

Recognition of professional qualifications – EUA Update no. 9, June 2012

Since the last Update (September 2011) the crisis centred on the eurozone has deepened and the hopes pinned on the re-launch of the Single Market have risen accordingly. At the turn of the year, the Commission published its proposals for an amended Directive 2005/36/EC. These are available at http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/policy_developments/index_en.htm

EUA responded to the draft Directive with a briefing note summarising the principal implications for higher education institutions, together with its own position paper. Both documents can be downloaded from <http://www.eua.be/eua-work-and-policy-area/building-the-european-higher-education-area/bologna-and-professional-qualifications.aspx>

The legislative process is now well under way. Meanwhile, Bologna Process ministers have subsequently called for the recognition of professional qualifications to be better integrated into the fabric of the European Higher Education Area. EUA had informed the ministers as follows:

EUA is contributing to the ongoing discussions on the amendment of Directive 2005/36/EC [...] EUA contributed the university viewpoint during the consultation process which preceded the publication of draft legislation in December 2011 [...]

EUA welcomes the explicit inclusion of ECTS in the proposal now on the table as well as the commitment to putting in place conditions that will allow a learning-outcomes approach to be adopted in the medium term. EUA will continue to collaborate with all partners in this process, given the importance for EUA members of ensuring a better alignment between the EU regulation governing professional recognition and the frameworks and tools introduced as part of the ongoing Bologna reforms.

http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Policy_Positions/Universities_in_the_EHEA_EUA_Statement_for_Bologna_Ministerial_Conference.sflb.ashx

1 The Bologna Process

1.1 In April, Bologna ministers met in Bucharest for their periodic summit. They issued a **Communiqué** which reviewed progress in the various action lines. In a clear indication that the alignment of the Bologna Process and Directive 2005/36/EC is feasible, both technically and politically, ministers stressed that they

[...] welcome the clear reference to ECTS, to the European Qualifications Framework and to learning outcomes in the European Commission's proposal for a revision of the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. We underline the importance of taking appropriate account of these elements in recognition decisions.

1.2 Ministers also adopted a **mobility strategy** for the EHEA, 'Mobility for Better Learning', which declares:

Furthermore, in accrediting or recognising study programmes we must pay even greater attention to ensuring that the professional perspectives opened up by a study programme are clearly set out. We aim to facilitate the alignment of EU legislation on professional qualifications with the EHEA (e.g. reference to learning outcomes, promoting even greater comparability in the use of ECTS as the basis for such recognition). We request the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) to engage in a dialogue with the European Commission and the national authorities responsible for professional qualifications in order to establish effective cooperation to this end. In addition, we ask the BFUG to explore the feasibility of entrusting agencies registered in the EQAR [European Quality Assurance Register] with the assessment of the conformity of regulated qualifications.

The final sentence is in direct response to the Commission's proposal that the task of notifying new compliant qualifications be devolved to agencies designated by Member States.

1.3 In the Communiqué, ministers also considered the **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA** [ESG] and announced their intention to:

[...] revise the ESG to improve their clarity, applicability and usefulness, including their scope. The revision will be based upon an initial proposal to be prepared by the E4 [ENQA, ESU, EUA, EURASHE] in cooperation with Education International, BUSINESSEUROPE and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), which will be submitted to the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

How and whether the revised ESG will accommodate a sharper focus on professional qualifications remains to be seen. Recommendations will go to ministers at their next summit, scheduled for Yerevan in 2015. By that time, however, the legislative process will have been concluded and the new Directive enacted. The questions regarding which measures attach to implementing and delegated acts will have been resolved. It is clear that the Bologna Follow-Up Group will have to keep a close eye on the process throughout, if the articulation of Directive and Bologna Process is to be effective.

1.4 Finally, in the statement emanating from the **Third Bologna Policy Forum**, also held in Bucharest, government representatives from all global regions undertook to ease professional recognition and to promote mobility.

