



The European Higher Education Area in 2018

*Bologna Process
Implementation Report*

Education and
Training

Recognition practice and policy in the EHEA

EPER Kick Off

05/07/2019

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Eurydice

Purpose of recognition

- Make it possible to move between systems without losing value of qualifications
- Assess foreign qualifications in terms of own education system
- Assign value in own system
- Ensure holders of qualifications can use them for further study and on the labour market

Bologna process Key Commitments:

Structural reforms underpinning EHEA

- 3 cycle degree structure
- **Recognition**
- Quality Assurance

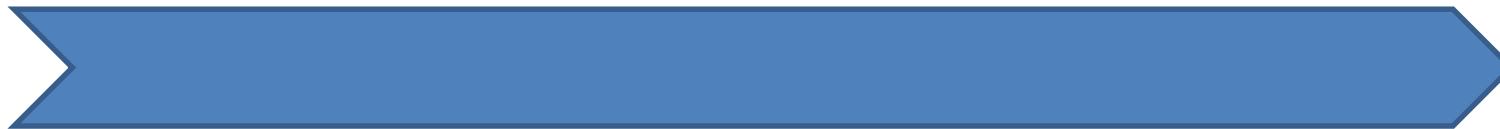
Why is there a key commitment on recognition?

“if recognition does not work properly... the Bologna degree system, joint degrees, mobility of students and academics, integrating lifelong learning into higher education and others will become just lip service.”
(2012 WG Recognition report)

Attitudes to recognition?

Suspicion

« the contents of this programme are different to ours »



Trust

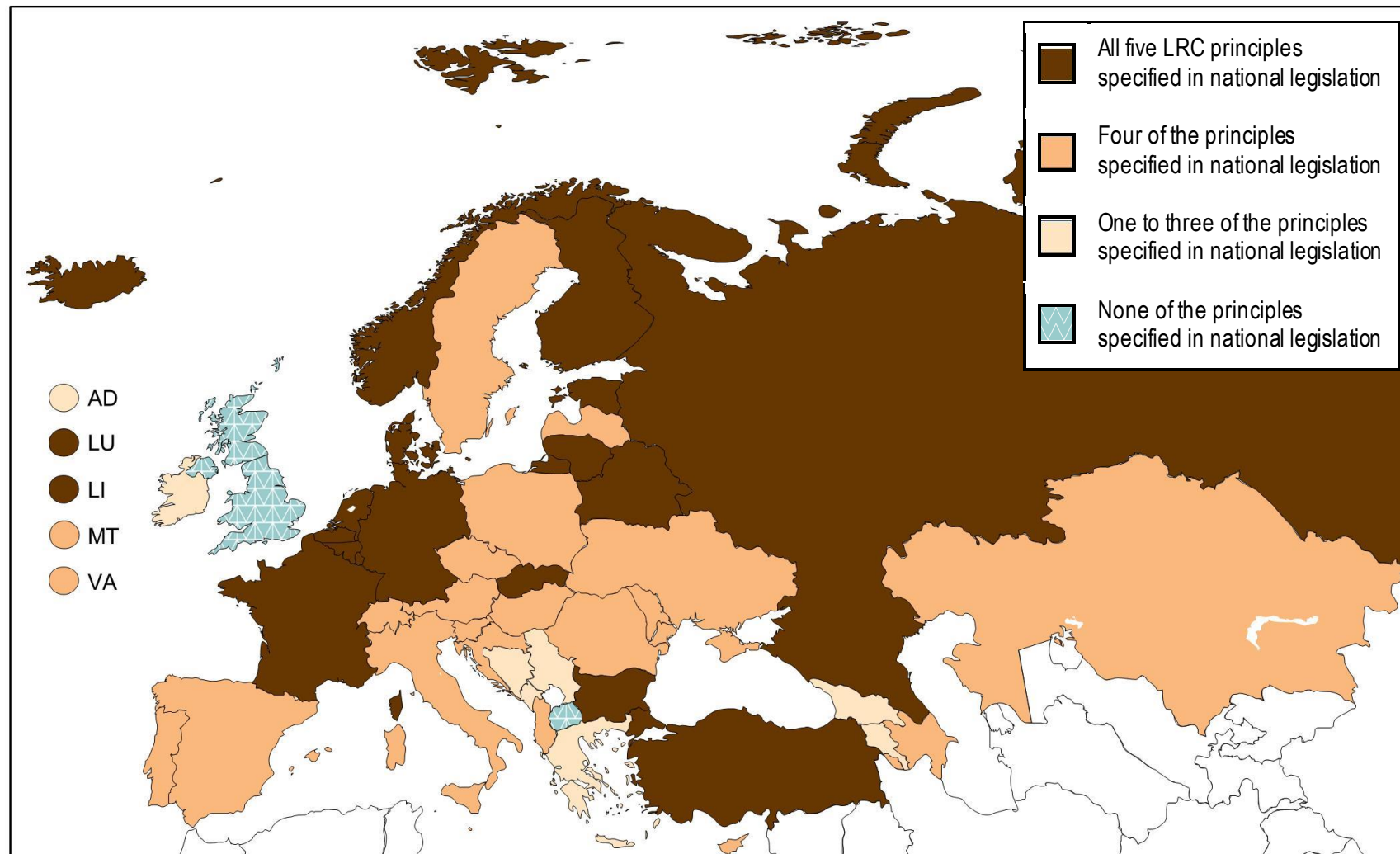
« NQF level, learning outcomes, profile, QA: it's all fine »

