



CONCLUSIONS

Regional conference on Qualifications Frameworks in the European Higher Education Area

Belgrade, 1 – 2 November 2007

Organized under the Serbian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe

Representatives of the Ministries of Education as well as academic representatives of countries of South East Europe¹ met in Belgrade on 1 – 2 November 2007 to reflect on the implementation of qualifications frameworks, which are essential instruments for higher education reform and a significant step in the development of the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

The conference constituted an important step towards meeting the commitments undertaken by Ministers of Education at the Ministerial meeting of the Bologna Process in London on 17 – 18 May 2007 as well as in implementing the mandate given to the Council of Europe:

We note that some initial progress has been made towards the implementation of national qualifications frameworks, but that much more effort is required. We commit ourselves to fully implementing such national qualifications frameworks, certified against the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA, by 2010. Recognising that this is a challenging task, we ask the Council of Europe to support the sharing of experience in the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks. We emphasise that qualification frameworks should be designed so as to encourage greater mobility of students and teachers and improve employability.

In this context, delegations recommended that, in the course of developing national qualifications frameworks, public authorities:

1. identify all actors that could contribute to the process of developing national qualifications frameworks and that they clearly define the roles and responsibility of each actor;

¹ The following countries were represented at the conference: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and Turkey.

2. dialogue actively with higher education institutions, students, staff and other stakeholders, as well as between different education sectors, in the course of the process of developing their national qualifications framework;
3. provide information on the development of their national qualifications frameworks through dedicated web sites;
4. appoint a “qualifications frameworks correspondent” who can assist in disseminating pertinent information received through the Council of Europe mailing list;
5. establish a regional network for the development and maintenance of their national qualifications framework.

Delegations recognize the importance of regional cooperation within the overarching framework of the Bologna Process. They underline the need to improve cooperation and the exchange of experience in the development of national qualifications frameworks, possibly through a regional forum on qualifications frameworks.

Delegations also stress the need to further develop the expertise on learning outcomes and quality assurance, with the use of foreign expertise if necessary. They agree to seek the support of the Council of Europe in this regional effort.