Summary of ACE and ENACA Survey on Accreditation of Architecture Programmes within Europe – 2016

Overview

The purpose of this study has been to understand the national systems for the accreditation of architecture qualifications, the accreditation of additional requirements beyond education for access to the market and the quality assurance systems that underpin the robustness of the Professional Qualifications Directive's automatic recognition system.

The questionnaire sought feedback on 13 questions that gathered information on the duration of formal period of study, the additional requirements for market access as an architect, and the quality assurance around these systems. This report is based solely on the answers received from ACE Member Organisations/ENACA Members via the survey (the findings are set out below in Appendix 1) and draws attention to responsibility for assessing compliance with Article 46 of the PQD, the incorporation of the PQD requirements within national accreditation processes, an overview of the national accreditation requirements for both education and the additional requirements for market access, nationally set learning outcomes for qualifications, and quality assurance requirements for universities.

Respondent/Responses

There were 21 responses received, including two responses from both the United Kingdom and Estonia. The results provide a fair reflection of the overall position within Europe but there are some limitation as only 19 countries are covered which leaves some gaps.

The respondents represent a good mix of professional bodies, statutory regulators, and competent authorities. There were responses from 13 competent authorities and the majority of respondents combined a mixture of both professional and statutory roles within the profession. A list of the responding member organisations is provided in Appendix 2.

Duration of Study/Professional Practice Experience

Table 1 provides an overview of the period of study and length of professional practical experience (PPE) in each of the countries. All countries, with the exception of Turkey, meet the minimum requirements of the PQD with either 5 years' study or 4 years' study and 2 years of the practical training. The results highlight the diversity of models throughout Europe which range from the minimum 5 years' study/4 years study and 2 years practical training to at least 5 years study with a period of PPE. At one end of the spectrum there is Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Switzerland and Italy with only 5 years of study compared 6 years of study and 3 years of PPE in the Czech Republic. Germany is the only country with that is using the 4 years' study and 2 years of practical training while the Netherlands and Lithuania have variations with 4 years' formal study and 4 years or 3 years PPE, respectively.

Overall, the most common model is at least 5 years of formal study followed by a period of PPE ranging from 1 year to 3 years. Only Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Spain and Italy (voluntary PPE) do not have a required period of PPE.

