

# European Qualifications Passport for Refugees

## Launching event

- Agenda -



28 March 2018

Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs  
Athens, Greece

# Introduction

Since the beginning of what is often referred to as the refugee crisis in Europe, the recognition of qualifications held by refugees<sup>1</sup> has become one of the tools for refugees' integration into European societies. A survey<sup>2</sup> published in 2016 showed that some 70 per cent of the States parties to the Lisbon Recognition Convention have not taken measures to implement the Article VII of the Convention that refers to the recognition of qualifications held by refugees that cannot be fully documented.

In 2017, the *Council of Europe*, the *Hellenic Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs*, *ENIC*<sup>3</sup>s of *Greece, Italy, Norway* and the *United Kingdom* as well as the *UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)* implemented a pilot project that successfully tested the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR). Its methodology enables the assessment of qualifications held by refugees in cases where those qualifications cannot be fully documented as well as a format for describing those qualifications, once assessed, in a format that should facilitate the use of the assessment both within and beyond the refugee's (first) host country. The EQPR should eliminate unnecessary and repeated further assessments of the same qualifications in other European countries if and when the EQPR holder moves. The EQPR does not constitute a formal recognition act, and it will not give access to study programs or profession with specific requirements, such as most regulated profession (typically medical doctor, dentist, lawyer, engineer), but it does set out the attainment of the individual. The EQPR includes three sections – the assessment part, the explanatory part and an advice on the way ahead. The assessment part of the document contains information describing the highest achieved qualification(s), subject field, other relevant qualifications, as well as work experience and language proficiency. The explanatory and advisory sections contain information about the status of the document and a short description of the project.

The aim of the second phase project is to further develop the EQPR and to make aware of this new tool that helps integrate refugees in their host communities and also helps States Parties implement the Article VII of the joint Council of Europe-UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention.

The second phase project is now launched thanks to voluntary contributions by Greece, Italy, Norway and the Flemish Community of Belgium as well as an allocation under the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe. Further contributions are required for the project to be fully implemented.

<sup>1</sup> The term "refugee" will be used to designate refugees, internally displaced persons, and persons in a refugee-like situation

<sup>2</sup> Survey carried out among recognition centres of States Party to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, presented to the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee on February 29, 2016. Available at [http://www.enic-naric.net/fileusers/Monitoring\\_Implementation\\_LRC-Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.enic-naric.net/fileusers/Monitoring_Implementation_LRC-Final_Report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> National information centres on recognition; all are members of the *European Network of National Information Centres*.

10:00 – 10:05	"Imagine for a second..." (screening of the documentary video produced in the pilot project)
10:05– 10:25	Opening and welcome by the Greek authorities and the Council of Europe (Mr Georgios Angelopoulos, Secretary General of the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Research, and Religious Affairs or his representative / Mr Sjur Bergan, Head of Education Department Council of Europe)
10:25 – 10:45	Why the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees? (Mr Sjur Bergan, CoE)
10:45 – 11:05	The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees: the Greek experience (Ms Vassiliki Makri, Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs)
11:05 – 11:25	The importance of assessment of qualifications held by refugees: the Italian case (Ms Chiara Finocchietti, Deputy Director, CIMEA)
11:25 – 11:45	Recognition of qualifications and refugee policy in a broader context: a UNHCR perspective (Ms Polyxeni Passa, Protection associate, UNHCR Athens)
11:45 – 12:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
12:00 – 13:00	The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Origins of the project (Mr Stig Arne Skjerven, NOKUT)</li><li>• Lessons learned from the pilot project (Ms Maria Fassari, Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and Mr Stig Arne Skjerven / NOKUT)</li></ul>
13:00 – 13:20	Presentation of the EQPR Phase II project (Ms Sarah Keating, CoE)
13:20 – 14:00	Universities and the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (Mr Spyros Spyros Syropoulos, Associate Professor, Vice Rector of International Relations, Student Affairs and Alumni, University of the Aegean, Greece)
14:00 – 14:15	Conclusions and wrapping up
14:15 – 15:45	<i>Buffet lunch</i> offered by the Greek Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs