

PHAR-QA

by PHARMINE

Quality Assurance in European Pharmacy Education and Training.



The Newsletter

April, 2015



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

PHAR-QA Quality Assurance in European Pharmacy Education and Training.

The PHAR-QA newsletter

March, 2015.

<http://www.phar-qa.eu/>

Quality Assurance in European Pharmacy Education and Training: the PHAR-QA project

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P8: The Jagiellonian University in Krakow

JUMC

(<http://www.cm-uj.krakow.pl/>)

The Jagiellonian University in Krakow is the oldest and the largest University in Poland. In 1364, after many years of endeavour, King Casimir the Great received permission from the Pope to establish a university in Krakow, the capital of the Kingdom of Poland. It was the second university to be founded in Central Europe, after Prague in 1348.

The structure of the modern Jagiellonian University is unique in Poland. Among the 15 faculties, there are three which comprise the *Collegium Medicum*: The Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Health Protection.



Jagiellonian University covers a broad spectrum of scientific and educational areas of Law and Administration, Medicine, Pharmacy, Health Sciences, Philosophy, History, Philology, Polish Studies, Physics, Astronomy and Applied Computer Science, Mathematics and Computer Science, Chemistry, Biology and Earth Sciences, Management and Social Communication, International and Political Studies, Biochemistry, Biophysics and Biotechnology.

Today (in the academic year 2013/2014) Jagiellonian University consists of 15 faculties with 47,989 students (including PhD students and Post diploma students) and 7,212 academic teachers and others (includes administrative staff).

The Jagiellonian University educates at three levels: Ordinary, Masters, and Doctoral, following the principles of the Bologna Process. There are well over a hundred degrees and specialties available in Polish, as well as over a dozen in English. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) has been implemented in all courses and specialties, enabling trouble-free linking of studies at UJ with studies in other European countries.

Ever more frequently there are foreign-language lectures, in addition to lectures given by foreign academics included in study programmes, for instance in the sphere of mathematics at the Faculty of Physics, Astronomy, and Applied Computer Science, within the framework of the School of Foreign Law (German, American, and French) at the Faculty of Law and Administration, or the School of Medicine in English at the Jagiellonian University.

The process of accreditation for particular courses of study proceeds without difficulty through the State Accreditation Committee and the University Accreditation Committee. The university also has accreditation from the USA Department of Education. The high level of studies at the Jagiellonian University is reflected by the fact that, in the annual all-Poland competition, its students win over 10% of ministerial grants, in addition to winning international competitions.

The ancient Jagiellonian University, covered with the moss of centuries, is simultaneously a young, innovative place. A new, modern campus, called the Third Campus is being built barely 4km from the centre of Krakow. The Krakow Technology Park, initiated by the Jagiellonian, has been developing systematically, and has already attracted a number of leading firms, among them Motorola.

The Faculty of Pharmacy, as a unit of the Jagiellonian University – Medical College, is also the oldest pharmaceutical faculty in Poland with history of over 230 years. Faculty of Pharmacy in Krakow carries out modern research activities including medicinal chemistry, pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, pharmaceutical technology, biopharmaceutics, herbal drugs, histochemistry, bromatology, epidemiology, toxicology and recently computer science as well. The latter includes quantified structure-activity relationship (QSAR) modelling and pharmacokinetic-pharmacodynamic modelling (PK/PD) as well as computational intelligence modelling and simulation tools in pharmacokinetics, biopharmaceutics, pharmaceutical technology, pharmaco-economics and epidemiology. The modern research profile of Faculty of Pharmacy recently resulted in cooperation with the pharmaceutical industry including innovative research in drug. The Faculty of Pharmacy employs 277 people, including 167 academic teachers and researchers of whom 16 are full professors, 43 members of academic staff are young scientists under 35 years of age.



Photo by Anna Wojnar

The Department of Social Pharmacy employs 10 people and most of them are experienced academic teachers. Our research is focused on broad aspects of social pharmacy, including qualitative and quantitative assessment of pharmacy practice, pharmaco-economics analysis and pharmaco-epidemiological research.

The main ongoing projects in pharmacy practice are:

- Pharmaceutical Care in Hypertension and Diabetes (PCHAD) Project. An interventional study aimed at implementation of pharmaceutical care to standard pharmacy practice in Poland. The project is focused on patients with hypertension and/or diabetes.
- The assessment and improvement of the use of benzodiazepine drugs (anxiolytic, sedative and hypnotic) in Poland. The different methods are used such as: observation, intervention and survey methods.
- An added value of pharmacist intervention in patients with gastro-esophageal disease (GERD). An interventional study focused on patients using proton pump inhibitor (IPP) and histamine antagonists (H2A).
- The role of the community pharmacy in assessment of patients smoking cessation motivation. A survey study based on validated questionnaires.
- The assessment of DRP in Polish population – based on survey method and on analysis of e-databases of community pharmacies.



Photo by Anna Wojnar

The results of our innovative and creative work are the IT tools. We have built an internet application, which allows pharmacists to document pharmaceutical care activities, such as: to identify, classify and solve drug related problems (DRP), to plan pharmaceutical care process and to analyse therapy outcomes. The application could be easily adapted to ongoing project. It is also used in teaching process by a few Faculties of Pharmacy in Poland.

Scientists and developers from the Department of Social Pharmacy led the effort to plan, develop and maintain the first and largest in Poland e-learning platform for the pharmacists' continuing education e-duk@cja (www.e-dukacja.pl). System which has been on-line for almost ten years now is further developed in close cooperation with the Regional Pharmaceutical Board in Krakow. e-duk@cja has now almost 22,000 active users, all of the certified pharmacists (from among ca. 24 000 active pharmacists practicing in Poland), who log on and use the learning system 4,000 times a month in average. From its beginning pharmacists passed more than 160 000 exams granted by electronic certificate and educational credits.

We are also involved in the European cooperation:

- we participated in the project Quality of Pharmaceutical Care indicators by auspice of European Committee on Pharmaceuticals and Pharmaceutical Care in European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines and Health Care (Council of Europe).

At the University we are involved in didactic process and responsible for organizing and teaching in courses:



pharmaceutical care, pharmaceutical law, pharmaco-economics and pharmacy practice. The teaching process is based on modern teaching methods like case-based learning, problem-based learning, and we use modern technologies such as simulation of virtual patients.