Lisbon Recognition Convention: the EHEA framework

Main principles of the LRC (= key commitment):

- Applicants have a **right to fair assessment**
- Recognition if **no substantial differences**
- Compare **learning outcomes** and **not programme content**
- Negative decisions backed up by **proof of substantial difference**
- Right to **appeal**

Principles of LRC in legislation

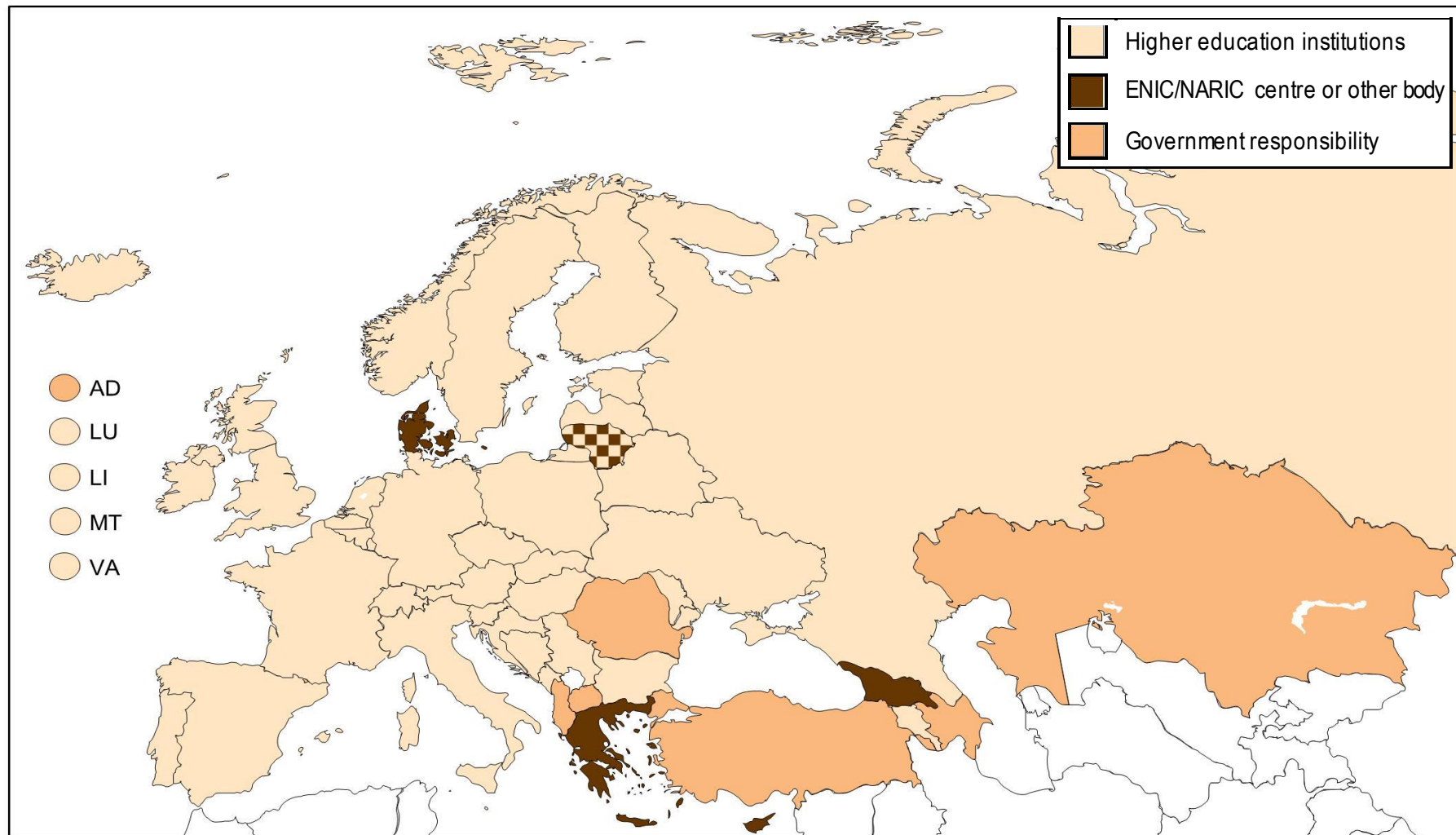


So where is the problem?

- *It is often far from certain if the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention are correctly applied by credential evaluators in higher education institutions across the European Higher Education Area*
- *The process is often in the hands of the individual institution and even in the hands of a single individual. This increases the risk that **decisions are taken without applying the principles of the LRC***

(Pathfinder Group Report, 2015)

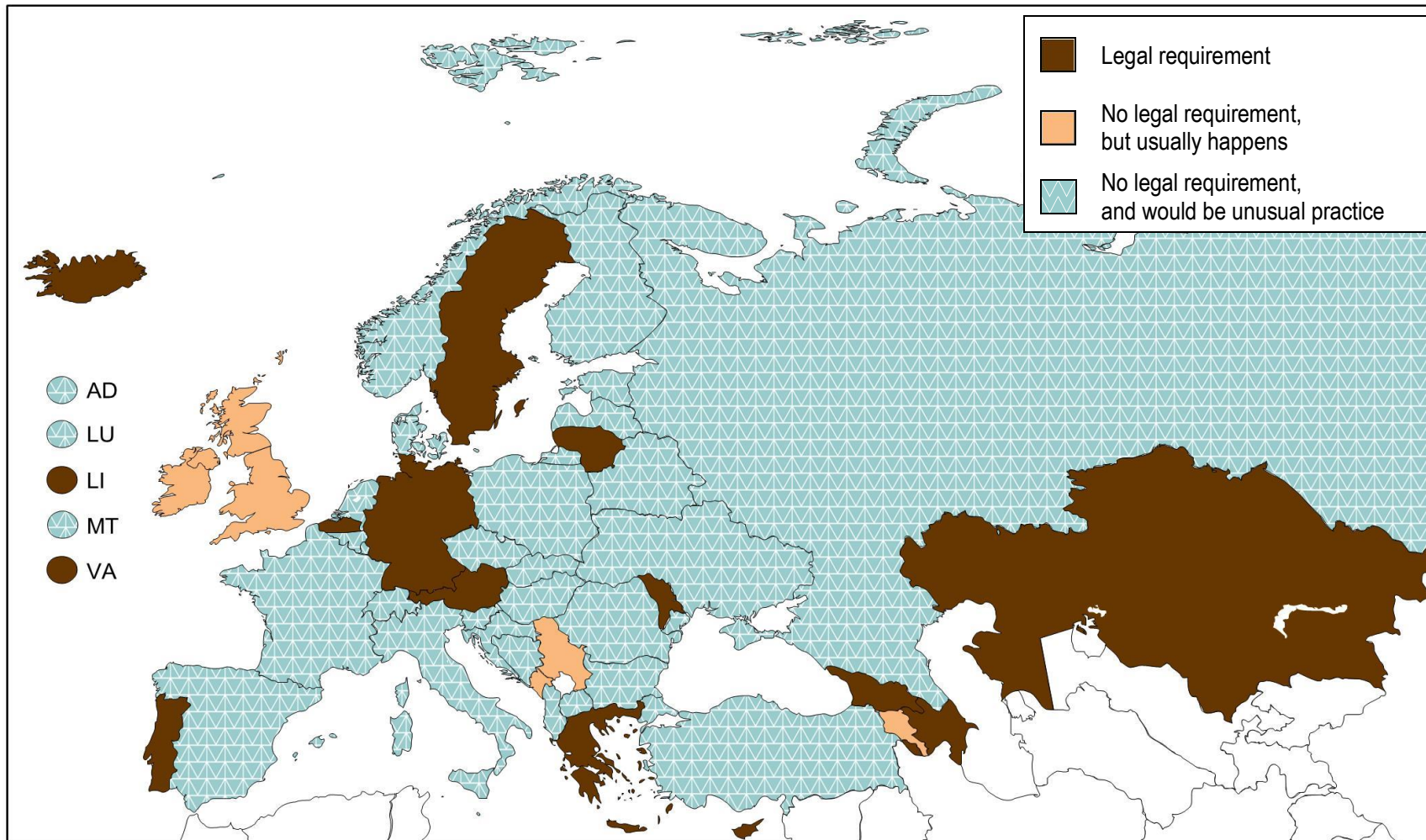
Institution responsible for recognition



Implications/questions

- Where should responsibility for **recognition** (not admission) lie?
- If the national answer is higher education institutions, then what measures