

Bologna Progress: The Story So Far?

As part of our continual updating process, the first half of this year has seen significant research carried out into the education systems and qualifications in the 46 Bologna signatory countries. This has allowed us to populate our online databases with the most up-to-date information regarding the implementation of this pan-European reform of higher education.

"This is a significant and important piece of work" said Dr. Cloud Bai-Yun, Head of UK NARIC, "it means that our members will have the most up-to-date information on the progress of the Bologna process."

"Overall the findings are encouraging, with significant progress being made in many countries, but, as detailed in other reports about Bologna, we have found that there is still some way to go before 2010."

The Data and Research team has been working with colleagues from other Bologna countries and,



in addition, UK NARIC staff have visited a number of countries across Europe including Albania, Croatia, Greece, Poland, Serbia and Spain to ensure that the information we provide is as accurate as possible.

"The move towards a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) presents some fantastic opportunities for citizens across the continent, but it does not mean that recognition will not have a role in the future," observed Dr. Bai-Yun.

"In fact understanding the different education systems across the EHEA will become more important. More significantly

although qualified to the same level, their experiences and cultural background will mean that they will not demonstrate uniform competences."

"That is why it is critical for us to understand more clearly the changing systems that mould the graduates of the future."

UK NARIC Elected onto NARIC Advisory Board / ENIC Bureau

Dr. Cloud Bai-Yun, the Head of UK NARIC, has been elected on to the NARIC Advisory Board / ENIC Bureau. This pan-European body is responsible for managing the ENIC-NARIC Network and ensuring that the work of the various NARICs is co-ordinated and consistent. It is the second time Dr. Bai-Yun has served on the ENIC-NARIC Board, having previously represented the UK from 2005-07.

Europe Open

The Europe Open team have been busy the last few months maintaining the enquiry service and visiting contact points around Europe.

Since the service went live on 1st December, the team have received a large number of enquires. Around 61% of these enquiries have been about professionals in Europe coming to the UK to practice whilst the remaining 39% have been from UK professional wishing to practice in the rest of the EU.

The EU Professional Recognition Team has also been busy undertaking visits to Contact Points, to establish relationships and obtain knowledge of other countries' processes of recognition. To date the team has met with the Greek and Spanish contact points and attended the Contact Point Network Meeting in Brussels.

In Athens the team discussed the differences in the role and remit of both Contact Points and the process of recognition for professionals who practice an unregulated profession in their home country.

In Madrid the team were joined by two representatives from the Ministry of Education for Andorra, various topics were discussed such as the role and remit of both Contact Points, and the status of regulated professional titles in the UK, particularly with reference to Chartered Engineering titles. Discussions also took place around the different routes to access the professions of engineering, teaching and law in the UK and Spain.

The team are planning more visits in the future months but the destinations are still to be confirmed.

Please note that as of 1st July 2009 practitioner psychologists have become independently regulated for the first time by the Health Professions Council (HPC). By opening the Register to practitioner psychologists the HPC has taken on responsibility for protecting the public by keeping a Register of practitioner psychologists who meet its standards for training, professional skills and behaviour.

From 1 July 2009, the HPC began regulating practitioner psychologists by protecting the following titles:

- Clinical psychologist
- Counselling psychologist
- Educational psychologist
- Forensic psychologist
- Health psychologist
- Occupational psychologist
- Practitioner psychologist
- Registered psychologist
- Sport and exercise psychologist

For more information on Europe Open please visit www.europeopen.org.uk

ENIC-NARIC

The 16th ENIC-NARIC joint annual meeting took place in Cyprus on 14-16th June, hosted by the Cypriot NARIC, KYATS. The UK delegation was led by Cloud Bai-Yun, Head of UK NARIC.

Key sessions this year included: i) the networks' role and contributions in the Bologna Process following the recent Ministerial conference in Leuven in May this year; ii) the development of Qualification frameworks (QF) and their impact on recognition of qualifications; and iii) recognition issues between Europe and other regions of the world. These issues will be considered as the priority activities of the 56 ENICs and NARIC in conjunction with regional networks.

Discussions on NARIC contributions also featured largely in this year's meeting whereby detailed reports were given to the ENIC-NARICs on the selected projects (by the European Commission) in 2008-09, including:

- National conference on the academic recognition of foreign qualifications (France)
- CIMEAProJoint (Italy): Database on Joint Study Programmes at Italian Universities
- NTRF (Latvia): New Tendencies in the Recognition Field
- REFNILLO (The Netherlands / UK): Recognition of Formal, Non- and Informal and Informal Learning: Use of Learning Outcomes
- ON-REQ (The Netherlands / UK): On-line training programmes: Recognition of Qualifications
- ENICCB (UK): Capacity Building assistance programmes to ENIC countries (Albania, Serbia)
- IINAP (UK): Implementing and Improving National Action Plans

UK NARIC plays an active role in the ENIC-NARIC networks and it is intended that we continue to be more widely engaged particularly through the identified priority activities.

At this year's general election, Cloud Bai-Yun was elected as a member of the NARIC Advisory Board / ENIC Bureau. This pan-European body is responsible for coordinating and managing the ENIC-NARIC Networks. It is the second election for Cloud Bai-Yun who had served on the Board previously from 2005-07.

Feedback on New NARIC Packages

It is approaching a year since the new package system was introduced. The ad hoc feedback we have received about the packages has been very encouraging, but over the past few months we have undertaken some market research to find out what you really think.

Overall, the feedback is good. Members suggest that they feel the packages are an improvement on the service previously offered. Over 77% of respondents feel that the package system has improved the service that UK NARIC provides to Members and two-thirds feel that the packages offer value for money.