The Chair and Department of Pharmaceutical Technology and Biopharmaceutics employs 20 persons of regular staff and 5 PhD students. Currently, a wide area of teaching activities carried out under the supervision of Professor Renata Jachowicz includes the courses for undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

In the area of undergraduate studies, the following courses are held:

- Pharmaceutical technology
- Biopharmacy
- Practical pharmacy

The topic of the research performed in the Department of Pharmaceutical Technology and Biopharmaceutics concerns following issues:

- The enhancement of pharmaceutical availability of slightly soluble or practically insoluble drug substances,
- Development of modern multiparticulate dosage forms with polymeric substances (microparticles, micro-emulsions) in order to achieve the enhancement of pharmaceutical availability, and bioavailability of drug substances,
- Novel solutions in the area of dosage forms with modified release of drug substance,
- Technological aspects of paediatric dosage forms,
- Evaluation of physicochemical properties of excipients using modern analytical techniques in order to optimize the manufacturing technology of oral dosage forms,
- The application and evaluation of the modern techniques in the quality assessment of different dosage forms,
- Innovative solutions in the development of the dosage forms using Quality by Design principles and Process Analytical Technology,
- The development of decision support systems based on artificial neural networks and their application in the area of pharmaceutical technology.

The main ongoing projects in pharmaceutical technology are:

- 2013 – 2016: "IPROCOT (€3.8M) - The development of *in silico* process models for roll compaction". Project No 316555 / FP7-PEOPLE-2012-ITN
- 2012 – 2015: "Delivery of Protein and peptide drugs through dry powder inhalation", 2/3/POL-SIN/2012 (€190 000), Poland-Singapore bilateral cooperation
- SONATA DEC-2012/07/D/NZ7/01673 (91 900 €). *In vitro/in vivo* characterisation of hydrophilic matrices containing phosphodiesterase (PDE-5) inhibitors.

From the two Departments four persons in total participate in the PHAR-QA project as a P8 partner team. We are responsible for the work-package 5, which is Exploitation.



The PHAR-QA survey on competences for pharmacists in Europe.

Minutes of the PHAR-QA M29 meeting Brussels, 23 & 24/2/2015



Vrije
Universiteit
Brussel

PHAR-QA M29 exceptional intermediate meeting

Brussels 23th February 2015

Kristien De Paepe – Vrije Universiteit Brussel – PHAR-QA P1 - administrator

Participation:

Partners: J. Atkinson (P2), B. Bozic (P7), K. De Paepe (P1), J. Hirvonen (P6), A. Koster (P10), A. Marcincal (P10), C. Mircioiu (P9), L. Noël (P1), D. Rekkas (P4), A. Sanchez-Pozo (P3), A. Skowron (P8), D. Volmer (P5).

Advisory Board: K. Wilson.

Stakeholders & Other participants: S. Hocevar and L. Besson (EPSA), D. Preece (EAHP), J. Wilkinson (PGEU).

Excused:

C. van Schravendijk (Advisory Board)

Programme and meeting report

16h00 Welcome, J. Atkinson – round table with everybody presenting him or herself, followed by the agenda of our two day meeting.

J. Atkinson presents the results and future developments of the PHAR-QA survey that ran from March until the end of October 2014. Question: how to successfully finish a successful project?

Evaluation of the PHAR-QA progress report – we need to consider the comments. J. Atkinson shows the overall comments table.

-Improve the visibility of the project activities: we have to increase our publications / newsletter / presentations at different national / international congresses. J. Wilkinson (PGEU) offers to help with the dissemination of our project activities.

-Testing the model of professional competencies: Question by D. Preece (EAHP): was this in the original application to EACEA or is this a further development? A. Koster answers that the testing of the model will be presented at the EAHP meeting in Athens.

-It is not clear for which respondents specifically this online survey was created: we need to explain that:

1. Choosing respondents amounts to choosing answers
2. The design was that there would be no limit on respondents and that by snowballing respondents could be recruited from all pharmacy professions and activities.

We have to decide how to study the different groups – list of possibilities / and possible comparisons to make. Furthermore a comparison with an existing Australian study is also possible.

the final global population (n=1245) is different from the 1613 replies as 23% did not go beyond profile description. Albeit, sample size is definitely statistically valid.

Raking was as in MEDINE2 with a four point Likert scale thus avoiding a neutral answer in the middle which is selected by the majority. As in MEDINE there was also the possibility to leave an answer blank.

Statistics proposed:

-Same as MEDINE2 and further developed by C. Mircioiu with creation of pictorial, schematic representations of data for ease of comprehension.

-Descriptive (means +/- SDs)

-Analytical using non-parametrical statistics. A proposal to use parametric analysis on the basis that it is robust and gives the same results, was rejected by the editor of the journal to which we submitted the sister organisation PHAR-IN article. This interesting point of parametric versus non-parametric will be taken up in a paper to a statistical journal but in the meantime for the sake of rapidity of publication we will stick to non-parametric analysis of the PHAR-QA data.

K. Wilson: you have nominal data, therefore non-parametric statistics.

A. Koster: possibility of cluster analysis thus finding a pattern in a given set of competences?

Global population overall results: low values for the basic knowledge (analytical chemistry / pharmacognosy / general and inorganic chemistry / plant and animal biology / physics,...) Clearly respondents do not see those as competences of a pharmacist.

These are not real “competences” – but it was decided to include them in the questionnaire because they make part of the background knowledge of a pharmacist.

Same patterns can be observed when looking at the subgroup of community pharmacists.

Analysis of comments: this is an enormous amount of work that will be facilitated by the use of the inbuilt surveymonkey algorithms for the analysis of comments by keywords, etc.

Next steps:

- IMP: Delphi round 2 to produce definitive PHAR-QA survey
- to be proposed at Athens May 2015 meeting
- call for volunteers for the evaluation and testing of model
- to be finalized by end of 2015 (end of project March 2016)
- DISS publication in Pharmacy Online; also Med. Educ. (IF3.6) if possible, – possibility to write a collaborative article together with MEDINE (Chris van Schravendijk) .

- EXP comparison with Australian study: Nationwide collaborative development of learning outcomes and exemplar standards for Australian pharmacy programs

- A. Koster talks about a conference in Italy (Australians are often present) – they are probably interested in these (even preliminary) results. Prato Monash University – Pharmacy 5-7 July 2015 / Prato – “Transforming pharmacy practice through education”. <http://monash.edu/pharm/about/events/education-symposium/>

-. Atkinson closes his presentation with the hope that the PHAR-QA results will be exploited through EAFP so as to create the European QA in PET networking system and agency – this was the basic aim of the PHAR-QA project).

18h00

Discussion is open – development of second network survey.

S. Hocevar : would like to see the differences between the answers of the students and the professionals – maybe they do not realize what the important competences are for a pharmacist in his/her future career and because of that they “dislike” maybe some of the basic subjects in the program.

