

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001153/25
to the Commission
Giuseppe Lupo (S&D)
(19 March 2025)**

Subject: Non-recognition of academic qualifications awarded to students of the Italian subsidiary (Enna) of Romania's 'Dunărea de Jos' University of Galați

The Italian Ministry for Universities and Research (MUR) has sent a letter to the 'Dunărea de Jos' University of Galați in Romania, stating that the qualifications awarded by this university through the subsidiary of the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy in Enna, Italy, cannot be recognised by the Italian education system because they are not accredited. This is because, according to the MUR, Italy has made the recognition of academic qualifications issued by foreign universities operating within its territory subject to specific accreditation procedures.

Considering that this subsidiary is an entity without a legal personality, operating on the basis of an accreditation issued by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, which ensures that the study programmes offered by Romanian universities comply with European standards, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Can it clarify whether, even without accreditation, academic qualifications awarded to students through the subsidiary of the Medical Faculty in Enna and obtained in accordance with the educational standards laid down in Directive 2005/36/EC, must be automatically recognised everywhere in Europe, including Italy?
2. Can it clarify whether the refusal to recognise these academic qualifications is contrary to Article III of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which requires Member States to take all necessary measures to facilitate the mutual recognition of academic qualifications?

Submitted: 19.3.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(17 June 2025)**

Under the intergovernmental Bologna process, the common agreement is that if a Romanian university's branch in Italy offers a programme accredited in full compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) ⁽¹⁾ by the Romanian quality assurance system, it would provide the necessary evidence for trust, which is the basis for recognition by other European Higher Education Area (EHEA) countries.

However, this remains a non-binding commitment, meaning there is no legal barrier preventing Italy from establishing its own accreditation procedures.

In the Rome Ministerial Communiqué ⁽²⁾, part of the Bologna process, ministers reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring that external quality assurance arrangements, when conducted in accordance with the ESG, apply equally to transnational higher education within the EHEA as they do to domestic provision. However, this political commitment does not translate into a legal obligation.

Directive 2005/36/EC ⁽³⁾ applies only when the purpose of recognition is for professional reasons, which does not correspond to the situation described. Accreditation procedures are not addressed in this context.

In the case of recognition for further study, there is no legally binding instrument at EU level. The non-binding Council Recommendation of 2018 ⁽⁴⁾ states that higher education qualification acquired in one country should be automatically recognised at the same level in another one.

Regarding the Lisbon Recognition Convention of the Council of Europe and Unesco ⁽⁵⁾, the EU did not accede to this Convention and is not in a position to interpret its provisions. Relevant information can be provided by National Academic Recognition Centres (NARICs).

⁽¹⁾ Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf.

⁽²⁾ https://ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique.pdf.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2005/36/oj/eng>.

⁽⁴⁾ Council Recommendation of 26 November 2018 on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods abroad, OJ C 444, 10.12.2018, p. 1, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=oj:JOC_2018_444_R_0001.

⁽⁵⁾ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treaty-num=165>.