Table 1: Duration of Study and Professional Practical Experience
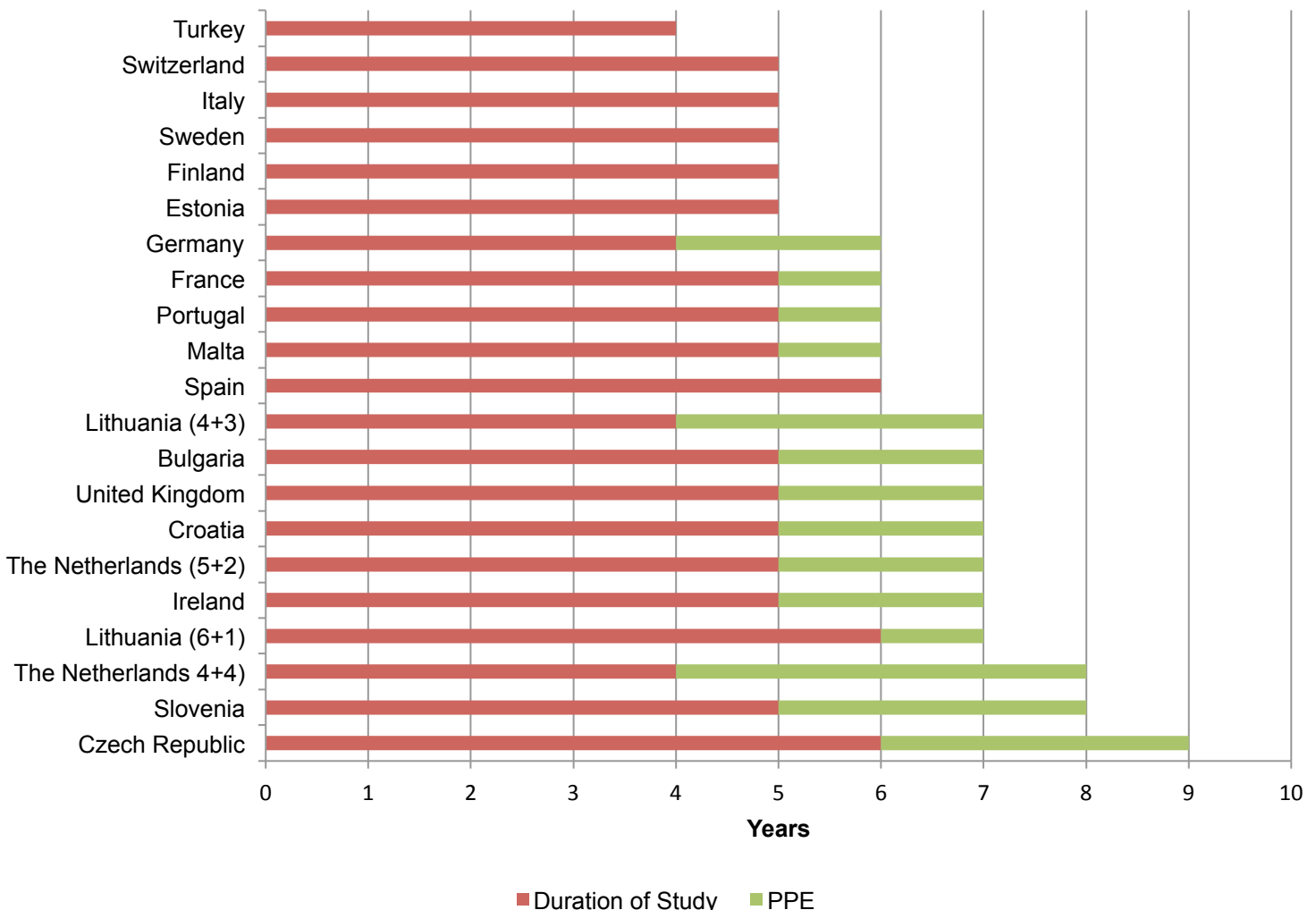
Listing of Architecture Qualifications under the Professional Qualification Directive

Under the PQD, there is a designated Competent Authority with responsibility for the implementation of the requirements of the Directive. The questionnaire sought to identify which bodies were responsible for the listing of qualifications, in particular, if it was the architectural professional body or statutory regulator, and whether there was a national or regional process for notifying qualifications to be listed under the PQD.

Of the 19 different countries that responded, in only 6 countries was the professional body or statutory regulator also responsible for, or have a role in, the listing qualification under the PQD. Those countries with involvement from the professional body/statutory regulator were Bulgaria, Ireland, Malta, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Italy where the CNAPPC and Ministry of Universities and Research hold joint responsibility.

The questionnaire also sought to identify countries with separate national processes to check qualifications before being notified to the European Commission under the PQD. Of the 19 countries that responded, 9 had separate processes, and 8 countries did not. This

question may have caused some confusion between the requirements for national accreditation of qualifications. A number of respondents detailed the requirements that were in place for national accreditation without explicit reference for notification to the European Commission. Only a few responses outlined a clear step from national accreditation before European notification. For example, in Ireland there is a clear link:

> "qualifications are accredited by the RIAI (Competent Authority) and then prescribed by the Minister under law with review from the national qualifications agency (QQI) and subsequently notified to Europe"

The questionnaire also sought to identify countries that explicitly confirm compliance with the requirements of Article 46 of the PQD as part of their national accreditation requirements. Nine countries have a requirement to confirm compliance. For some countries this is explicitly mandated by the Government. For example:

> "The Directive's requirements are reflected in a Government decree, and therefore mandatory for accreditation." (Estonia)

Other states have designed their requirements to align with Article 46:

> "The standard they must meet includes article 46 but is not explicitly aligned to it, the standard development process ensured inclusion of all key art 46 elements in the standard." (Ireland)

> "ARB's Criteria for the Prescription of Qualifications at Part 1 and Part 2 levels are based on the 11 points contained within Article 46. It is a standard condition of ARB prescription that Part 1 and Part 2 level qualifications comply with the requirements of Article 46." (United Kingdom)

The Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands and Switzerland all indicated that confirmation of compliance of Article 46 was not part of national accreditation.