J. Hirvonen makes the same remark for the university staff answers.

C. Mircioiu indeed confirms the importance of cluster analysis to locate differences and the use of schematic representation for an easier understanding of the data

B. Bozic: do not mix up competences with university curricula (= disciplines) – typical example ‘physics’ (low score); but indeed, we are not ‘competent’ in physics but we need it for other skills and competences. Take care that in the end we only teach what is described as a “competence”.

D. Rekkas emphasizes the interrelationship between quality assurance (=education) and competences (=pharmacy profession).

A. Sanchez-Pozo: how should the data be analyzed? Different point of views? We need to come to a consensus: survey should be shorter and respond to the different hypotheses? We are not just running the survey again for a second time for the sake of it.

A. Koster: curriculum mapping is necessary. Once you have the competences; screen your curricula to test whether you have everything in -house to reach those particular competences.

S. Hocevar: suggests to focus on the young professionals / they are new in the field and maybe less influenced compared to students.

K. Wilson: proposes either to reformulate the scientific knowledge (disciplines) into a competence; or otherwise leave it out.

J. Atkinson: emphasizes that it never was the intention to create uniformity, nor ‘one fits all’. It is a Delphi procedure to establish the common competences upon which all pharmacy professionals could agree.

Conclusions:

1) Finalize the analysis of the results (should be done before Athens) + analysis of the comments

2) 2) Do various comparisons

3) possibility for publications

4) and 4) Do a second round of the survey

- Use the model / results to adjust the questionnaire to prepare a second round:

- make it shorter

- rephrase some of the questions / or leave out those curriculum disciplines
- ask respondents to reflect on the listed competences with their own curriculum / ask them whether they agree with the model.
- D. Preece (EAHP): first you need to share the results / can people identify themselves with the listed competences?
- B. Bozic: based on the discussion of this afternoon; rephrase the disciplines into competences. Make the survey shorter.
- D. Rekkas: Use the Saturday morning meeting in Athens to develop the second round.
- L. Besson (EPSA): how are you going to inform the respondents about the results of the first round?
- A. Koster: how are we going to present this to the audience in Athens?
- D. Preece: focus on each sector / listing best versus worse/worst and ask the participants what they think of it?

19h30 End of meeting day 1.

PHAR-QA M29 exceptional intermediate meeting

Brussels 24th February 2015

Chris van Schravendijk – Vrije Universiteit Brussel – MEDINE2 WP7L

Participation

Partners: J. Atkinson (P2), B. Bozic (P7), K. De Paepe (P1), J. Hirvonen (P6), A. Koster (P10), A. Marcincal (P10), C. Mircioiu (P9), L. Noël (P1), D. Rekkas (P4), A. Sanchez-Pozo (P3), A. Skowron (P8), D. Volmer (P5).

Advisory Board: C. Van Schravendijk, K. Wilson.

Stakeholders & Other participants: S. Hocevar and L. Besson (EPSA), D. Preece (EAHP), J. Wilkinson (PGEU).

Programme and meeting report

09h00 Andries Koster reports on WP5 and what should be done with EXP. Utrecht University is organizing a summer school in July 2015 on “Pharmacy Education and Training” The details are still under development. The summer school will have a maximum of 20 participants..

09h30 Agnieszka Skowron presents her results on the PHAR-QA virtual consultation agency with the aim of providing professional support and scientific expertise.

Actions: to set up an expert data base at pharminc.org.

What has been realized so far: a preliminary version of the tool is initiated and currently hosted by the university server in Cracow.

Domains of competences / personal competences / competency level – add competency. In that way you create a database of experts with well-known teaching skills. So people can search for experts in a particular field able to teach that particular competency.

Purpose: Join competences with teaching methods.

One could sign in as an expert and then indicate competences. Dropdown lists assist in selection of the relevant competences. Any person indicating competences, should have these validated by a colleague or members of the group. The expertise can also be used to identify persons that would be able to teach certain topics. Also, and very important, the competence level can be indicated. There is possibility to moderate competences, remove them, accept or adjust them, with date recorded of the changes carried out.

The overall idea is to combine competences with teaching abilities.

Question asked by C. van Schravendijk: is there a link between indicated competences of a person and the research profile of that person? Answer: the tool is not about research so this is not included.

How to proceed: A. Koster; we should start small and implement this by way of a growth model, with some concrete examples of effective education. Experience is among the people who set this up The quality should be followed-up by continuous monitoring.

B. Bozic: idea is good, but it should be clear to the user which type and level of competences are indicated. Sometimes, there is a competence, but not an expert competence, this should be distinguished.

A. Koster sees this more as a learning tool and as an exchange tool.

J. Atkinson: we should look at how this ties in with the program. We should avoid that this tool complicates the framework that we already have (from the survey). Where it could fit in is as a testing tool;

A. Sanchez-Pozo: this tool would also help in creating a virtual consultation agency.

A. Koster; we could indeed link it to EAFP. It should work from the onset, as a teaching expertise tool, starting in a very specific domain.

J. Atkinson: the first part could be active in spring 2016, with some results, while the second part (further exploitation) is to be taken over by EAFP.

K. Wilson: we need a framework, a method and an expert panel.

J. Atkinson: the new 'virtual' agency is not going to replace the national agencies, but could in the long run support European accreditation In a manner similar to that of EUA.

10h50 Coffee break and group picture

D. Rekkas. PHAR-QA update and future perspectives. Discussion of results from the first round, proposal for the next steps – second round. EAFP annual conference Athens 14-16 May 2015.

PHAR-QA has two specific time slots, on Friday and Saturday.

Special arrangements could be made for stake holders to attend meeting on Saturday.

Two posters could be submitted (one introductory, one about the results of the questionnaire). Dimitri will take care for this.

Productive live discussions with stake holders should take place in conference; it is a golden opportunity to make use of this. Stakeholders' inputs are critical for planning/execution of the second round.

11h20 Final points: Discussing the presentation strategy and who to involve. Invite the representatives of the Pharmacists professional and student unions.

Plan according to the meeting.

Assure implementation of stakeholders views and suggestions.

Design and decide on the second round.

Proposal to the stakeholders to upload the link of the PHAR-QA to their sites.

Newsletter should be disseminated around the date of the conference; D. Rekkas will send the info as soon as he received the request from D. Volmer who handles WP4 DISS.

J. Atkinson: are the stakeholders expenses going to be paid and if not are they aware of this? D. Rekkas: we waved their registration. EAFP will be asked to cover some (?) of their expenses. D. Rekkas: the letter of invitation was quite clear on the financial arrangements related to the invitation. J. Atkinson will invite the stake holders to participate to the meeting on Saturday (with no reimbursement of expenses).

