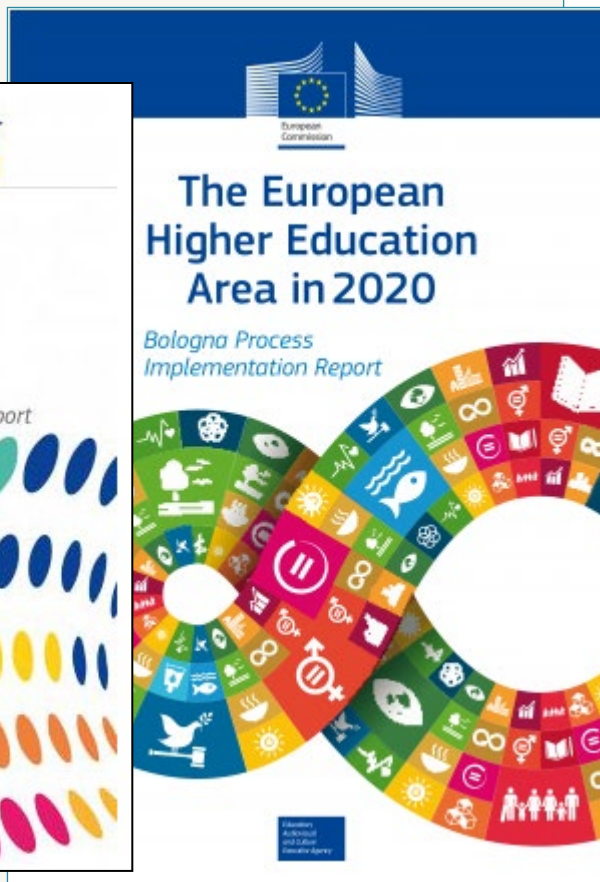


## INTEGRATING ACADEMIC RECOGNITION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE: PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

<https://www.enqa.eu/publications/integrating-academic-recognition-and-quality-assurance-practical-recommendations/>

# Monitoring of implementation

- LRCC conducts monitoring exercises on LRC implementation by Parties to formulate recommendations to the LRCC, based on findings.
- Monitoring across the 49 countries of EHEA



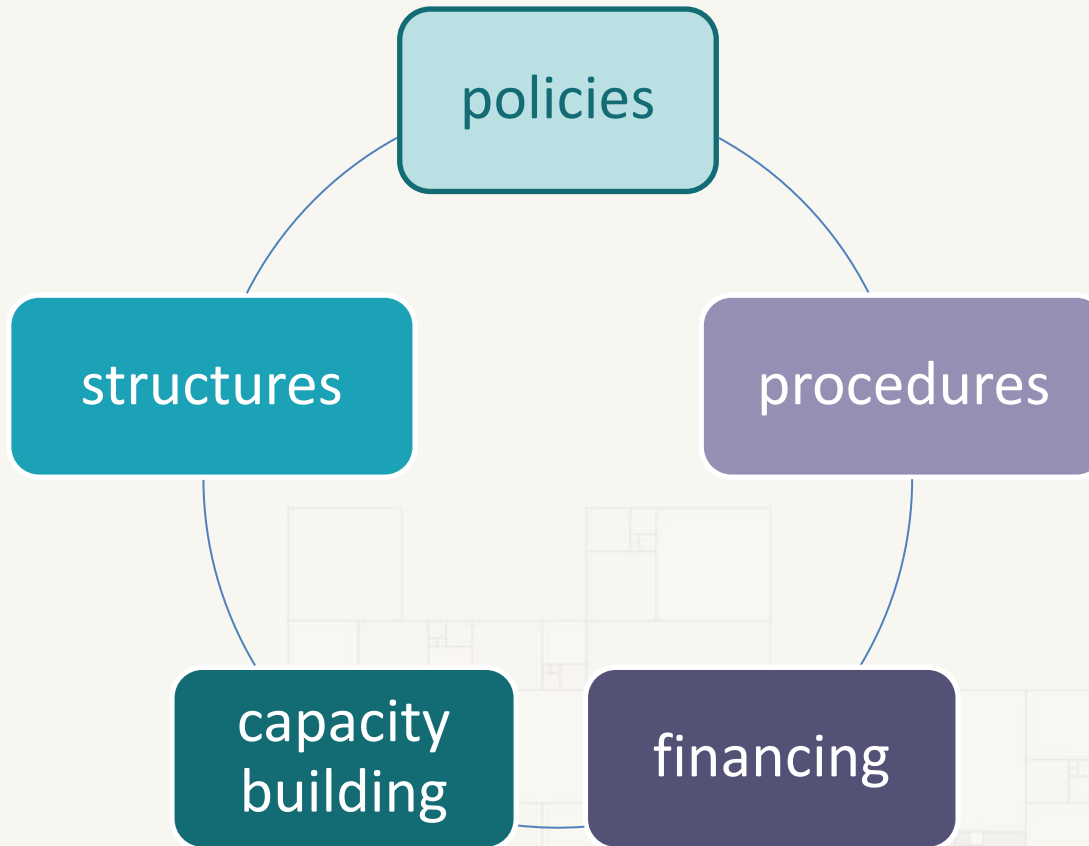
# Aiming towards automatic recognition (AR)