can ensure that the LRC principles are respected in practice?
- Minimal condition: recognition practice in HEIs is evaluated by external QA...

Recognition assessed by external QA?



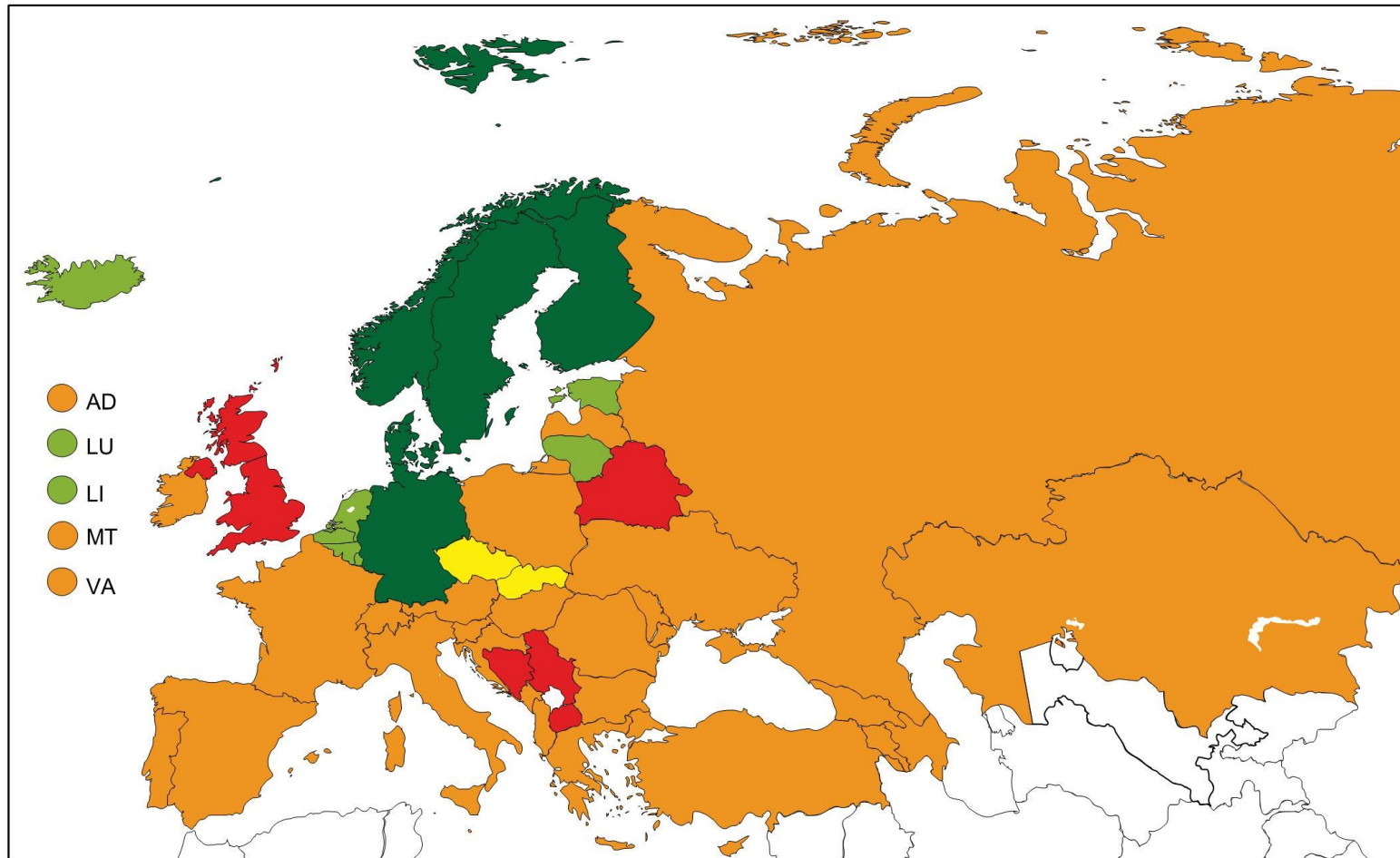
What action is needed?

- 1 **Discussion** and **awareness-raising** of the issues...
- 2 HEIs/credential evaluators should be **educated/trained** (role for ENIC/NARIC) and ideally work together across borders:
- 3 For many, objective should be **simplification**
 - If the (EHEA) qualification is awarded in a country with clear QA, NQF, ECTS, DS etc, is there any need for recognition procedures?
 - Or can we move towards automatic recognition?

Towards « automatic » recognition ?

- What does “automatic” mean?
- Automatic recognition of a degree leads to the automatic right of an applicant holding a qualification of a certain level to be considered for entry to a programme of further study in the next level in any other EHEA-country (access).
- Automatic recognition ≠ automatic admission
- A bachelor is a bachelor

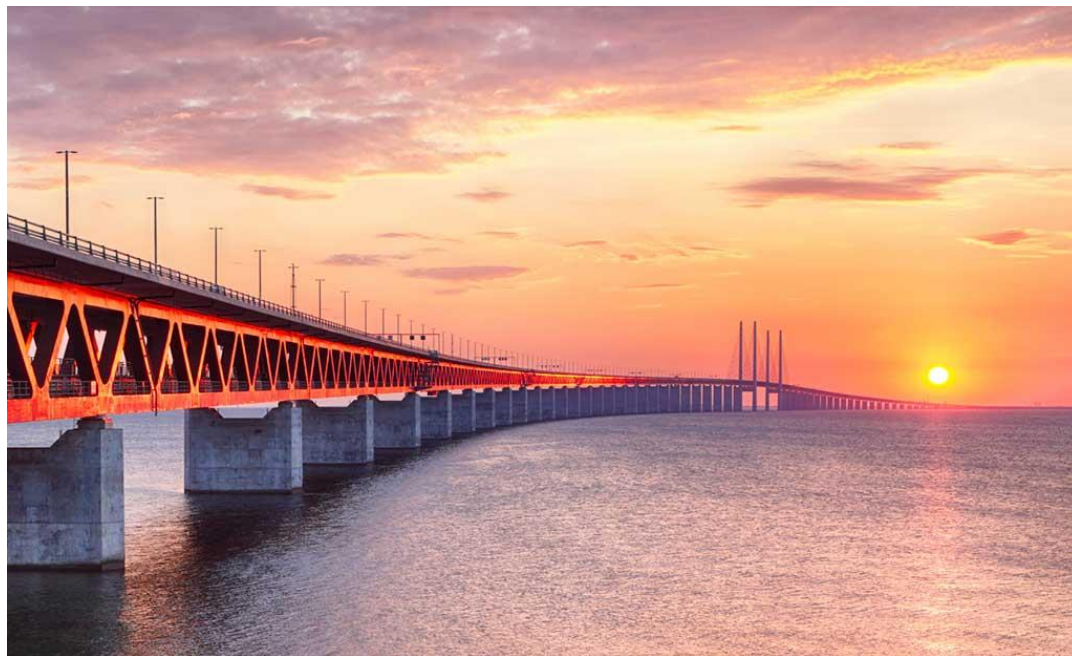
System level "automatic" recognition?



Key points

- Lisbon Recognition Convention principles mostly embedded in national legislation
- But recognition practice (in HEIs) is inconsistent and often unfair
- If HEIs have responsibility, they should not be left alone: mutual learning/exchange and quality assurance should play a stronger role
- We are still far from « automatic » recognition
- But key commitment, peer support and projects like EPER are stimulating discussion and focusing minds...

Which vision/metaphor for recognition do we want?



**Thank you
for your attention**



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