National Accreditation of Qualifications and Requirements for Market Access

Institutional and programme accreditation are an important part of the educational delivery process. These accreditation processes provide an assessment as to whether a programme and/or an institution meets independently set minimum standards and provide a transparent reporting mechanism for external stakeholders regarding the quality of delivery/educational provision.

The questionnaire sought it identify if Member States had national accreditation processes for architectural qualifications that lead to registration. Fifteen countries stated that they had national requirements and only 4 respondents indicated that there were no national requirements in place (Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland).

The majority of respondents noted that this process was undertaken by the Ministry of Education (or equivalent) or national quality assurance or qualifications agency.

> "External quality evaluation and accreditation is performed by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC). The main aims of

external evaluation are to help Higher Education Institutions to improve the quality of higher education in Lithuania. The accreditation of study programmes is based on external evaluation reports. Programmes can be accredited for 3 or 6 years, they can also be given non-accreditation decision. New study programmes are accredited for a period of one year longer than the full duration of the study programme." (Lithuania)

"Royal Decree 967/2014 … setting out the requirements and procedure for the accreditation and declaration of equivalence of qualifications at an official university academic level and for the equivalence of foreign higher education studies, and the procedure to determine their correspondence to the levels within the Spanish framework for higher education qualifications for the official titles of Architect, Engineer, Graduate, Technical Architect, Technical Engineer and Diploma Holder.) (Spain)

This also often occurs with involvement from the professional or statutory regulator for architects:

"When new academic courses are proposed, the NCFHE verifies that they are at the appropriate level. As far as sufficiency to reach the specific requirements of the profession, this is verified by the Periti Warranting Board." (Malta)

"… in line with the Higher Education Act a statement of the regulatory body, in this case the Czech Architects' Chamber is needed in the accreditation process. The applicant higher education institution submits the application for accreditation of a study programme not only to the Accreditation Commission (QA agency for all higher education) but also to the Chamber. The applicant then provides the statement of the Chamber to the Accreditation Commission. The procedure takes place every time the higher education institution applies for (re)accreditation of a study programme." (Czech Republic)

In other cases, the statutory regulator or professional body is responsible for the recognition of qualifications for the purposes of registration. For example, in the United Kingdom, statutory regulator has responsibility:

"The Architects Registration Board is responsible for prescribing UK qualifications for entry on to the UK Register of Architects. This process checks both compliance with national standards and the requirements set out in Article 46 of the Directive. ARB prescribes qualifications for up to five years at any given time; it undertakes a major review of the qualifications it prescribes every four to five years; plus it undertakes an annual review of the qualifications it prescribes in intervening years. As part of the prescription process, ARB review documentary submissions from institutions which include course material; external examiners reports and responses; internal institutional review material; external peer review

material; information regarding resources and material which maps the qualifications to ARB's Criteria.

Fourteen respondents (all except Finland, Sweden, Spain and Switzerland) indicated that they had an accreditation process for the additional requirements beyond formal study that provide access to the market. This covered all respondents who indicated that they had additional requirements. Spain and Switzerland do not have requirements beyond formal study and Finland and Sweden did not provide a response. However, both countries only require 5 years of study.