Links to all three documents from the Bucharest summit can be found at <http://www.ehea.info/>

1.5 **The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process Implementation Report**, published by EURYDICE, offers a comprehensive overview of the state of play and can be downloaded from http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/thematic_studies_en.php

1.6 The **Lisbon Recognition Convention**, which covers academic qualifications, celebrates its fifteenth anniversary at a conference in Toledo in June. Details are available at <http://www.educacion.gob.es/educacion/universidades/educacion-superior-universitaria/titulos/naric/15-Anniversary-of-the-Lisbon-Recognition-Convention.html>

1.7 As part of the consolidation of the European Area of Recognition [EAR] a consortium led by the Dutch NUFFIC has begun work on the adaptation of the **European Recognition Manual**. Originally drafted for ENIC/NARIC agencies, it is being re-formulated to suit the purposes of admissions staff and credential evaluators in higher education institutions. See <http://www.eurorecognition.eu/manual/>

2 The European Commission

2.1 DG MARKT

2.1.1 The draft of the revised Directive is backed up by two volumes of **impact assessment** which reveal the Commission's thinking on all its proposed changes; these are essential reading for those who wish to follow the debates closely. They have been posted at [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/docs_autres_institutions/commission_eu_ropeenne/sec/2011/1558/COM_SEC\(2011\)1558_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/docs_autres_institutions/commission_eu_ropeenne/sec/2011/1558/COM_SEC(2011)1558_EN.pdf), and http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/docs/policy_developments/modernising/resume_impact_assesment_SEC1559_en.pdf

2.1.2 Meanwhile, the DG's other plans for the professional qualifications, over and above its participation in the legislative process, are set out in its **Management Plan for 2012**. Its main tasks are to:

- * Update *Annex II* and *Annex V of the Professional Qualifications Directive* by adding new qualifications to facilitate migration of professionals in the framework of automatic recognition.
- * Launch a study on *Annex IV activities of the Professional Qualifications Directive* (craft, trade, industry) to prepare implementing measures in 2013.
- * Based on the work carried out in 2011, complete the study evaluating the Lawyers Directives, which could lead to a possible revision in 2013.
- * Update the professional qualifications database to facilitate use for stakeholders to keep track of which professional qualifications are regulated by

which competent authorities in different Member States.

* Work towards introduction of a *European professional card* to facilitate the free movement of professionals in the EU under a possible future modernisation of the Professional Qualifications Directive.

http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/synthesis/amp/doc/markt_mp.pdf

2.1.3 In January, the Commission published a study of '**reserves of activities** linked to professional qualification requirements in 13 MSs', together with their economic impact. It focuses on business services, construction and tourism. 'Reserve' means 'any requirement reserving the exercise of a service activity to the holders of a specific professional qualification'. The study comes in the distant wake of attempts initiated by DG COMP to open up the liberal professions in particular, as well as responding to the Monti Report's more recent call for a pruning of the regulated professions. It also prefigures the proposed mutual evaluation procedure by which MSs will justify to each other the degree of professional regulation which they exercise.

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/docs/news/20120214-summary_en.pdf

2.1.4 In its **Single Market Governance Report** (dated 2011, but published in 2012), the Commission promises that by the end of 2012 the Internal Market Information system [IMI] will be extended to cover all regulated professions. At the same time, the SOLVIT network will be enhanced, by reviewing its legal base and by integrating it into the technical framework of IMI. The EU Pilot (cf Update 5, August 2010) – a mechanism designed to obviate recourse to infringement procedures – will also be extended. These and other measures are intended to support the Single Market Act and to render the market more efficient. See http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/score/docs/relateddocs/single_market_governance_report_2011_en.pdf

2.1.5 Details of DG's intentions regarding the **extension of IMI** are set out in the minutes of the February 2012 meeting of the Coordinators Group: '[...] extension will be gradual. Professions will be grouped into 15 sectors representing 294 professions. Registration of competent authorities will also be gradual and will start for a selection of the most mobile and most representative professions in each of the 15 sectors.'