11h40 J. Atkinson: the Friday session is one hour (11h00 – 12h00), so we need two speakers. One will be J. Atkinson, but who is the other? Could it be someone of the DG/Internal Market (preferable to DG Education)? This person will be reimbursed by EAFP. A. Koster and K. De Paepe confirm this. Unfortunately the PHARMINE contact in DG/IM (J. Tiedje is no longer in the sectoral professions area. H. Davies from EUA could handle this well.)

J. Atkinson suggests Nathalia Riesgo from EACEA. However Gilles Gervais is now in charge of PHAR-QA. G. Gervais has been invited by K. De Paepe to come to Athens, but no response has been received. K. De Paepe mentions Howard Davies (EUA specialist on competences in education), who was proposed before by J. Atkinson. H. Davies has been visiting the network before. A. Koster: education is more important for us than internal market. J. Atkinson proposes to invite D. Howard even for the PHAR-QA session on Friday. D. Rekkas is more in favour of sufficient time for discussion (see arguments above) of the PHAR-QA results. D. Rekkas: The PHAR-QA label is linked to the session because this is the only opportunity to discuss the PHAR-QA project, so we should take advantage to discuss this with the stakeholders.

11h50 J. Atkinson: what do we decide, one speaker with longer discussion or two speakers with less discussion? J. Atkinson: first possibility is two speakers of PHAR-QA and a little less time for discussion. Second possibility, H. Davies situates the PHAR-QA in context. Third possibility is to invite stake holders. K. De Paepe proposes to invite H. Davies.

D. Rekkas: where do we fit him, on Friday or on Saturday? On Saturday May 16, there is a 1 hr QA workshop starting at 9h00 and at the same time a PHAR-QA partners meeting from 9h00 to 12h00.

In general, the group supports the idea to have H. Davies, but exact implementation needs more time for D. Rekkas, to have the overview of the whole program. Who will finance HD It is confirmed that PHAR-QA can cover his expenses.

J. Atkinson: we should also think of the final PHAR-QA Brussels meeting at the end of the PHAR-QA project period: this could be held in the buildings of the EC, who to invite?

12h10 J. Atkinson closes the meeting.

During lunch, informal discussions about the PHAR-QA project continue.

Conclusion: This exceptional intermediate meeting was useful and important and the participants had sufficient opportunity to discuss their points. The most important stakeholders were present and participated actively. With the Athens meeting approaching in May 2015, a lot of practical issues were discussed; from these, it is clear that the first steps toward dissemination are taken and several ideas on EXP are circulating.

The traditional group picture was taken in the meeting room.



Report drawn up by:

23/2/2015: Kristien De Paepe / Lea Noël – Vrije Universiteit Brussel – P1

24/2/2015: Chris van Schravendijk – Vrije Universiteit Brussel – advisory board MEDINE2 WP7L



EAFP EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF FACULTIES OF PHARMACY



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens

Faculty of Pharmacy

21st EAFP Annual Conference

14-16/05/2015

University of Athens
Greece



Quality Assurance
in Pharmacy Education

Acropolis museum

<http://eafponline.eu/conferences/athens2015/>



PHAR-QA M32 meeting with EAFP Athens, 16/5/2015

Programme

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09h00	Kristien De Paepe J. Atkinson	VUB, P1 PCN/P2	Introduction. Budgetary affairs.
09h20	H. Davies	EUA, Brussels	Competence frameworks in professional healthcare training
09h50	J. Atkinson K. Wilson	PCN/P2 Aston, UK, Advisory board	Proposal for PHAR-QA EU network Delphi round 2
10h30	Coffee		
10h45	M. Rouse	ACPE, USA, Advisory board	How the competences that must be achieved by graduates impact QA issues
11h15	A. Skowron A. Koster	JUMC/P8 EAFP	Tool for testing the PHAR-QA model
11h45	J. Atkinson	PCN/P2	Conclusions and general discussion
12h45	End of meeting		

Please will you ALL sign the attendance list and send in your QPLN meeting evaluation form.

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RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

EUA Update no. 13, January 2015

Background

It is one year since the amended **Directive 2013/55/EU** came into effect. Member States (MSs) have now reached the half-way point of the period during which they must transpose all of its provisions¹ into national legislation. The eventual outcomes will no doubt be mixed. There will be those who fail to meet the deadline, those who meet it ahead of schedule, those who go further than is required ('gold-plating'), and those whose national circumstances pose significant problems for other MSs. This is an optimistic view. When Directive 2005/36/EC came into force, it too had a two-year transposition period. By September 2007, not a single MS had met the deadline. By September 2009, transposition had been completed everywhere except in Greece, but only 17 of the 27 MSs had progressed to full implementation.

A **study**² commissioned by the European Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Affairs committee (IMCO) attributed this to the complexity of legal, professional and educational structures and to the fact that the Internal Market Information system (IMI) was not up and running. The study also pointed to evidence of continuing protectionism. Finally, it noted plaintively that 'if the MS could trust each other's education systems and believe that a child nurse is well educated in the EU, regardless of the formal degree he or she has obtained, there might be fewer problems with recognition of professional qualifications.'³

At the beginning of **2015**, 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 three-cycle qualification system of Bachelor, Master and Doctorate is regarded as being securely in place, underpinned by the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF), to which 20 MSs have referenced their national qualifications frameworks.

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/european-qualifications-framework>

¹ With the exception of one provision concerning route 1 of midwifery, the deadline for which is 2020.

² *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.

³ Ibid. p.65

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

- the availability of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as an alternative way of expressing course duration;
- the introduction of the 'common training framework' (CTF), allowing an advance-guard of MSs to agree competence-based curricula into which other MSs may subsequently opt;
- the higher profile enjoyed by the recognition of formally validated lifelong learning, together with 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.

Finally, the amended Directive can be said to be fully on stream once a number of **delegated acts** have been concluded by the Commission. Their scope is spelt out in Article 57c. They cover, *inter alia*, the updating of Annex 1 (list of recognised professional bodies); the updating of requisite knowledge and skills in the sectoral professions, together with the updating of qualification titles in Annex V; the setting up of CTFs.

All stakeholders will hope that 2015 will see the publication of the long-awaited **consolidated text** of the Directive, which will integrate the 2013 amendments into the 2005 text.

