



FINNISH NATIONAL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

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# Free movement of workers with the focus on Estonia and Finland Recognition of diplomas and access to the labor market

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## Finnish National Board of Education

- ◆ Central government agency for the development of education under the Ministry of Education and Culture
- ◆ Competent authority in the professional recognition of qualifications: decides on the eligibility that foreign qualifications give for civil service posts in Finland (e.g. teachers, lawyers and social welfare professionals)
- ◆ Coordination for information networks: Directive 2005/36/EC; European and National Qualifications Framework, Information Centre for Academic Recognition; National Europass Centre



## Professional recognition

- ◆ The recognition of a qualification for the purpose of employment in general or in a certain profession
  - de jure - regulated professions: competent bodies make decisions
  - de facto - non-regulated professions: labor market (e.g. private companies) makes decisions



## European Union competence

- ◆ Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications.
- ◆ Directive currently being evaluated
- ◆ Green Paper 6/2011: Modernising the Professional Qualifications Directive
- ◆ New proposal already in 2011?



## Basic principles of the Directive

- ◆ Support to professional mobility
- ◆ Reciprocal confidence in educational systems without harmonization of training requirements (general system)
- ◆ Right to a decision of recognition within 4 months
- ◆ Compensatory measures: adaptation period, aptitude test (usually applicant can choose)
- ◆ Measures should be proportionate and take account of the applicant's professional experience
- ◆ Right to appeal



## Basic principles of the Directive

- ◆ Automatic recognition of the evidence of formal qualifications on the basis of coordinated minimum conditions for training:
- ◆ doctors, nurses responsible for general care, dental practitioners, veterinary surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and architects



# Recognition of foreign qualifications for professional purposes

- ◆ Regulated professions
  - Finland has quite few regulated professions
  - a list of regulated professions and competent authorities can be found (in English, Finnish and Swedish) at [http://www.oph.fi/english/mobility/recognition/regulated\\_professions\\_in\\_finland](http://www.oph.fi/english/mobility/recognition/regulated_professions_in_finland)



## Recognition of foreign qualifications for professional purposes

- ◆ Non-regulated professions
  - employers (e.g. private companies) make decisions;
  - an advisory statement from the Finnish National Board of Education can be helpful





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## Professional recognition for regulated professions, EU-nationals/EU qualifications (Estonia)

- ◆ Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications
- ◆ Recognition is sought individually with written application with documents requested in the application form
- ◆ Principle: a qualified professional in Estonia is qualified to exercise the same profession in Finland
- ◆ Compensation measure (aptitude test/adaptation period) may be applied substantial differences exist
- ◆ Right to appeal



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## Professional recognition for regulated professions, EU-nationals/EU qualifications (Estonia)

- ◆ Requirements for a favorable decision:
  - the qualification belongs to the official structure of qualifications and the education institution has official status in Estonia
  - the level of the qualification is at least equivalent to the level immediately below the level required in Finland
  - if there is substantial difference, the applicant has professional experience that compensates for it



## Recognition of Estonian qualifications in Finland

- ◆ Statistics for professional recognition (decisions on the recognition of Estonian qualifications issued by the Finnish National Board of Education)
  - 2009: 36 decisions
  - 2010: 46 decisions
  - 2011: so far 43 decisions
  - 1997–2011 altogether 333 decisions



# Recognition of Estonian qualifications in Finland

- ◆ Eligibility for a regulated profession has been given in 154 decisions.
- ◆ Most common professions:
  - teachers (subject teachers, class teachers, special needs teachers), 22%
  - legal professions, 7 %
  - social workers and social instructors, 7 %
  - kindergarten teachers 6 %



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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST!

- ◆ More information:  
[www.oph.fi/recognition](http://www.oph.fi/recognition)  
[recognition@oph.fi](mailto:recognition@oph.fi)