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/docs/coordinators/20120508-summary_en.pdf

2.1.6 In the stage of the **infringement procedure** which precedes referral to the Court of Justice, Greece has been issued a Reasoned Opinion by the Commission, demanding that it discontinue its practice of failing to recognise some post-graduate qualifications awarded in other Member States. Details are at <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/280&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

2.2 DG EMPL

2.2.1 Under the title of '**Towards a job-rich recovery**', the Commission has brought a number of its services together in a drive to promote growth and employment. The Communication looks for 'better synergy between the worlds of education and work' and undertakes to:

- seek, in cooperation with Member States and social partners, that Cedefop and Eurofound complement their expertise at EU and sectoral levels with stronger country-specific knowledge, and that cooperation between both institutions is reinforced;
- launch an EU Skills Panorama, notably based on the European Vacancy Monitor by the end of 2012;
- launch a new phase in the recognition of qualifications and skills with guidance for a systematic indication of European Qualification Framework levels in all new qualifications to be generated in the EU and stronger complementarities with the Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;
- from 2013 onwards ensure that at least one quarter of the qualifications issued every year have a reference of their European qualification level;
- launch the European Skills Passport by the end of 2012;
- support the setup of a network of representatives from both employment and education representatives to support the skills governance.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0173:FIN:EN:PDF>

2.2.2 The Commission has approved funding for a feasibility study into the setting up of a **European Sector Council on employment and skills for the nursing and care workforce**. Led by the European Health Management Association and by the University of Southampton, the study was launched in January 2012. The nursing project proposal and related presentations are available on the website of the European Federation of Public Service Unions; see item 8 at <http://www.epsu.org/a/8196>

2.3 DG SANCO

2.3.1 In annex to 'Towards a job-rich recovery' is an **Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce**. Proposing to address the imbalances in the distribution of healthcare workers throughout Europe and the dependence on third country labour, it follows the DG MARKET line on CPD – it is the responsibility of Member States. It looks to Erasmus for All (see 2.4.1 below) to facilitate cross-border training, but chooses not to pick up on the implications of the Green Paper of 2009 which strengthen the case for the recognition of prior learning in the up-skilling of healthcare workers. It calls for the alignment of the Directive with the Commission's work on ESCO – the European Classification of Skills/Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. (ESCO is currently matching the ILO classification of occupations to the levels of the European Qualifications Framework [EQF]). http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/docs/swd_ap_eu_healthcare_workforce_en.pdf

2.4 DG EAC

2.4.1 Currently in the legislative process is the Commission's proposal for the next generation of funded programmes in the areas of education, training, youth and sport – '**ERASMUS for All**'. Its aim is to bring existing actions more closely into line with EU employment and growth strategies, as well as to streamline them under a single umbrella. The main features, which include a loan guarantee

scheme for Master-level students, backed by the European Investment Bank, are set out at

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/>

2.4.2 ERASMUS for All will also provide support for the development of **Sector Skills Alliances** [SSA], designed to promote cooperation between education and training providers, social partners, and education authorities. The SSA will develop joint curricula and training materials, with a focus on vocational education and training [VET], rather than on higher education. In the framework of the current Lifelong Learning Programme the Commission has put out a call for exploratory projects intended to pave the way. Details are available at

http://ec.europa.eu/education/calls/s0112_en.htm

2.4.3 CEDEFOP's third annual review of the development of **national qualifications frameworks** can be downloaded from

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/publications/19313.aspx>

2.4.4 The latest **EQF Newsletter** (December 2011) is available at

http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/newsletter_en.htm

2.4.5 The full range of the Commission's positions on higher education – in relation to the Bologna Process, to research and to the structural funds – is summarised in 'The **EU and the Bologna Process** – shared goals, shared commitments', available at

http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc/bologna-goals_en.pdf

3 The European Council

3.1 The **Danish Presidency**, which comes to an end shortly, intended to facilitate the **inward migration of highly qualified labour**, 'through a more effective system for mutual recognition of vocational education and training qualifications'. In respect of intra-EU mobility, it stressed the need to **strengthen the IMI**, 'with a view to making the system for recognition of professional qualifications more effective'. In education and training, it sought the rapid conclusion of negotiations on the 'ERASMUS for All' Programme, as well as for progress in the Copenhagen Process. It wanted to work for 'the development of a **benchmark for employability**' and for the adoption of a Recommendation on the **recognition of informal and non-formal learning**'.

http://eu2012.dk/en/EU-and-the-Presidency/About-the-Presidency/~/_media/Files/Trykt%20materiale/Presidency%20programme/EU%20Presidency_Programme_UK_Final%20Web_22_12.ashx

3.2 The Danish programme has been only partially completed. How far the incoming **Cypriot Presidency** hopes to carry it forward is not yet known in detail. What is known is that the Competitiveness Council will be chaired by the Communist minister of commerce, industry and tourism, Neoklis Sylikiotis, a mechanical engineer who studied in Germany. The Education Council will be chaired by Giorgos Demosthenous, minister of education and culture. Professor Demosthenous is also a mechanical engineer; he studied in Greece. See http://www.presidency.gov.cy/presidency/presidency.nsf/prc07_en/prc07_en?op=endocument

3.3 The **Competitiveness Council** held an orientation debate on the draft Directive at the end of May. It focused on two issues: the professional card and

the mutual evaluation of regulatory powers. The preparatory briefing document is available at

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st09/st09960.en12.pdf>

The webcast can be heard at

http://video.consilium.europa.eu/webcast.aspx?ticket=775-979-11342&siteLanguage=en&go_button.x=16&go_button.y=10

3.4 Earlier, in September 2011, the Member States' **Coordinators Group** for the Directive, chaired by the Commission, had been consulted on the contents of the Commission's proposals; it did not display a high level of agreement on the detail:

5) The Commission invited members to give their views on the proposal made in the Green Paper to have, for sectoral professions, bodies assessing compliance of minimum training conditions with the Directive requirements. In general, this issue was still under examination at Member States level. Some members expressed the views that this task could be achieved by universities, or competent authorities or accreditation bodies.

6) There was a discussion about whether the current Directive requirements should be interpreted as requiring studies of a minimum duration in years and hours – as opposed to years or hours. Some members expressed diverging views on the issue. There was also a discussion on the need to replace training hours by ECTS for sectoral professions. A number of members expressed the view that it was too early to introduce ECTS now in the Directive but adding an option to the Directive to be used in future might be worth while discussing. [...]

8) Members were invited to give their views on the possibility to add competences to the Directive for sectoral professions. Some members expressed the view that further work needs to be done.

9) Members were invited to give their views on the proposal made in the Green Paper to have a reference to continuous professional development for sectoral professions in the Directive. Two members expressed a favourable position to make it even mandatory. One member was against.

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/docs/coordinators/20110909_summary_en.pdf

3.5 The **UK House of Lords EU Scrutiny Committee** reported in March on the EU's contribution to the modernisation of higher education in Europe. It endorsed the UK government's view that the Bologna instruments and the EQF should 'synchronise' with the updated minimum training standards proposed by the Commission. EUA Secretary General Lesley Wilson gave evidence. See <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201012/ldselect/ldeducom/275/27502.htm>

3.6 The **German Federal Ministry of Education and Research** has set up a website for professionals who wish to practise in Germany. It features a 'recognition finder' which guides enquirers through the recognition procedures. See <http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/32.php>

4 The European Parliament

4.1 CULT Culture and Education

4.1.1 At its January meeting, CULT decided not to submit an opinion to IMCO (the lead committee) on the **draft Directive**. This appears to be due to workload considerations. EMPL and ENVI (for health) will submit opinions. ENVI has sought a legal view of the legality of the Commission's proposal to extend the prior general education for nurses from ten years to twelve.

4.1.2 In February CULT adopted László Tóké's report on the **modernisation of European higher education**. The report is generally supportive of the Commission's agenda and backs the bid for a budget increase.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/cult/pr/884/884721/884721en.pdf

4.1.3 CULT also adopted Luis Berlinguer's report on the **contribution of the EU institutions to the Bologna Process**. This contained either the spirit or the letter of the suggestions made by IMCO and tabulated in paragraph 4.2.1 below. The full version of the report can be found at

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2012-0035&language=EN>

4.1.4 In preparation for its deliberations on the Commission's proposed ERASMUS for All, CULT held a **public hearing** in March. The presentations by CIMO and DAAD (the Finnish and German national agencies) and others are available at

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/cult/events.html>

4.1.5 A report commissioned by CULT into the state of play in the **implementation of the EQF** was published in March. It recommended, *inter alia*, the alignment of the 5-level grid, used by the General System, with the EQF. The executive summary is posted at

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/cult/dv/esstudyeurqualifframewimplem/esstudyeurqualifframewimplemen.pdf

4.2 IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection

4.2.1 Malcolm Harbour was re-elected **chair of IMCO** for the two-and-a-half year period beginning in January 2012.

4.2.2 The IMCO input to the CULT discussion of the **contribution of the EU institutions to the Bologna Process**, beyond general remarks regarding mobility, knowledge transfer and innovation, and equality of access, made specific points related to the Directive:

10. Draws attention to the strong link between the Bologna Process and the Professional Qualifications Directive, and stresses the need for coordination by the Commission in a manner entirely consistent with the Bologna Process; argues that the link can be further strengthened by providing students with all the relevant practical information concerning the recognition of diplomas obtained abroad and the job opportunities which training abroad opens up; [...]

12. Calls, as part of the revision of the Professional Qualifications Directive and in

order to make progress towards a real European Higher Education Area, for a comparison of national minimum training requirements and for more regular exchanges between the Member States, competent authorities and professional bodies;

13. Calls on the Commission to support Member States in enhancing the transparency of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) so that it can be used as a comparative tool to facilitate the recognition of professional qualifications, and argues that a more skills-based approach could facilitate better comparisons across different sectors; asks the relevant stakeholders to consider the possibility of incorporating periods of training completed as part of higher education in the ECTS;

14. Draws attention to the importance of consistent implementation of the ECTS system; calls on the Commission, Member States and higher education institutions to develop a comparative table that would indicate the number of ECTS credits awarded for courses, in order to enhance consistency and facilitate student and professional mobility; notes the barriers that students face when transferring credits between universities, and believes that these obstacles can discourage students from participating in academic exchanges;

15. Calls for enhanced transparency of the information provided to students before the beginning of a given exchange regarding the number of credits to be awarded, and invites Member States and higher education institutions to cooperate when assessing the number of credits to be awarded for courses; encourages the development of common platforms in order to provide a core of knowledge and skills defined by professionals and higher education institutions, with the possible goal of achieving the approximation of some diplomas, while safeguarding allowing national specificities, taking the system of automatic recognition of professional qualifications in the EU as an example

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/imco/ad/884/884547/884547en.pdf

4.2.3 In February, IMCO began its consideration of the draft Directive (the rapporteur is the French Socialist Bernadette Vergnaud), covering such issues as partial access, notaries, minimum training requirements for nurses and midwives, and language requirements. It followed it up with a **public hearing** in April, which focused on partial access, the professional card, and minimum training conditions. Presentations by FEANI, HPC, UEMS and others are available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/imco/events.html>

4.2.4 The April meeting saw a reasoned opinion from the **French Senate** which contests the admissibility of the Commission's proposals, alleging that they contravene the subsidiarity principle, in respect particularly of the professional card and of jurisdiction over education and health. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/juri/cm/896/896083/896083en.pdf

4.2.5 The draft Vergnaud report will be considered at the September meeting, with amendments due by 15 October. Eventual **adoption by IMCO** is scheduled for the end of November, with process to plenary session in January 2013.

5 Professional, academic, regulatory and student bodies

Healthcare Professions Crossing Borders

- HPCB convened a **meeting** in March in the European Parliament. It addressed the professional card, the alert mechanism, language requirements, and education and training. Lesley Wilson, Secretary General of EUA, chaired the final session. A report of the meeting can be found at http://www.hpcb.eu/news/documents/Issue_23_-_May_2012.pdf
- The **European Network of Medical Competent Authorities** issued a position paper in February. Representing 23 regulatory bodies in EEA and EU countries, it commented on the full range of issues, stressing its objection to the use of delegated acts with no guarantees of consultation, particularly in respect of the minimum training conditions. http://www.gmc-uk.org/final_with_signatories_European_Network_of_Medical_Competent_Authorities_position_on_EC_RPO_proposal_Feb_2012.pdf_47937583.pdf
- WHO has published a study undertaken in the framework of the EU-funded PROMeTHEUS project. It examines **migratory patterns of healthcare workers in 17 European countries**. <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-publish/abstracts/health-professional-mobility-and-health-systems.-evidence-from-17-european-countries>
- The **European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies** has published 'Perspectives on the Professional Qualifications Directive', containing the views of a regulator, a medical doctor and a nurse. <http://www.euro.who.int/en/who-we-are/partners/observatory/eurohealth/perspectives-on-the-professional-qualifications-directive>

Medical doctor

- **CPME** has proposed detailed amendments to the draft Directive, including the extension of the minimum training duration from five to six years. Full detail are posted at http://cpme.dyndns.org:591/adopted/2012/CPME_AD_EC_27032012_009_Final_EN.pdf
- **UEMS** has set out its position at http://uems.net/fileadmin/user_upload/uems_documents/contentogram_doc_client_20120530/UEMS_2012.07_-_Proposal_for_new_POQ_-_FINAL.pdf
- The 2012 **AMSE** conference has been moved to Sweden in November, where it will debate the role of the medical school in 2050. <http://www.amse-med.eu/news.html>
- The annual **AMEE** conference (Lyon in August) will include sessions on the Bologna Process and a wide range of educational topics.

<http://www.amee.org/documents/AMEE%202012%20Provisional%20Programme.pdf>

Dentist

- **CED** and **ADEE** hope to produce in July a joint proposal on competences, learning outcomes and related matters, which they will submit to DG MARKT. It will press for the minimum duration of training for dental practitioners to be expressed in years (5 years), hours (5000 hours) and ECTS credits (300 ECTS).
http://www.adee.org/documents/newsletter/ADEE_Newsletter_Vol8_No1_April_2012.pdf
- The ADEE Newsletter referenced above also features an update on the progress of the **DentCPD** project, which is drawing up an inventory of CPD provision across Europe. The project website is at
<http://www.dentcpd.org/index.html>

General care nurse

- The next **FINE** conference on **nurse education** is scheduled for Cardiff in October. See
<http://www.fine-europe.eu/en/conferences/prochaine.html>
- The UK Nursing and Midwifery Council [**NMC**], which coordinated the experience report drawn up by Competent Authorities during the evaluation of the Directive in 2010, has followed up by convening informal meetings of 11 national regulators with a view to developing **common positions**. These consist of: support for the professional card, with reservations about cost and timeframe; opposition to partial access; caution regarding the articulation of temporary provision and CPD; support for the alert mechanism; demand for greater clarity on the assessment of language competence; and, finally, full endorsement of the Commission's proposal to update the training requirements and to develop a set of minimum competences for nurses. The positions are not yet publicly available. HPCB Newsletter no. 23 carries a report.
http://www.hpcb.eu/news/documents/Issue_23_-_May_2012.pdf
- **EFN** has thrown its weight behind the Commission's proposal to extend the general education requirement for entry to training as a general care nurse from 10 to 12 years. Its survey of 15 countries concludes that the 12-year requirement is already well established and that its effect on recruitment to the profession has been positive. In Germany, which is the Member State government most hostile to the proposal, EFN finds evidence that the Bachelor route (with 12 years prior general education) into nursing is more popular than the Diploma route (10 years). See
<http://www.efnweb.eu/version1/en/documents/EFNEvidenceReporton10-12yearsFebruary2012.pdf>

Midwife

HPCB Newsletter no. 23 carries a report of the March meeting of **NEMIR**, the network of midwifery regulators. Delegates reviewed the Commission's proposals and called for wider recognition of the specificity of midwifery, too long assimilated into nursing. That the difference is real is illustrated by the fact that Germany has no objection to 12 years of prior general

education being required of midwives, in contrast to its view of nurses. NEMIR held a Brussels summit in May; no report is available yet.
http://www.hpcb.eu/news/documents/Issue_23_-_May_2012.pdf