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1 The Bologna Process

1.1 Bologna ministers are due to meet in Yerevan in May. The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG), of which the European University Association (EUA) is a member, is currently preparing the documentation for the summit. It will include the **2015 Bologna Implementation Report**, a detailed review of the progress made by signatory countries in areas such as quality assurance, student support, widening participation, lifelong learning, employability and internationalisation.

1.2 Ministers will be asked to endorse

- the revised **ECTS Users' Guide**, which can be read at <http://www.ehea.info/news-details.aspx?ArticleId=370>
- the revised **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in European Higher Education** (ESG), which can be downloaded from <https://eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/e4/ESG - draft endorsed by BFUG.pdf>
- the revised **European Approach for the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes**, now posted at https://eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/bologna/02_European_Approach_QA_of_Joint_Programmes_v8_5_endorsedByBFUG.pdf

1.3 Ministers will also receive a report from the **Pathfinder group**, which has explored the viability of the automatic recognition of academic qualifications. Automatic recognition exists currently, to varying degrees, in the Benelux, Nordic and South-Eastern European countries. Rather than propose mechanisms for automatic recognition as it exists in the Directive, the report suggests ways of ensuring greater adherence to the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, to which all Bologna countries formally subscribe. See the report at http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/SubmittedFiles/12_2014/154205.pdf

1.4 It is probable that the **2018 meeting** of Bologna ministers will be held in France.

1.5 The **European Quality Assurance Register** (EQAR) has now expanded to include 37 quality assurance and accreditation agencies which function in line with the ESG and which, national legislations permitting, operate on a cross-border basis. See <https://eqar.eu/home/newsletter-december-2014.html>

1.6 EQAR has recently published a report on **Recognising International Quality Assurance Activity in the European Higher Education Area**. It finds that cross-border quality assurance, while increasingly available and increasingly in demand, is not sufficiently recognised by national governments. https://eqar.eu/fileadmin/documents/eqar/riqaa/WP6_RIQAA_Report_final.pdf

2 The European Commission

2.1 The **Work Programme for 2015** is based on the agenda proposed by Jean-Claude Juncker at the time of his candidature. It consisted of ten policy guidelines: a boost for growth, jobs and investment; a digital single market; a forward-looking climate-change policy; a deeper and fairer Internal Market; deeper and fairer economic and monetary union; a free trade agreement with the

US; an area of justice and fundamental rights based on trust; a new policy on migration; a stronger global presence; a framework for democratic change.

http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/docs/pg_en.pdf

2.2 The guidelines translate into a list of **'new initiatives'**, set out in Annex at

http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/pdf/cwp_2015_new_initiatives_en.pdf

2.3 DG MARKET – now evolved into DG GROW

2.3.1 The Juncker Commission has merged the bulk of DG MARKET (Internal Market) with what was previously DG ENTR (Enterprise). The exceptions are the units handling copyright, which go to DG CNECT (Communications Networks, Content and Technology), while the corporate governance unit moves to DG JUST (Justice). The units handling financial services make up the new DG for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union. The rump of DG MARKET and DG ENTR is renamed DG GROW, **DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs**. Unit D (services) is headed by Claire Bury and D/4 (free movement of professionals) by Martin Frohn. See the DG's organigram:

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/about-us/files/org_chart_en.pdf

2.3.2 The new Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs is **Elżbieta Bieńkowska**, previously deputy prime minister of Poland. In the matrix structure put in place by Jean-Claude Juncker, she will work to all the Commission vice-presidents, with the exception of Frans Timmermans and Federica Mogherini. In the course of her EP hearing, she made specific reference to professional qualifications:

My immediate priority is the efficient implementation of the Services Directive and the correct implementation of the modernised Professional Qualifications Directive. I intend to present, early in the mandate, a report on the remaining barriers to a fully-functioning internal market for services. [...]
I will also work to ensure that regulation of professional services in the Member States is fit for purpose. I will support modernisation and structural reform efforts by Member States through the ongoing peer review process (on the basis of the Professional Qualifications Directive).

http://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/cwt/files/commissioner_ep_hearings/bienkowska-reply_en.pdf

2.3.3 DG GROW is pushing ahead with the **evaluation of recognised professions** announced in Communication COM/2013/676 and designed to eliminate over-regulation. Its first phase was a transparency exercise, requiring each MS to report which professions it regulates, either nationally or regionally. In the next phase, and by January 2016, MSs have been asked to supply detailed breakdowns of all their regulated professions and the activities that they cover, together with statements of intent regarding which of them they intend to retain. As reported in the previous Update, the first-phase interactive map is online at

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/regprof/index.cfm?action=map#close

2.3.4 In the autumn DG MARKET held a series of events on the theme of **'modernising access to the professions'**. Details of the meetings in Warsaw, Berlin and Rome are available at

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/forum/2014/events/professional-qualifications/index_en.htm

The Rome meeting was devoted exclusively to the European Professional Card. A brief report of the Warsaw event, by a representative of the Polish Supreme Chamber of Physicians and Dentists, can be viewed at http://www.hpcb.eu/Issue_30_HPCB_Update_Briefing.pdf_58660726.pdf

2.3.5 No summary reports of meetings of the **Group of Coordinators** have been posted since June 2014.

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/qualifications/policy-developments/group-of-coordinators/index_en.htm

2.3.6 The DG GROW web page on **infringements** has not been updated since the Commission's restructuring. News of developments in December will be posted at

http://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/qualifications/infringements/index_en.htm

2.4 DG EAC

2.4.1 The new commissioner is the Hungarian **Tibor Navracsics**, who will work to vice-president Valdis Dombrovskis. Citizenship, which was to have been part of his brief, will instead be handled by first vice-president Timmermans. The salient points made by commissioner Navracsics in his appearance before EP's CULT committee include the following comment on the Bologna Process:

"I think the Bologna system is a success. However, it has to be refined. The experience of many Member States shows, that if the system is implemented without flexibility, it results in certain case a too stiff system. The system should be refined, made more flexible and more sophisticated."