With regard to the services included in the packages Members were very positive about the customer service we provide as well as the training and publications. The three publications that we produce were all deemed to be 'very good' and were also the service which members were not aware of previously.

Research was also carried out into why Members use UK NARIC; unsurprisingly the majority use our services for 'general advice, guidance and information about qualifications and skills from overseas'. While the main sectors that Members require information about are 'academic qualifications from overseas', 'vocational skills and qualifications from overseas' and, interestingly, 'academic qualifications from the UK'!

Benchmarking Projects

UK NARIC has recently been working with a number of professional bodies with a view to enhancing international recognition of their awards and, where appropriate, making recommendations for development of the programmes.

The benchmarking projects are carried out using the tested NARIC methodology which is based upon the key principles of credential evaluation. On completion UK NARIC will be disseminating results of the various benchmarking studies to its member organisations.

Qatar

In March this year UK NARIC undertook a project for the Qatari Institute of Higher Education, reviewing their ranking list of universities from across the world. The outcome of this work was to provide as accurate and reliable list of institutions as possible which the Institute can use in their processes for awarding grants to international students. This project also provided recommended procedures and methodologies for the purposes of carrying out further ranking and reviews.

Europass

2009 has brought with it the greatest cohesion thus far between Europass and the Lifelong Learning Programmes. UK NEC presence at a recent Leonardo da Vinci start-up seminar generated extremely positive feedback. Many were keen to learn about the practical benefits of Europass increasing mobility and employability. The team will continue work with other National Agencies, striving for complete unison between the Lifelong Learning Programme and Europass.

April saw the first Europass training session for careers advisors. Taking place in Edinburgh, this session allowed the team to answer questions from staff, dispel myths surrounding the initiative and broaden in-house knowledge.

UK NEC has also been busy at an array of other events around the country - Graduate and language fairs in Cardiff and Leeds, the HERDA conference in Manchester and the Thematic Networking event in Birmingham.

The team were hosted by the Bulgarian NEC in Sofia during the bi-annual Europass network event, which gave rise to lively debate on the future development of new tools and online services.



What's new

After a few months' busy research, a number of key updates have been made on our three main databases: International Comparisons (IC), Vocational Comparisons (VC) and Teaching Comparisons (TC). The following country files have been fully or partially reviewed and updated, following desk based research:

- Armenia
- Denmark
- Monaco
- China
- Macao
- USA
- Cuba
- Moldova

In addition to this, the HEI lists for 42 countries have been fully or partially updated, including Algeria, Bangladesh, Canada, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Libya, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, Saudi Arabia, USA covering more than a thousand institutions. 63 qualifications and / or comparability statements have been added or changed largely as a result of the latest information gathered through desk based research and information provided by overseas authorities.

Stats

The number of individual enquiries received by UK NARIC has declined over the last two months following an increase in the volume received during January, February and March. On average 1,800 statements of comparability were issued in the last three months to individuals from countries worldwide. The majority of enquiries received from individuals relate to professional employment; undergraduate education is the least common purpose of enquiry representing less than 5% of the total number of enquiries received from individuals. India, Pakistan, Poland and South Africa remain top of the country league, followed by Australia, USA and Nigeria.

In recent months over 50% of enquiries received from subscribing organisations have been submitted from the Higher Education sector. Here India, China, UK and USA remain top of the country league.

Where have we been?

Research in the last three months has been mainly desk based, but we made three study visits to Cyprus, Greece, Poland and Spain, with a number of study visits due to take place over the next few months. New information and data is being reviewed and processed in order to appear on UK NARIC products in the near future.

Training

In-house events 2009

There are four sessions running in Cheltenham over the summer / early autumn. As always the morning sessions run from 09.30 – 12.30 and afternoon sessions run from 13.30 – 16.30.

TRAINING	DATE	SESSION
Evaluating International Qualifications	02/09/2009	morning session
Using UK NARIC's International Comparisons	02/09/2009	afternoon session
Education in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh	03/09/2009	morning session
Education in China	03/09/2009	afternoon session

External events UK

Demand for our training has increased significantly over the past few months and we are pleased to announce the following sessions are taking place across the UK and in Ireland:

DEGREES OF DECEPTION – COMBATING EDUCATION FRAUD		
Manchester	22/09/2009	afternoon session
Dublin	13/10/2009	afternoon session
London	03/11/2009	afternoon session
EDUCATION IN INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH		
Manchester	23/09/2009	afternoon session
EDUCATION IN CHINA		
Manchester	23/09/2009	morning session
London	04/11/2009	morning session
ENGLISH SPEAKING AFRICA		
Manchester	24/09/2009	afternoon session
Dublin	14/10/2009	afternoon session
EVALUATING INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS		
Manchester	22/09/2009	morning session
Dublin	13/10/2009	morning session
London	03/11/2009	morning session
EDUCATION IN NEW EU MEMBER STATES		
Manchester	24/09/2009	morning session
Dublin	14/10/2009	morning session
EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST		
London	04/11/2009	afternoon session

Further external events are still being discussed and will be advertised in our up coming training newsletters.

For more details on UK NARIC training courses or if you would like to host your own event please contact our training department on e. training@naric.org.uk or t. +44 (0) 871 330 7303.

Stop Press – Annual Conference 2009

The UK NARIC Annual Conference will be held on 2nd and 3rd of November 2009 at the Radisson SAS Portman Square Hotel, London. This year's event is different from previous events in the fact that we are holding it over two days; the first day will be focused on education and the second on the needs of our members from the commercial sector as well as those from Professional Bodies and Careers Advisory Services. Information about the event will be sent out to members in the near future.

Feedback

If you have any comments about the service that we provide, or any of the articles in this edition of NARIC News, please contact us on feedback@naric.org.uk

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