Pharmacist

- This summer's **EAFP** (European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy) conference was held in Utrecht, with the theme of 'tradition and innovation in pharmacy education: from content to process'. Details are available at http://www.eafp2012.nl/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=2
- **EMTRAIN** (the European Medicines Research Training Network) has launched an online database of over 2000 biomedical courses, containing 1500 Master and more than 700 CPD, as well as doctoral programmes, many of which are pharmacy-related. Go to <http://www.on-course.eu/index.htm>
- The **FIP** (International Pharmaceutical Federation) will be debating a range of education-related topics at its October congress in Amsterdam. They include competence-based curricula, inter-professional education, social accountability of pharmacy education, and the global strategic policy direction of professional pharmacy education. See <http://aim.fip.org/deans-forum/aim-at-fip-congress-2012/>
- The thematic network **Pharmine** has announced two new bids: for projects on pharmacy education in Eastern Europe and on quality assurance in pharmacy education and training. Details are available at http://www.pharmine.org/losse_paginas/New_Projects/

Architect

- In an editorial which anticipates a formal position paper to be released in mid-June, **ACE** welcomes the proposal to extend the **minimum training duration** to 6 full-time years, as well as the retention of the 5-level qualification grid in the General System. It also welcomes the professional card, but has reservations about the phasing-in schedule. By contrast, it has strong objections to the principle of partial access. See http://www.ace-cae.eu/public/contents/index/category_id/11/language/en
- ACE has set up a working group on **CPD**. It will begin its work by drawing up a country-by-country inventory of CPD provision. An equivalent audit will be conducted by a working group on **practical professional experience**. See http://www.ace-cae.eu/public/contents/getdocument/content_id/1381
- The **EAAE** conference in September will focus on 'improving learning quality in architectural education environments'.
http://www.eaae.be/web_data/documents/NewsLetters/201205NewsLetter27.pdf

Teachers

- A joint statement has been issued by **EFEE and ETUCE** (European Federation of Education Employers; European Trade Union Committee for Education). It welcomes measures to promote recognition and professional

mobility of teachers, but cautions against those which would undermine national competence.

http://www.educationemployers.eu/uploads/files/2012_pqdirective_final_statement.pdf

6 The European University Association

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

6.1 As part of the higher education reforms announced last year by the Romanian government, the European University Association's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) will carry out **evaluations of 90 universities in Romania** over the course of the next three years.

<http://www.eua.be/iep/activities/coordinated-evaluations.aspx>

6.2 EUA is also participating in discussions on the diversification of **Slovenian higher education**.

http://www.eua.be/news/12-03-01/EUA_contributes_to_debates_on_diversification_of_the_Slovenian_higher_education_system.aspx

6.3 In January, the E4 Group, ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE, organised a launch conference to present and discuss the findings of the project "**Mapping the implementation and application of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance** in the European Higher Education Area" (MAP-ESG). The report is available at

http://www.enqa.eu/files/op_17_web.pdf

6.4 EUA conducted an online consultation on the proposed **ERASMUS for All** programme. The results can be found at

http://www.eua.be/News/12-03-15/Results_of_EUA_consultation_on_EC_Proposal_for_next_education_and_training_programme_Erasmus_for_All.aspx

6.5 The final conference of EUA's MAUNIMO project – **Mapping University Mobility** – will be held in Oslo in September. The project aims to support institutions in developing strategies for student and staff mobility which articulate with research, curriculum development, quality assurance and recognition.

<http://www.maunimo.be/>

6.6 The call has been published for papers and workshops for the E4 Group's annual **European Quality Assurance Forum**, which this year will be held in Tallinn from November 22 to 24. Full details have been posted at

http://www.eua.be/events/upcoming/EQAF_2012/Home.aspx

6.7 EUA has published the **collected papers** from the previous Forum (Antwerp, November 2011). These are available at

http://www.eua.be/News/12-04-12/New_publication_Collection_of_selected_contributions_from_the_6th_European_Quality_Assurance_Forum.aspx

**Please feel free to forward this update to any other interested parties.
Comments, corrections and news items will be welcome.**

<http://www.eua.be/eua-work-and-policy-area/building-the-european-higher-education-area/bologna-and-professional-qualifications.aspx>

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