What this means may become apparent in time. For a summary of his commitments, see pp.99-101 of the compilation put together by the EP secretariat, at

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2014/536386/IPOL_BRI%282014%29536386_EN.pdf

2.4.2 DG EAC Unit A3 (Skills and Qualification Strategies; Multilingualism Policy), as well as the parts of Unit B2 (Vocational Training and Adult Education; Erasmus+) dealing with Vocational Training and Adult Education policy, have been **moved to DG EMPL** (Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion). Jordi Curell Gotor, who oversaw one of the 'modernisation of education' policy strands, has since followed. The DG EAC organigram is posted at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/docs/organisation_en.pdf

2.4.3 Since the last Update, DG EAC has published an evaluation report on the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (**CEDEFOP**). See

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/index_en.htm

2.4.4 Those working in the sectoral professions which straddle vocational training (VET) and higher education will be interested in the evaluation report on the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (**ECVET**). Among its observations are the following:

... However, ECVET was not equally useful to all EU Member States. The level of commitment to ECVET in different countries strongly depends on the features of the existing VET and credit systems. Countries with units, modules and functional credit systems, as well as those with VET systems dominated by workplace-based training saw lower added value in ECVET implementation than those which lacked credit

system or had no units/modules and were predominantly school-based. The rigidity of national VET systems and the continuing lack of political commitment and argumentation at the national level shows that a genuine European credit system for VET (including all Member States) may not be feasible in its current form and could either be applied only in those countries where the demand and theoretical compatibility exists, or its objectives could be revised. [...] [pp.12-13]

ECVET and ECTS had weak compatibility in terms of their approach towards credit / credit points, but the learning outcomes approach could facilitate a two-way conversion between the systems. There were also indications that keeping separate tools was a viable option, as the workload element was much more important in higher education due to the stronger need to structure the curricula and schedules of lecturers and students, and meet student expectations in terms of workload offered by university courses. [p.14]

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/docs/education/ecvet14_en.pdf

2.4.5 Also worthy of mention here are two recent reports produced by **EURYDICE**:

- *National Student Fee and Support Systems in European Higher Education* (2014)
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/fees_support.pdf
- *Education Budgets in Europe* (2014)
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/National_Budgets.pdf

2.4.6 DG EAC also publishes an **Education and Training Monitor**, covering country-by-country snapshot views of, *inter alia*, tertiary education attainment, graduate employment, and participation in lifelong learning. The 2014 edition can be downloaded from http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/publications/monitor14_en.pdf

2.4.7 Finally, October saw the publication of the conclusions of the **High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education**. The main thrust of its recommendations concern the adoption of online learning and teaching methods and the consequent need for CPD at all levels of the teaching profession. (See also para.4.1.3 below)
http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/reports/modernisation_en.pdf

2.5 DG EMPL

2.5.1 The new commissioner is the Belgian **Marianne Thyssen**. A lawyer by profession, and formerly an MEP, her CV is available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/empl/dv/empl20141001_thyssen_cv/empl20141001_thyssen_cv_en.pdf

2.6 DG SANCO

2.6.1 Two DG SANCO projects impinge on aspects of the amended Directive:

- **Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting** has completed its first year of activities. Its report is due in January. See <http://euhrforce.weebly.com/>

- The consortium of the Council of European Dentists (CED), the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN), the European Midwives Association (EMA), the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU), led by the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), together with the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) – has concluded its ‘Study concerning the review and **mapping of continuous professional development and lifelong learning for health professionals in the EU**’. The full report now available at http://ec.europa.eu/health/workforce/docs/cpd_mapping_report_en.pdf

3 Council of EU

3.1 The Italian presidency ended in December, claiming little more than to have confirmed the priority of mobility and employability in the internal market:

The Presidency focused on education and training as key elements to boost growth and job creation policies, reaching three important results during its six-month term. Firstly, the Council restated that if Europe wants the Europe 2020 Strategy to be more effective, education must be a priority. It also stressed the need to mobilise every resource available at regional, national and European level and the opportunity to strengthen cooperation with Employment Ministers and the EPSCO [Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs] Council. In this regard, the Presidency organised for the first time a cross-participation of the Trio Presidency Ministers (Italy, Latvia and Luxembourg) and the two European Commissioners responsible for Education and Employment, respectively in the EPSCO Council and in the Education Council. The second result achieved is the approval of the conclusions on entrepreneurship and training, with the aim of supporting the institutions responsible for education and training in the activities promoting entrepreneurship during the learning process and disseminating the entrepreneurial culture among all European citizens. Finally, being generally aware that job opportunities depend also on the possibilities young people have to participate in mobility programmes, the Presidency deemed it fundamental to channel the Council’s effort on how to integrate mobility into education and training for all young Europeans. EU Ministers’ discussions showed broad convergence on the importance of promoting the integration of mobility experiences particularly in higher education curricula and on the need of further work on the proposal to prepare, under the Latvian Presidency, a political declaration of the Member States in support of the Erasmus + which include a percentage target for mobility experiences.

http://italia2014.eu/media/4605/risultati-semester-presidenza_it2014eu.pdf

3.2 The **Latvian Presidency** which began in January will focus on three overarching priorities: Competitive Europe, Digital Europe and Engaged Europe. CE includes strengthening the Single Market – making progress on the outstanding Single Market Act II proposals and launching discussions on the expected Internal Market Strategy for goods and services.

<https://eu2015.lv/the-presidency-and-eu/priorities-of-the-latvian-presidency>

3.3 Latvian presidency: the **minister for education and science** gave more detail in a speech to the EP Culture and Education (CULT) Committee:

Thinking of the skills and competences necessary for the future labour market, the Presidency will focus on enhancing European cooperation in vocational education and training. [...] Similarly, the work programme stresses evaluation of the Bologna process, accessibility of education and effectiveness of investments, internationalisation of education and transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications for mobility and employability.

<https://eu2015.lv/news/media-releases/318-minister-for-education-and-science-presents-education-youth-and-sports-priorities-at-the-european-parliament>

4 The European Parliament

4.1 CULT Culture and Education

4.1.1 The Committee decided in September not to debate the **Commission's Report on Progress in Quality Assurance in Higher Education** (for details, see Update 12, para.2.4.3).

4.1.2 It will, however, report on the **implementation of the Bologna Process**. The rapporteur will be the Polish socialist Krystyna Łybacka.

4.1.3 Aldo Patriciello, Italian EPP member, has tabled a motion for a resolution on 'the establishment of a single European system for access to the **teaching profession**, continuous training and performance assessment'.

4.1.4 DG EAC and DG EMPL, will hold a joint hearing on February 26, the subject of which is to be 'the **reform of educational systems** in Europe as a way to fight early school leaving, child poverty and youth unemployment'. The programme is not yet available.

