Institutional organisation and responsibilities over higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are regulated by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, constitutions of entities and cantons and the Statute of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Full competence for all levels of education lies with the Republika Srpska, ten cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District. This means that there are 12 educational authorities which have constitutional competencies over education and consequently over recognition of higher education qualifications (HE qualifications).

In 2003, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Bologna Declaration and ratified the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region – the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

According to the Lisbon Recognition Convention the duty of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to harmonise its legislation in the field of recognition of HE qualifications with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and to enable its full implementation.

The Lisbon Recognition Convention must be the legal standard for recognition of qualifications acquired in education systems of the signatories of the Convention.

The Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (FLHE) was adopted. The Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH is responsible for the enforcement of this Law, especially for coordination and development of higher education in BiH, in cooperation with other competent ministries. Moreover, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH is assigned to promote integration of research in HE, student and staff mobility, equal opportunities of access to HE and life-long learning, and to support stronger links between higher education, industry, businesses and society.

The Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance (HEA) and the Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (CIP) have been established. As an advisory body for the implementation of the reforms in higher education, Rectors’ Conference of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been established. It consists of all rectors of licensed and accredited universities in BiH.

In 2008, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed a Decision on the Commencement of Work and the Seat of CIP. According to the Decision, CIP started to work on March 1st, 2008, with the official seat being in Mostar.

CIP has the role of an ENIC/NARIC office and is the part of the ENIC/NARIC network of national information centres that are information centres for academic and professional recognition of HE qualifications. CIP’s work is independent and public.

Important tasks of CIP are:

- Advice / Information / Opinions / Recommendations
- Professional Recognition
- Academic Recognition
- Lisbon Convention
- Qualifications Framework
- International Cooperation

**CIP IN NUMBERS**

Number of employees in CIP responsible for providing information and opinion on recognition of HE qualifications to the competent authorities:

4

On average, number of processed requests for information on recognition of a particular qualification, per year:

700

On average, number of issued opinions on recognition of higher education qualifications, per year:

300

Number of people trained by CIP on recognition in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention:

175

**BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR RECOGNITION OF HE QUALIFICATIONS**

Target groups of trainings for building capacities for recognition of HE qualifications are credential evaluators, HEI staff, ministry and public agencies staff, representatives of employers and employers’ organisations, court interpreters.

- Number of trained persons
- Number of trained persons at the end of the project implementation

**NUMBERS OF TRAINED PERSONS (BY 2018)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Trained Persons</th>
<th>Planned Trained Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representatives of employers’/organisations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court interpreters</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry and public agency staff</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential evaluators and HEI staff</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NUMBER OF TRAINED PERSONS (BY 2018) VS PLANNED NUMBER OF TRAINED PERSONS AT THE END OF THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

CIP - The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed a Decision on the Commencement of Work and the Seat of CIP. According to the Decision, CIP started to work on March 1st, 2008, with the official seat being in Mostar.

CIP has the role of an ENIC/NARIC office and is the part of the ENIC/NARIC network of national information centres that are information centres for academic and professional recognition of HE qualifications. CIP’s work is independent and public.
Recognition implies formal confirmation of the value of foreign higher education qualifications issued by the competent recognition body for the purpose of access to labour market or for the continuation of education at a higher education institution.

Contrary to recognition, nostrification implies the equivalence of a foreign higher education qualification to a related qualification in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By nostrification, individuals acquire qualifications as if they were educated in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Recognition according to the Lisbon Recognition Convention is aimed at facilitating academic and professional mobility. Transparency is one of the main principles which ensures that applicants get the most accurate, clear and reliable information on recognition procedures and criteria followed in the host country. The recognition process should be understandable, transparent, clear and successful.

The applicants should have the right to appeal in the case of unsatisfactory or negative decision on recognition.

Competent recognition bodies for professional recognition, as prescribed by the legislation, are currently either higher education institutions or governmental institutions.

### Types of Recognition of HE Qualifications

- **Academic recognition of higher education qualifications** is recognition with the purpose of access to further education and training.
- **Professional recognition of higher education qualifications** is recognition with the purpose of access to the labour market. Access to regulated professions may require compliance with specific and additional educational or professional criteria.

### Recognition of Professional Qualifications

- Recognition of professional qualifications required to access regulated professions is usually carried out in accordance with specific regulations on regulated professions and recognition of foreign professional qualifications.

### Short Analysis of Legislative Acts For Recognition of HE Qualifications in BiH

The procedures of recognition of HE qualifications in BiH are regulated differently in 10 cantons, Republika Srpska and Brčko District education authorities and are prescribed by laws on recognition, laws on nostrification (equivalence) laws on higher education, bylaws and statutes of higher education institutions.

The adopted legislative acts are not coherent nor clear in terms of used terminology, criteria or prescribed procedures for recognition.

### Short Analysis of Legislative Acts in Numbers

- Education authorities have adopted legislative acts in the field of recognition of HE qualifications fully aligned with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary documents.
  - **0/12**

- Education authorities have procedures established by the legislative acts that are not at all aligned with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary documents and that have still in place procedures for nostrification (equivalence) of HE qualifications.
  - **6/12**

- Education authorities have procedures established by legislative acts that are partially aligned with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its subsidiary documents.
  - **6/12**

- Legislative acts on recognition have provisions that include requiring the CIP’s opinion.
  - **6/12**

### Database of Recognition Outcomes in BiH

There are neither available nor reliable sources of overall data on HE qualifications recognition decisions in BiH. Every competent recognition body maintains its own database of issued decisions on the recognition or nostrification of higher education qualifications.

**Note:**

According to the Law on Validity of Public Documents (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina No 23/04) the professional recognition decisions issued by the competent bodies in one of the 12 educational authorities are valid throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Decisions on recognition of HE qualifications for further studies are valid only in the institutions where the recognition has been granted.

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**This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.**