Chapter 6
Comparison of Academic and Professional Recognition Systems of Engineering Degrees in Bologna Countries: Case Studies From Cyprus and Russian Federation

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ABSTRACT

Academic and professional recognition of engineering degrees is an important problem in higher education and human resources mobility. The chapter presents a review of academic and professional recognition systems features in Cyprus and Russia. Both Russia (non-EU-member country) and Cyprus (EU-member country) are Bologna countries, use similar education curricula, and will potentially follow the qualification framework in the European Higher Education Area. However, national qualification frameworks are different. The chapter discusses the academic and professional recognition systems features in Cyprus. Then the Russian system of engineering degrees is explained and the academic and professional recognition approach is clarified. Case studies for both countries are outlined. A comparison of the academic and professional recognition systems features in Cyprus and Russia is given.

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INTRODUCTION

The subject of academic and professional recognition of engineering degrees is an important issue not only in the European Higher Education Area (Rauhvargers, 2008; Bologna, 2014) but also in the whole engineering academic community (Marginson, 2009; Allen, & Van der Velden, 2011; Chung, 2011; Teichler, 2013). In some countries like US (Froyd, Wankat, & Smith, 2012) this problem is solved and controlled at a satisfactory level. Unfortunately in the Bologna Area the problem of recognition is still under an interesting but long discussion and a general policy applied to all Bologna countries is not established yet while the legal framework for the recognition was elaborated by the Council of Europe and UNESCO. This obstacle directly affects negatively the international student mobility and employability of graduates in the Bologna community (Kassinopoulos, 2004).

This paper deals with the academic and professional recognition of engineering degrees in two European-Bologna countries Cyprus and Russia with different national qualification frameworks. Cyprus is a very small country E.U. member, with a high number of engineering degree holders, most of which have received their degrees abroad in foreign universities. Russia is the largest country in the world, non E.U. member with many high ranking universities offering high quality engineering courses. The great majority of engineering degree holders are graduates of Russian or Soviet Union Universities. Cyprus shows extremely high shares of outgoing mobile students (over 50%) as well as high levels of incoming mobile students (over 30%). It should be noted that Greece is the main country destination in the student mobility. In opposite, Russian higher educational system demonstrates low shares of incoming mobile students (in average, 5%) and outgoing mobile students (in average, 1%). Table 1 illustrates our case studies countries indicators. Therefore, it seems to be interesting to compare recognition systems in the two countries.

Table 1. The case study countries indicators

Indicator	Cyprus	Russia
Area	9 251 km^2	17 098 242 km^2
EU member	Yes	No
Bologna country	Yes	Yes
Human population	1,100,000	146,500,000
Human population density	120, 8/km2	8, 4/km2 (max 4626/km2, min 0.07/ km2)
Student population	31,000	4,766,000
Official languages	Greek Turkish	Russian
Number of Universities in the TOP 300 Universities list	N/a	2
BSc duration	4 years	4 years