



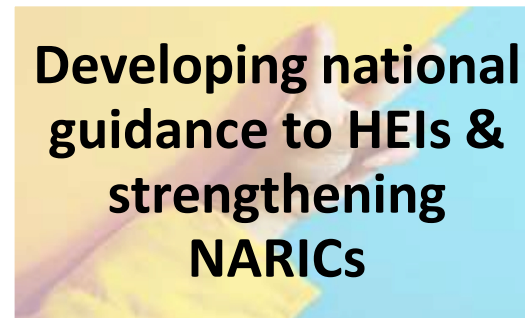
Report on the implementation of automatic recognition of qualifications and learning periods

DG EAC
European Commission

11.05.2023
Stockholm, Sweden

Council Recommendation 2018

- **By 2025, Member States put in place the steps to ensure that**
 - a HE qualification acquired in one MS is automatically recognised at the same level in any other MS, for the purpose of granting access to further studies.
 - the outcomes from a learning period abroad at HE level in one MS are automatically and fully recognised in the others
- **Member States are recommended to create framework conditions and trust and transparency by:**



Automatic recognition of qualifications - definition

The right for holders of a qualification of a certain level that has been issued by one Member State **to be considered for entry** to a higher education programme in the next level in any other Member State, **without having to go through any separate recognition procedure**. This shall not prejudice the right of a higher education institution or the competent authorities to set **specific evaluation and admission criteria** for a specific programme. It does not prejudice the right to check, if the qualification is **authentic** and, in case of an upper secondary education and training qualification, **if it really gives access to higher education** in the Member State of issuance or, in duly justified cases, if the granted qualification meets the requirements for accessing a specific higher education programme in the receiving Member State.

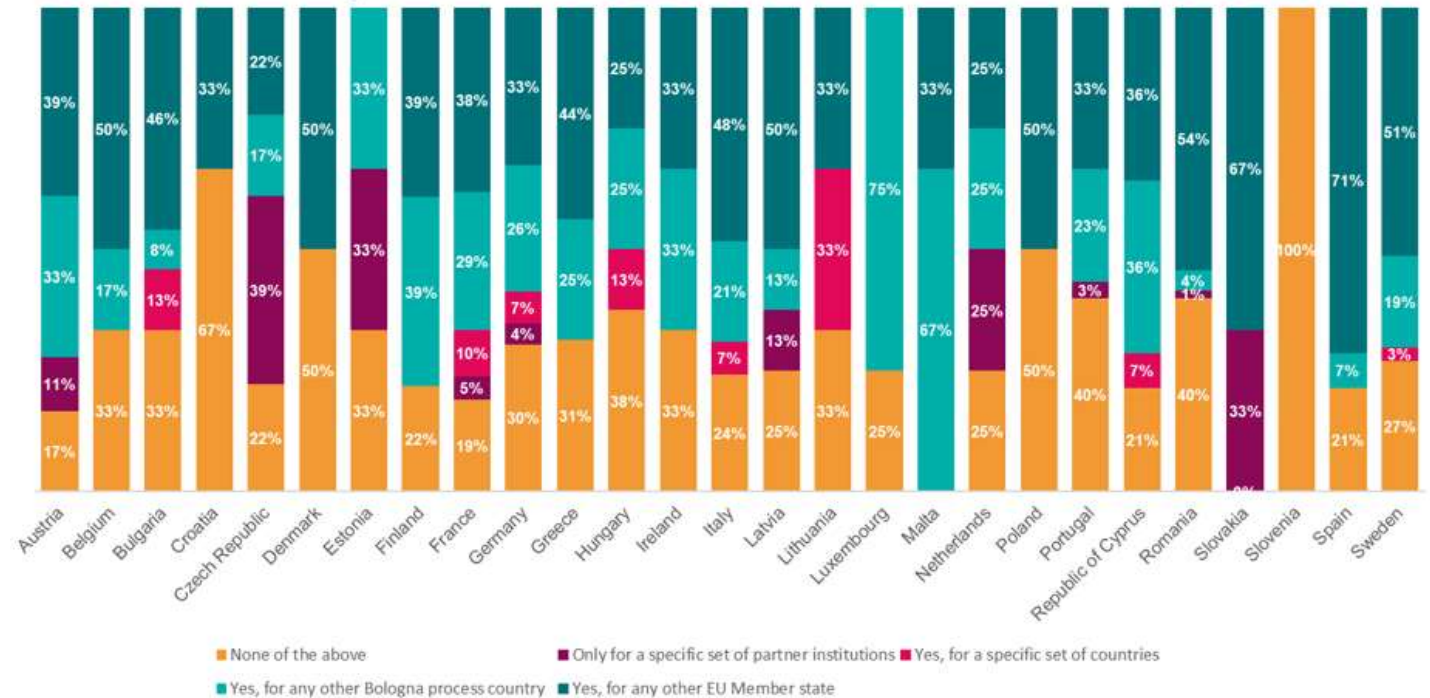
Main results of the evaluation of progress

- National legislation in 12 MS; in process in 3 MS.
- Bologna & EU transparency tools in place in most MS but not fully implemented in 11 MS.
- 14 MS have national guidance for institutions, regular training provision and utilisation of online tools for recognition decisions.
- 7 MS monitor and evaluate recognition decisions through a central system-level database that collects and disseminates data on recognition cases and is regularly updated.
- Decentralised decision making on recognition in most MSs. Variations in implementation at HEI-level with inconsistencies between and within institutions.
- Outcomes of learning periods abroad: on average 84.4% of credits are recognised within Erasmus+. Procedures vary between and within HEIs.



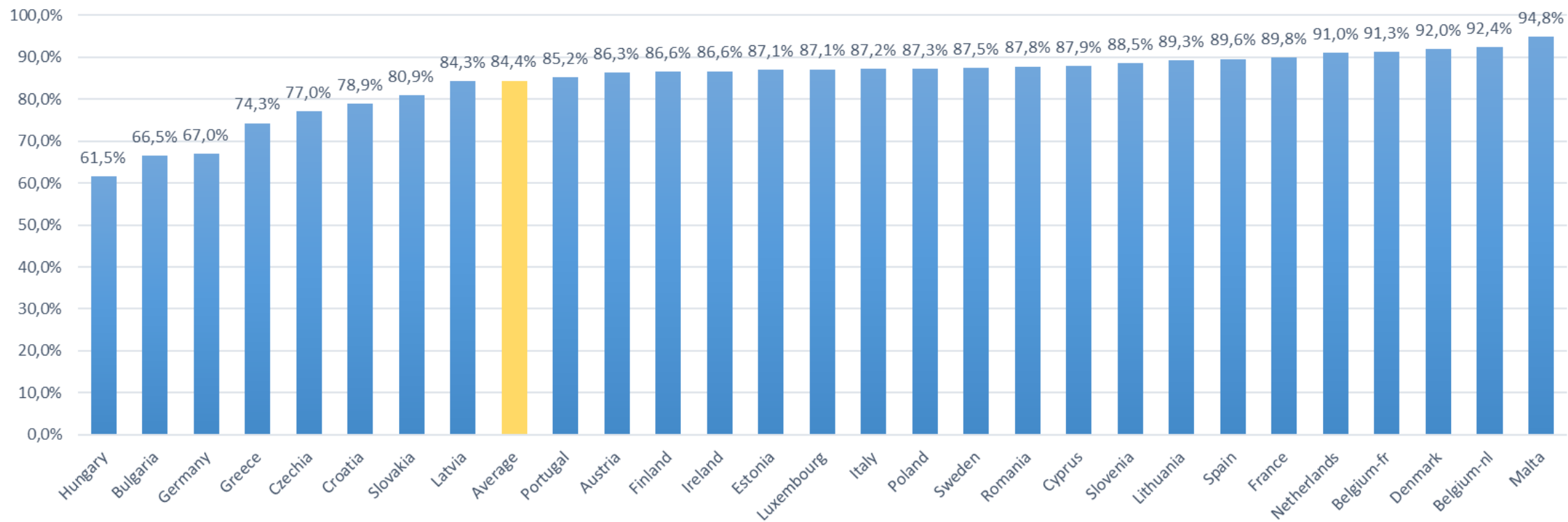
Is there automatic recognition in place?

Figure 13. HEIs: automatic recognition of bachelor's degree qualifications by country

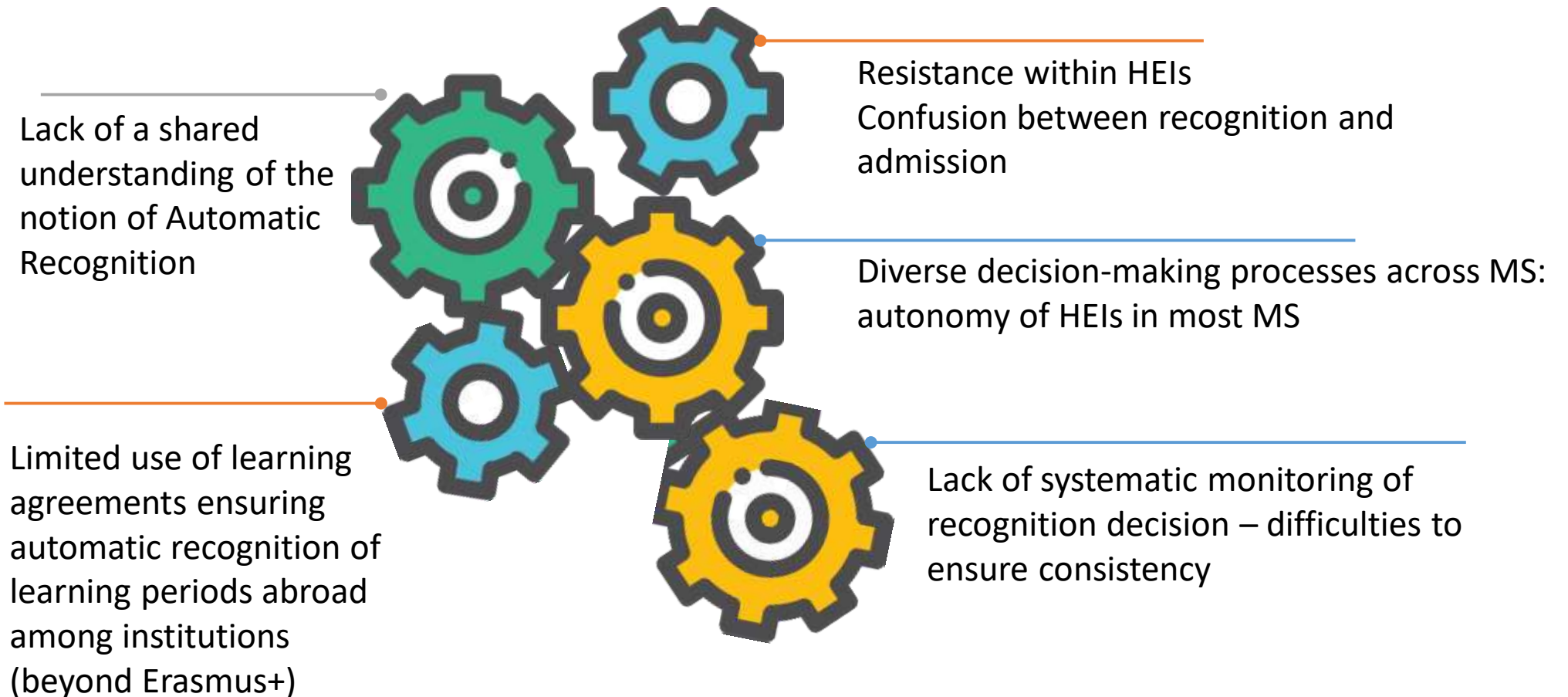


Source: ICF/3s survey, N=422

Full recognition of Erasmus+ learning periods abroad, 2020



Challenges in implementation



Moving forward: conclusions

- Member States could consider ensuring consistency of implementation by giving the competence for automatic recognition decisions to a dedicated body, while HEIs would keep their autonomy in selecting and admitting students to their programmes. Thus, the distinction between recognition and admission would become clearer in practice.

- Member States may integrate automatic recognition into external quality assurance procedures and encourage HEIs to do the same for their internal quality assurance, including full implementation of the ECTS Users Guide. It would improve the transparency and consistency of recognition practices within institutions for learning periods abroad.

- Consistent decision making could be supported with digital solutions such as databases. A systematic approach for the monitoring and evaluation of recognition decisions for qualifications and individual learning mobility would improve transparency and contribute to evidence-based decision-making.

Commission support for further effort to implement automatic recognition



- **Develop trust among national education systems**

- **A European Quality Assurance and Recognition System** will create a closer link between QA and recognition and a fit-for-purpose QA system for deeper transnational cooperation.
- The Commission will set-up, with the support of Erasmus+ and NARICs, new **automatic recognition accelerator teams reviews** to accelerate the implementation. Experts will be sent on site to provide coaching.



- **Support implementation by building capacity**

Financial support for automatic recognition: Erasmus+ calls dedicated to NARICs, European Higher Education Area call to boost the implementation of the Bologna transparency tools and the **Technical Support Instrument** for tailor-made support upon request from MS.



- **Support training, information and knowledge exchange**

The Erasmus+ programme through Transnational Cooperation Activities and Peer-Learning Activities, will support staff training on automatic recognition. Dialogue between MS



(Draft) Council Conclusions on further steps to make automatic recognition a reality

When recognition is not automatic, it can entail administrative burdens for institutions, education and training providers and learners alike, affecting equal access to equitable and quality education and training throughout life, and hampering mobility and the acquisition of transversal skills and competences needed for personal, civic and professional development as well as for enhanced employability.

Thank you for your attention!



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