4.2 IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection

4.2.1 As reported in the previous Update, the new **chair of IMCO** is the UK conservative Vicky Ford. While this signals continuity with the work of her predecessor Malcolm Harbour, as well as consistency with the perception that the UK is the most energetic promoter of the Single Market, it may also be read as a sign of IMCO's limited influence. The *European Voice* offers a downbeat view of the committee: it is overshadowed by Industry, Research, Energy (ITRE), by Legal Affairs (JURI), and by Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON); it has to struggle hard to win important dossiers; the two main political groups consider it to be of little significance. See <http://3kck0t38mmqdnrjfp23kzm9tz0.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Companion-Final-PDF.pdf>

4.2.2 The programme of events mentioned in para.2.3.4 above runs in the framework of the **Single Market Forum** (SMF). The Forum has hitherto been organised jointly by IMCO and DG MARKT. At its September meeting, IMCO decided to seek a budget to extend its activities. It is intended in the future to focus on 'services, digital, IPR, public procurement, professional qualifications and crowd funding', with workshops in a number of MSs and a conference in 2015. See IMCO's September Newsletter at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201409/20140925ATT89944/20140925ATT89944EN.pdf>

4.2.3 The previous Parliament adopted in plenary session Anna Maria Corazza Bildt's report on the **state of play and next steps in the Internal Market**. The report regrets the "significant numbers of identified cases where Member States are inappropriately invoking overriding reasons of public interest for the sole purpose of protecting and favouring their domestic markets". See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2013-0273+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en>

4.3 PETI Petitions

4.3.1 Details of a petition submitted by a Polish speech therapist, who was refused recognition in France, can be accessed at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=COMPARL&reference=PE-535.946&format=PDF&language=EN&secondRef=01>

5 Professional, academic, regulatory and student bodies

Healthcare professions

- December saw the first **summit of healthcare student organisations**:

ECPTS: European Confederation for Physical Therapy Students

EDSA: European Dental Students Association

EMSA: European Medical Students Association

ENSA: European Nursing Student Association

EPSA: European Pharmaceutical Students' Association

<http://www.adee.org/pdf/news/press-release-european-healthcare-students-symposium-15-12-14-52.pdf>

No report is available at the time of writing. Some detail of existing collaboration between EPSA, EMSA and EDSA can be found on pp.26-7 at <http://www.epsa-online.org/images/publications/nwl/flash/V22E1/>

- The latest Update by Healthcare Professions Crossing Borders (HPCB) is available at http://www.hpcb.eu/Issue_30_HPCB_Update_Briefing.pdf_58660726.pdf
- The European Observatory of Health Systems and Policies has published a book on the mobility of health professionals in Europe. Chapter 2 provides a useful overview of the main conclusions. The second volume of outcomes of the PROMeTHEUS project, can be downloaded from http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/248343/Health-Professional-Mobility-in-a-Changing-Europe.pdf?ua=1&dm_i=CUG,2U73U,BJMhk4,ABAY3,1

Medical doctor

- The September conference of the **Association of Medical Schools in Europe** (AMSE) debated the "uncontrolled" increase of public and private medical schools, franchise/cross-border models of medical schools, differences in medical programmes, in the quality assurance procedures and the automatic recognition of physician licenses across Europe according to the EU Directive 2005/36/EC and EU Directive 2013/55/EU'. Among its conclusions were the following:

We need Europe-wide standards for medical education programmes, medical schools, franchise/cross-border models of medical schools and academic hospitals. Based on these standards AMSE need Europe-wide valid quality assurance procedures.

<http://www.amse-med.eu/news.html>

Dentist

- In anticipation of the formulation of the delegated act by which the Commission will update the list of 'subjects' detailed in Annex V, the **Council of European Dentists (CED)** and the **Association for Dental Education in Europe (ADEE)** have jointly published a position paper on competences. It itemises the competences to be acquired by the end of the basic training programme, setting them into five broad categories: ethical, intellectual, clinical, therapeutic and preventative. See http://www.eudental.eu/library/policy.html?filter_id=57
- CED has also decided to strengthen its links with EDSA, as well as to join the advisory board of a **transnational e-learning platform**. http://www.eudental.eu//index.php?option=com_newsletter&view=newsletter&id=38&sbid=58&Itemid=4&tmpl=ajax

General care nurse

- The general assembly of the **European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN)** was held in Dublin in October. *Inter alia*, it resolved to 'advance the negotiations for the development of the Delegated Act that will update Annexe V; as regards CPD, EFN members will take forward the recommendations of the EU Study on CPD making sure that their governments facilitate nurses' access to CPD activities'. <http://www.efnweb.be/wp-content/uploads/EFN-Update-November-December-2014.pdf>
- With regard to Annex V, EFN has drafted a **proposal for a competency framework**, which seeks to translate the content of the amended Article 31 into a set of generic and specific competences. The framework has been discussed by among others, the Chief Nursing Officers meeting in Rome, and a meeting of UK and Irish stakeholders convened by the Royal College of Nursing and the Council of Deans of Health. It can be accessed on the FINE website at <http://www.fine-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/EFN-Competency-Framework-Final-Draft-V18-07-2014-clean.pdf>
- FINE, the **European Federation of Nurse Educators**, has published an initial set of comments, to be finalised following a consultation of its membership which closed at the end of December. See http://www.fine-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014_12_16_FINE-Feedback-to-EFN-DRAFT-for-Council-2.pdf

Veterinary surgeon

- Under the aegis of the European Coordination Committee for Veterinary Training (ECCVT), four professional bodies (the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education - EAEVE, the European Board for Veterinary Specialisation - EBVS, the Federation

of Veterinarians of Europe - FVE, and the Union of European Veterinary Practitioners – UEVP) have set up a programme of **Veterinary Continuous Education in Europe (VETCEE)**. It has recently approved three postgraduate programmes in companion animal medicine. They are set at EQF level 7, each consisting of ECTS 30 to be completed on a part-time basis in a period of between one and three years.

http://www.fve.org/education/docs_to_download/VETCEE%20Applications/001_VETCEE%20Standards.pdf

- FVE, meanwhile, has issued a **policy paper on veterinary education**. In line with the VETCEE initiative, it calls for the harmonisation of CPD credits and specialist education across Europe. It also takes a strongly critical line on the basic training programme enshrined in the amended Directive: non-compliant courses have not been outlawed; the list of mandatory subjects set out in Annex V and unrevised since 1978 is inadequate; there is a persistent risk that programme designers will diminish the core curriculum in order to accommodate options prematurely; finally, where the Bologna Process has been implemented in such a way as to split an integrated programme into Bachelor and Master, there is no evidence that mobility has increased or that the Bachelor has any utility as an opportunity for career-switching.
http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/008_fve_edu_policy_ga_22_nov_2014_ad_opted.pdf
- In consequence, FVE will hope to engage fully with the preparation of the **delegated act** which updates Annex V.
http://www.fve.org/education/docs_to_download/ECCVT%20Newsletter/005%20ECCVT%20newsletter.pdf
- EAEVE's application to join ENQA, however, has been turned down; it has said that it will appeal.
http://www.eaeve.org/fileadmin/downloads/news/EAEVE_Staying_in_Touch_Ed3FINAL.pdf