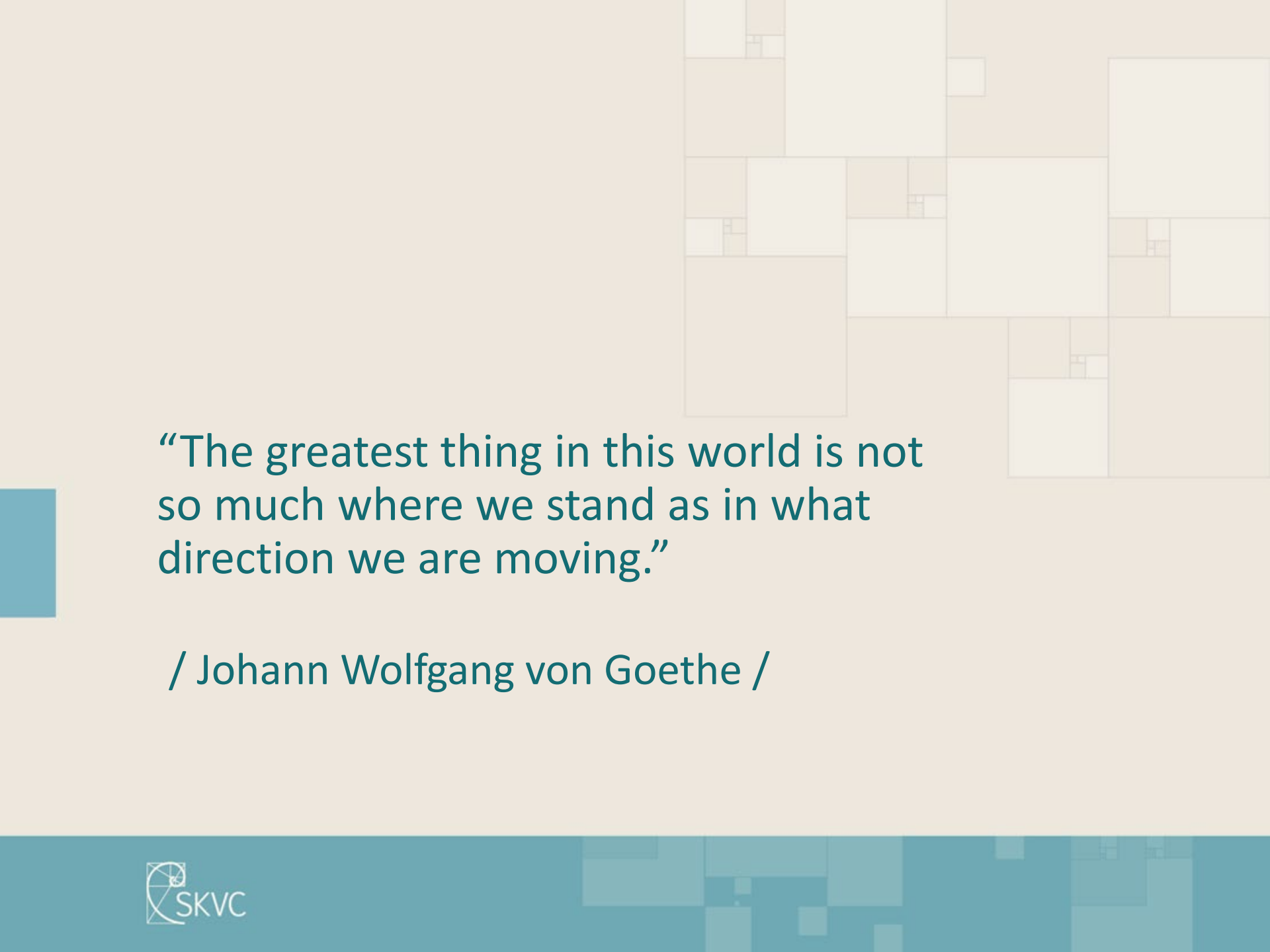
---

- AR relies on implementation of Bologna reforms and usage of common tools:
  - Implementation of **LRC**
  - Internal and external **QA** based on the ESG
  - **Three cycles + Learning outcomes** approach
  - **National qualification frameworks** aligned to EQF-LLL/ EHEA-QF
  - Issuing of **Diploma Supplement**
  - Usage of **ECTS** or compatible credit systems
  - digital **registers/data** bases
  - Implementation of **QA of recognition** services
- EU Council recommendation (2018/C 444/01) on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods abroad
- Automatic recognition of higher education qualifications treaty between Benelux countries (BE, NL, LU) and Baltic states (EE, LV, LT) – potentially open to other European Higher Education Area countries to join

# Success of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

---





“The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving.”

/ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe /