



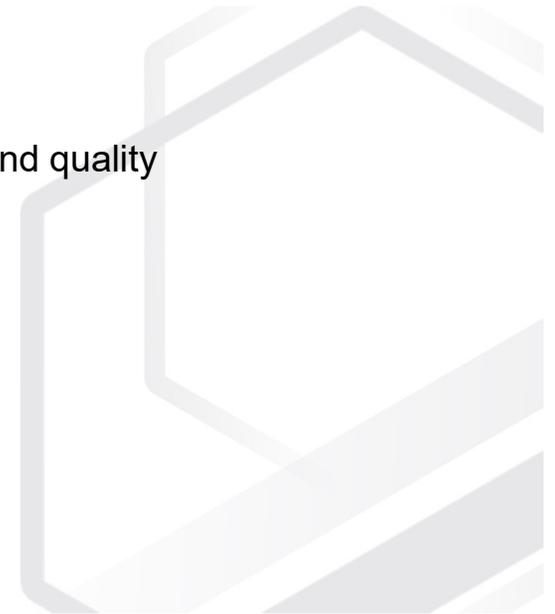
# Thinking and acting globally

**The role of recognition, quality assurance and qualifications frameworks for student and talent mobility: challenges and opportunities**

Stig Arne Skjerven, Director of foreign education, NOKUT; ENIC bureau president

## Outline of my speech

- NOKUT: QA agency, recognition body and QF coordination point
- The interplay between trust, quality assurance and recognition
- The European model: Development of a higher education area
- Trends, challenges and achievements in recognition related to QA, QF and quality



## NOKUT = QA + recognition + QF

- Mandate: safeguard public trust in education
- Sole legal accreditor and QA agency
- Legal decisions on recognition
- ENIC-NARIC
- Qualifications framework: NQF, EQF
- Diploma supplement
- EU Professional Qualifications Directive



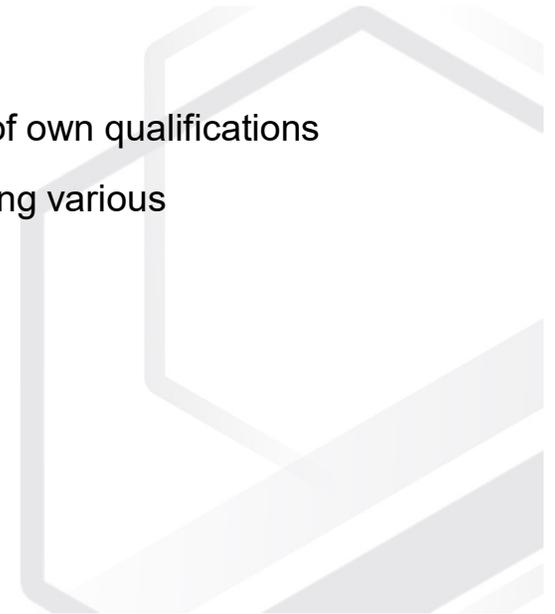
## Trust, QA and recognition

- Recognition is an expression of trust in quality
- Description of reality
- Expression of a willingness to trust



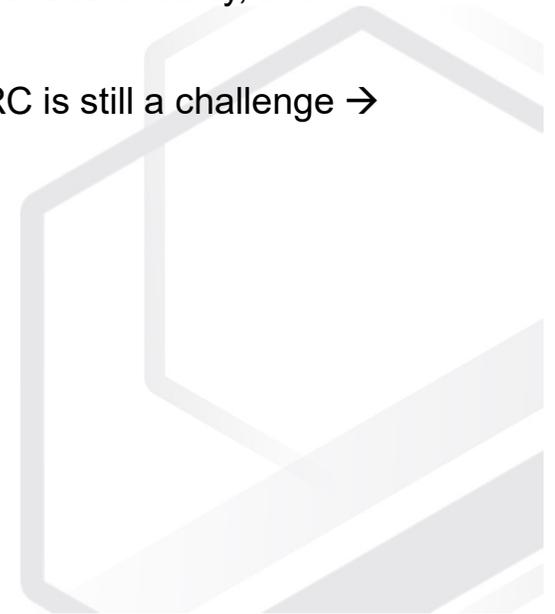
## Recognition as quality

- Prerequisite for mobility and internationalization
- Necessary to secure quality in admission of students
- Social dimension of recognition: Fair system for qualifications
- Reflects institution's ability to understand the quality and QA processes of own qualifications
- Recognition and QA are both part of the same infrastructure for expressing various manifestations of trust



## European model: Developing a HE area

- Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC, 1997)
- Common, legally binding principles for fair recognition of qualifications, periods of study, and prior learning
- 2015 Bologna Process Implementation Report: Implementation of the LRC is still a challenge →
- Need to improve QA



