

Recognition of foreign qualifications in Denmark

- Background and legislation
- Principles and procedures
- Barriers to recognition

CIRIUS is the national agency for internationalization of training and education



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Background and legislation

- Common national system of recognition implemented in 2000
- Legislation on recognition of foreign qualifications passed in 2001, revised in 2003 and small amendments in 2007.
- One central point of entry for persons with foreign qualifications: CIRIUS, an authority under the Danish Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation
- Binding decisions on recognition:
 - A public institution's decision of admission
 - An unemployment fund's decision of admission
 - A public employers decision of employment
 - Recognition of teachers: Primary and secondary school

Principles and procedures in recognition

- Danish legislation based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention
- Lisbon Recognition Convention:
 - All individuals must have easy access to fair recognition of his or her foreign qualifications
 - Recognition should be fully granted unless there are **substantial differences** between the foreign qualifications and the similar national qualifications
 - Recognition principles should be based on recognition of learning outcome and not of equivalence
- Central document underlying the Lisbon Convention: “Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment on Foreign Qualifications”

Danish system of recognition

- Main developments since 2000:
 - One central entry point
 - Recognition based on learning outcome and not on equivalence
 - System facilitates development of expertise in recognition principles and procedures and of knowledge of foreign educational systems
 - Flexible system: Based on a spirit that barriers to recognition should be removed unless they constitute a substantial difference between foreign and Danish qualifications
 - However, Quality of foreign qualifications is emphasised in the assessment

Danish system of recognition

- No fee for assessments
- Assessment of qualifications from Grundschule to Ph.D.-level - from carpenters to civil engineers
- Assessments of qualifications from all countries
- Top countries: Sweden, Germany, UK, Iraq and Russia
- Average case processing time: 30 days
- 2200 cases handled in 2008 – many more dealt with in mails and by phone with employers and institutions and through published standards of assessment on the internet
- Decisions published on website and in general descriptions of top countries

Danish system of recognition

- Application form
- Is the educational institution officially recognised/accredited in the country of origin?
- The admission level
- Nominal duration of programme
- Content and core subjects
- Thesis or major written assignment
- Letter of assessment

Regulated professions

- CIRIUS is coordination point for access to regulated professions in Denmark
- CIRIUS is competent authority for recognition of teachers in Denmark
- Teachers from countries outside Europe recognised in line with the legislation in the EU-directive
- If no automatic recognition CIRIUS provides a list of tests, which should be taken in order to get recognition as teacher

Danish system of recognition

- CIRIUS has close relationship with educational institutions: Web based information of standards of recognition from all countries, seminars on recognition and hotline for institutions' admission officers
- Employers have easy access to assessments from applicants with foreign qualifications, verification of documents is part of the assessment
- Guiding assessments of qualifications of refugees and displaced persons without documentation of educational qualifications

Barriers to recognition on the labour market

- Old and unused qualifications: From refugee camp to Danish labour market: Often 4-5 years.
- Different profile of educational qualifications: A Russian engineer of mining construction (no mines in Denmark), an economist in planned economy (USSR)
- Qualifications with strong national emphasis: Ex. law degrees
- "The Tick, Trick und Track syndrom"

Thank you for listening

Further information:

www.ciriusonline.dk/recognition

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