



# ENIC Capacity Building Project Former Yugoslavia – ENIC CB FY

Final Report



## Project information

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ENIC CB FY

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# Project Summary

## Project Objectives (envisaged objectives, target groups, needs addressed)

Building on the success of previous capacity building projects, the aim of this project was to increase UK NARIC capacity building activities in the Former Yugoslavia region in order to facilitate transparency and consistency in recognition practices across the ENIC/NARIC network. By engaging closely with ENICs in the region, collaboratively examining existing recognition practices and identifying issues to support a more coherent approach, the project aimed to improve cooperation and best practice in the region. This was achieved by establishing a platform to enable discussion of regional issues in education and recognition from a variety of different perspectives.

The following objectives were identified for this project:

- To identify key opportunities for development of a more coherent approach to recognition in emerging ENICs
- To share best practice and experience in recognition between the participating ENICs and UK NARIC
- To initiate and encourage the development of a regional platform to discuss recognition issues and facilitate mobility
- To further develop a sense of inclusion of the emerging centres within the ENIC-NARIC network
- To establish a solid ground for co-operation and identify further opportunities to continue working together in the future

The partners for this project were UK NARIC and the Croatian ENIC-NARIC (Agency for Science and Higher Education). The other centres involved were the ENICs for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education) and Serbia (Ministry of Education Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia).

The main target group of this project was the participating ENICs, with a view to encompassing stakeholders within the participating countries as a result of the centres sharing the knowledge obtained through the project with their own national context.

**Project Outcomes and Undertaken Activities** (including information on the involvement of partners, if applicable and the dissemination and exploitation strategy)

In order to achieve the specified outcomes, the project consisted of a workshop in each of the participating countries. These workshops were the core method of presenting and discussing current recognition procedures. The specific programme for these workshops was agreed at the beginning of the project, during a kick-off meeting held at UK NARIC, and included topics such as:

- Credential evaluation practices (including recognition criteria and reference to LRC, EAR etc.; practical application of recognition criteria; evaluation processes and methodological considerations, including reference to the ENIC-NARIC Charter).
- Country specific information on education systems and qualifications for the purpose of fair evaluation, particularly for countries from the Former Yugoslav area, the UK (particularly postgraduate qualifications), Russia, Germany and the US.
- Research and data processes, information development and storage for the purpose of consistent and fair evaluation.
- Identification of fraudulent documents
- National qualification frameworks and the EQF – how can they be helpful and meaningfully integrated into the work of recognition information centres, with a particular focus on the role of learning outcomes.
- ENIC-NARIC network activities, including presentation of on-going projects such as the Changing Role of NARICs.

The accompanying capacity building materials were jointly prepared by UK NARIC and the Croatian ENIC for all participating centres; manuals for the workshops were printed including all the supporting information to allow for the workshops to be practical and productive.

The dissemination of the project included periodic news published on the UK NARIC online blog (e.g.: <http://uknarc.org/2013/10/07/reflections-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>) and included the e-mailed newsletter to UK NARIC members and stakeholders (for example, with an announcement of the kick-off meeting in the April 2012 newsletter, which can be viewed at <http://ecctis.co.uk/narc/Newsletters/April%202012.pdf>). Updates on the progress of the project were also shared at ENIC-NARIC network meetings during the course of the project lifespan.

The ENICs from Serbia and Bosnia, as well as the Croatia ENIC-NARIC, were asked for formal feedback at the conclusion of the final workshop. Questions included:

- Have you found the project useful?
- What activities did you find particularly useful?
- What are the areas for future work and development?
- Can further capacity building activities be helpful and how?

The responses to the project were positive and the following areas for development were identified:

Bosnia:

- There is a need to raise awareness of the operations and position of the ENIC Centre as the main national stakeholder for good practice in credential.
- The centre needs to extend its cooperation beyond its own canton and identify opportunities to promote the application of the LRC among national authorities responsible for recognition
- Continuous development of the Centre's capacity (in particular, investment in staff)
- Potential for the development of an electronic database for applicants/recognition decisions to promote consistency and efficiency

Croatia:

- The recognition decisions of the Croatian ENIC/NARIC are legally binding but the status is currently being debated; Croatia may consider advisory statements in the future
- The experience of Croatian NARIC is highly relevant for the participating ENICs and regional cooperation should continue in order to build on the work of the project

Serbia:

- There was an identified need for reforms in recognition policy and practice (for example, moving away from 'nostrification' towards the current practices of 'recognition' across the wider network) which the centre should seek to explore
- Greater consistency and efficiency in recognition practices is necessary
- The Centre should consider how to develop its resources (in particular, staffing levels)

The feedback demonstrated that the project had provided the participants with support to increase their effectiveness as centres and members of the ENIC-NARIC network. Future work in this area will enable them to examine whether the developments have been effective.

## Contribution to EU Policies and Impact

As with the previous capacity building projects, this project focussed on the continuing improvement of the understanding of recognition practices in a specific region of the network. Therefore it directly addresses the following:

- “There has been progress in the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC), ECTS and diploma supplements, but the range of national and institutional approaches to recognition needs to be more coherent. To improve recognition practices, we therefore ask the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) to arrange for the ENIC/NARIC networks to analyse our national action plans and spread good practice.”  
*London Communiqué of May 2007*
- The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Working Group on recognition action points include following up on the recommendations of the analysis of the national action plans on recognition with a view to improving the coherency of the recognition of qualifications and credits more across the EHEA and the rest of the world.

This project will have a demonstrable and long-lasting impact on improved recognition criteria and processes, increased understanding and knowledge of European recognition tools and initiative as well as increased transparency and coherent recognition processes across the region. This project aimed to ensure greater co-operation and coherence in recognition practices in line with the LRC and offer opportunities for sharing information and best practice through regionally shared capacity building activities and information provision on education systems and recognition tools. As a tangible result from this project and as a priority in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Bologna Process, mobility will be made easier. The activities of this project addressed Priority 2 through the workshop and networking activities among the centres involved in this project (presenting on and sharing recognition practices in line with the LRC in the region, specifically facilitating mobility and recognition in the Former Yugoslav region). In addition, the project activities served to increase an understanding of common European recognition tools such as the Diploma Supplement and Qualification Frameworks and to disseminate and discuss the European Area of Recognition manual.