Pharmacist

- The Pharmine project's **PHAR-QA consortium** has completed the first round of its consultation on competences for pharmacy practice. 1,600 academics, students and community pharmacists responded. The full results will be announced in February.
- PHAR-QA is to run a **summer course** in July at Utrecht University. It is designed for teachers, programme directors, staff developers and professionals who are involved in the course development and quality enhancement at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It will provide a working knowledge of curriculum development in the pharmaceutical field, as well as set up a network of pharmacy education professionals. See <http://www.utrechtsummerschool.nl/courses/life-sciences/pharmacy-education-and-training>
- The **European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP)** has set in motion the construction of a common training framework (CTF) at EQF level 7. An initial meeting heard a presentation by a DG EAC policy officer and discussed divergences in national professional practices, as well as issues relating to curriculum design and quality assurance. It established a steering committee to organise the mapping of national curricula and to identify working groups, reporting back to the EAHP congress in March. Detailed minutes of the meeting are available at <http://www.eahp.eu/content/first-meeting-forming-common-training-framework>

Architect

- The **Architects Council of Europe** (ACE) is participating in the mutual evaluation process set in motion by the Commission. Intended to identify and address cases of over-regulation by MSs, the evaluation runs from 2013 to 2016.
http://www.ace-cae.eu/uploads/tx_jidocumentsview/ACE_Info_-_September_2014.pdf

6 New comitology

6.1 As indicated above, the sectoral professions are gearing up to lobby the Commission on the **delegated acts** that will deliver the amendments to the bodies of knowledge, skills and competences set out in Annex V. In the previous Update, EUA noted that implementing and delegated acts allow a legal text to be both fleshed out following enactment and modified in advance of the next scheduled review – in the case of the Directive, in 2018.

- **Implementing acts** concern the putting into effect of measures spelt out in the Directive. They 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), its accommodation in the IMI system, and the putting in place of the alert mechanism. The Commission is subject to the oversight of a Committee composed of MS representatives. Although the Commission chairs the meetings of the Committee, it has no vote. The Commission is already engaged in the drafting of implementing acts for the EPC and the alert mechanism.
- **Delegated acts**, meanwhile, allow the Commission to modify so-called non-essential elements of the Directive. Both Council and Parliament nevertheless have power of veto over whatever measures the Commission might propose in this respect – and both can revoke the decision to delegate. Examples from the amended Directive are: introducing new medical and dental specialties; updating the knowledge and skills itemised in the Articles dealing with the sectoral professions; introducing CTFs; and updating the various lists contained in Annex V. These are non-essential in the sense that they render the Directive more relevant to the circumstances which it is designed to address, without changing the underlying logic of recognition which informs it.
- However, simply to state that an act is delegated to the Commission is not the end of the matter. The text of the amended Directive is followed by a **'statement' by the Commission:**

The Commission will, when preparing the delegated acts referred to in Article 57c(2), ensure a simultaneous, timely and appropriate transmission of relevant documents to the European Parliament and the Council, and will 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.

6.2 The question of **expert groups** has been taken up by the European Ombudsman. Emily O'Reilly has launched an own-initiative investigation (OI/6/2014/NF) into their composition and

transparency. It included a public consultation which closed at the end of August. No 'closing summary' has yet been published, but a list of organisations responding to the consultation can be seen at

<http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/cases/correspondence.faces/en/55509/html.bookmark>

6.3 Meanwhile, the complexity and political sensitivity of implementing and delegated acts is reported to have generated considerable tension between the EU institutions. **Comitology experts** regard the new instruments as controversial – essentially for three reasons:

- Commission, Council and Parliament do not necessarily agree on whether a particular action should be undertaken by implementing act or by delegated act: in such cases the European Court of Justice (CJEU) may have to pronounce.
- How delegated acts, in particular, have been determined is far from transparent.
- There is dispute over what degree of control MSs can exert over the content of delegated acts.

6.2.1 By way of example, the Parliament alleged that the Commission exceeded its implementing powers in setting up a Management Board for the **EURES employment portal**. The case went to the CJEU, which – to the surprise of some observers – found in favour of the Commission. <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=158605&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=404933>

6.2.2 MSs are reported to be putting pressure on the Commission to publish draft delegated acts, to take on board the opinions of stakeholder groups, and to set up a **register of delegated acts** for the sake of transparency.

6.2.3 Since November, the procedures governing secondary legislation have changed in line with the modification of **Qualified Majority Voting** (QMV) by the Treaty of Lisbon. When Council considers the veto of delegated acts or the withdrawal of the delegation, it will henceforth require a double majority: 55% of MSs + MSs representing 65% of the EU population. The same will apply to decisions on implementing acts. However, until 2017, MSs have the option of requesting a return to the previous system enshrined in the Treaty of Nice. There appears to be considerable uncertainty about whether and how this would work.

6.2.4 It is hoped that the new **Interinstitutional Agreement** (IIA), to be drafted by Commission vice-president Frans Timmermans, will resolve many of the difficulties.⁴

7 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.

7.1 The recognition of professional qualifications is one of the strands of the controversial **Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership** (TTIP), currently in negotiation between the EU

⁴ This section owes a great deal 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).

and the US. EUA provides detailed Updates at <http://www.eua.be/eua-work-and-policy-area/building-the-european-higher-education-area/international-trade-agreements.aspx>

7.2 The **9th European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF)** was held in Barcelona in November. Its focus was on the transition to student-centred learning; the importance of pedagogical training; opportunities and challenges created by technological advances, and the recognition of non-formal learning. Videos are available at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyDeF1BQckVs6ryLdJvoHOg>

Presentations and papers are available at

<http://www.eua.be/events/past/2014/EQAF-2014/Presentations.aspx>

7.3 The **10th EQAF** will take place in London in November this year.

7.4 EUA's **Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)** has recently completed one of its largest external evaluation exercises. 70 Romanian higher education institutions have taken part in IEP evaluations over the last three years in the framework of two projects managed by UEFISCDI, the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding of the Romanian Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport. The final report can be accessed via

http://eua.be/News/14-11-13/IEP_concludes_evaluations_of_70_HE_institutions_in_Romania_and_presents_system-level_report.aspx

7.5 IEP's application to renew its inclusion in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (**EQAR**) has been successful. IEP will now be listed on the EQAR until 2019

http://eua.be/News/14-12-11/IEP_inclusion_in_the_European_Quality_Assurance_Register_for_Higher_Education_EQAR_renewed_until_2019.aspx

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

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



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