## ENIC-NARIC and EAR Manual

- ENIC-NARIC: networks of information centres
- Contribute significantly to the transparency of education systems and processes of QA that support HE
- EAR Manual: Practical recommendations on assessment of qualifications
- ENIC-NARIC charter: Expectation of bidirectional interaction with QA to establish common ecosystem of trust
- Relationship with national quality assurance bodies



## ENQA and ESG

- *Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
- Article 1.4:

*Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility. Appropriate recognition procedures rely on*

- *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention;*
- *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.*



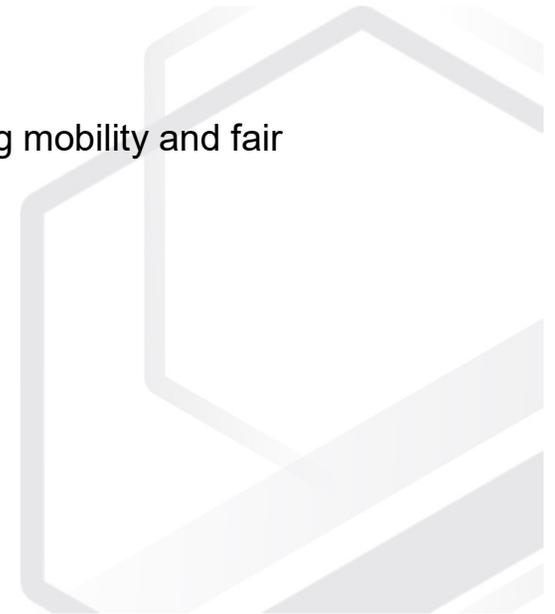
## Bologna Process: European HE Area (EHEA)

- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS): good systems of QA important for legitimacy
- Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (QF-EHEA): dual purpose as information and regulatory instrument
- QF-EHEA → European Qualifications Framework of Lifelong Learning (EQF)
- *European model: processes institutionalizing trust through quality*



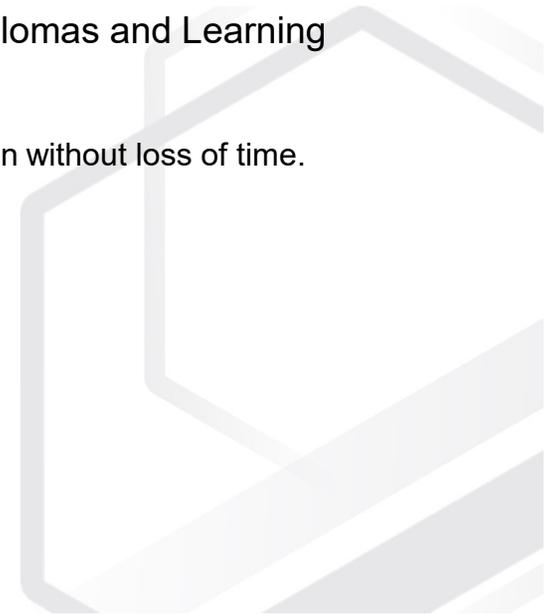
## Trends, challenges and achievements

- Bologna 2018: Renewed focus of core commitments that link QA, QF and recognition
  - three-cycle system in HE
  - compliance with LRC
  - QA in compliance with ESG
- “Quality assurance is key in developing mutual trust as well as increasing mobility and fair recognition of qualifications and study periods throughout the EHEA.”



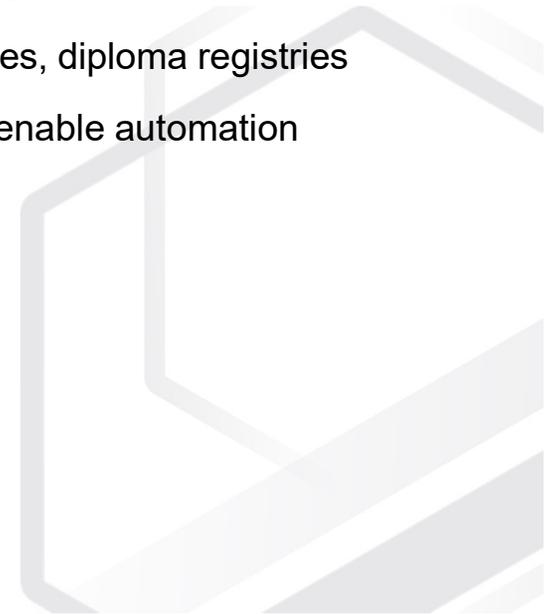
## Automatic recognition

- Bologna Process communiqué 2012, 2015: Higher education qualifications should be automatically recognized across the EHEA by 2020
- EU Member States Decision on the Automatic Mutual Recognition of Diplomas and Learning Periods Abroad 2018:
  - No separate recognition procedures to access studies in another EU country
  - Learning periods abroad automatically recognized as part of the learner's education without loss of time.
- Automatic recognition  $\neq$  automated recognition



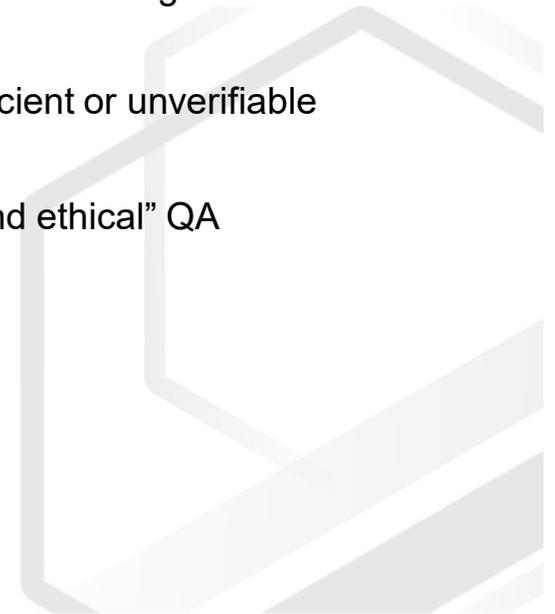
## Digitization of recognition

- Technological developments can reduce barriers for academic mobility and facilitate recognition
- Verified, trustworthy information about a qualification: databases/websites
- Verify the educational qualifications of applicants: trusted data depositories, diploma registries
- Standardisation of data on the students and their academic attainments enable automation
- EMREX project and ELMO standard for digital student data



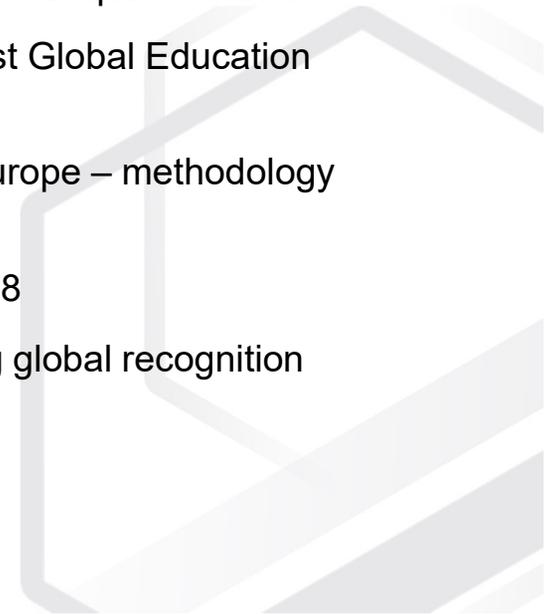
## UNESCO Global recognition convention

- Right to assessment of qualifications outside home region
- Recognition must be given unless proof of substantial difference between the foreign qualification and own qualifications
- Procedures for the recognition of qualifications for individuals with insufficient or unverifiable documentation, including refugees
- Requires transparency instruments for building trust, including “robust and ethical” QA



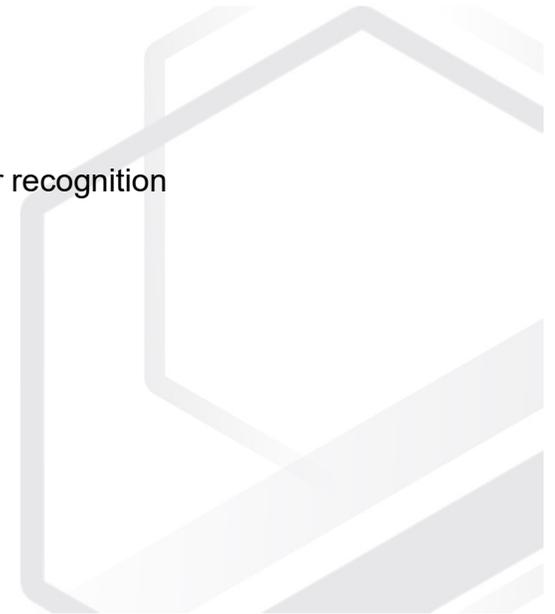
## Refugees and forced migrants

- Recognition of qualifications is one of the main education challenges for migrants
- Important part of the social dimension of education, ensuring a just system of qualifications
- Today's practices are in large inadequate – clearly documented in the last Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO)
- European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR) by Council of Europe – methodology developed by NOKUT
- Qualifications Passport endorsed in the Brussels Communiqué, Dec 2018
- Possible global scheme based on collective action, SDG4 and upcoming global recognition convention



## Conclusion

- QA and recognition processes are mutually dependent factors in building national and international ecosystems of trust in education
- Collaborative efforts create trust
- Responsible recognition practices in light of QA:
  - Standards and procedures for QA of academic recognition
  - Policy reforms to establish common, fair, non-discriminatory transparent criteria for recognition
  - Structured information tools and contact points
  - Cooperation platforms between countries
  - Cooperation platforms for QA and recognition bodies





Thank you for your attention!