The majority of respondents indicated that they required a level of PPE for access to the market. Member states indicated a variety of different methods for accrediting this experience. Some rely on the completion of an additional qualification that incorporates PPE such as the Part 3 qualification in the United Kingdom and other assess the individual's PPE as part of the registration process and have specific requirements guiding the assessment of the PPE:

> "Complete a Professional Practical Experience for a period of one year ("Estagio Profissional") 1. The Professional Practice Experience is developed in Entities framed in the practice of the profession's acts and has the supervision of an Advisor. 2. The Professional Practice Experience last 12 months. May be carried out in periods of 4 months in different entities and should be completed within a maximum period of 24 months. 4. The Adviser must be a full member of the Order registered for more than five years. The Adviser can not jeep more than 3 trainees simultaneously." (Portugal)

> "There are two "routes" to fulfil the traineeship: an integrated route and an individual route. The participant of the integrated programme is offered a "package". He is supervised throughout the professional traineeship by the provider of the programme. The individual route is monitored by a committee on the professional traineeship, during 3 meetings; an intake meeting, interim meeting and a final meeting." (the Netherlands)

> "The Periti Warranting Board oversees the practical experience undertaken by local graduates, and verifies that it fulfils national minimum requirements via a log-book of experience. A professional examination, generally oral, is held at the end of professional experience, prior to admission to register." (Malta)

Overall the responses provide are clear indication that there are accreditation processes for the additional requirements; however they do not provide sufficient depth on the underpinning mechanisms. It would useful to further understand the processes that member states use to verify the suitability of the PPE as this information help demonstrate the robustness of the process.

National Learning Outcomes and External Quality Assurance

The 11 points outlined in Article 46 of the PQD provide a set of knowledge, skills and competence that are expected to be achieved through architectural education. The questionnaire sought to understand the relationship between these expectations on universities and whether there are national learning outcomes that had been established separately for architectural education.

Only 9 respondents indicated that there was a published standard or set of learning outcomes used for the accreditation of qualifications. Some of these requirements are captured in legislation (Bulgaria), published standards by quality assurance agencies or national education bodies (Estonia, France, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Spain), a mixture of quality assurance/qualifications agencies and professional body/statutory regulator (Ireland) or by the professional body/statutory regulator (United Kingdom).

Both Germany and Croatia indicated that there are plans for the development of national-level learning outcomes. Germany noted that the Chamber of Architecture and universities are working together with the accreditation agencies on their development.

The majority of respondents indicated that universities were subjected to external quality assurance. Only 4 of the 19 member state that responded indicated that there was no additional quality assurance in place for universities (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Italy and Slovenia). Most respondents outlined that there was some form of programme accreditation or institutional accreditation or quality assurance within the system. This is usually undertaken by an independent body with responsibility across the higher education system. For example, this is undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency in the United Kingdom, the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education in Portugal or the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders NVAO in the Netherlands.

Understanding of Other Systems

An important part of developing mutual trust about the educational outcomes and quality assurance systems within a member state is an awareness and understanding of other countries systems. The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their familiarity with other member states' accreditation systems. Of the 21 respondents, only 3 indicated that they had some familiarity (Bulgaria, Estonia - Union of Estonian Architects, Finland and Turkey). All other respondents said they were not familiar (except Spain which provided no response) with other member states accreditation systems.

Conclusions

The responses to the questionnaire have provided a good overview of the accreditation arrangements that exist in Member States. It highlights there is a diversity of systems from educational attainment through to achieving access to market.

The responses indicated a clear and easy to understand story regarding the overarching quality assurance and accreditation of study programmes and institutions across the member states. However, there remains more work to do on the development of clear and common story about the involvement of the profession/regulators on the development of qualifications that provide access to market and how contributes to the overall robustness of the automatic recognition system under the PQD. It may be useful for ACE/ENACA to

consider using a common set of key features that should define architectural education systems. This may provide a framework for Member States to use as part of an explanation of their systems to external audiences and enhance the understanding of commonalities amongst member states.

Finally, the responses indicated that member organisations do not have a strong understanding and knowledge of systems outside their home country. The use of a common framework or key features that define an architectural education system that leads to market access may provide a tool to increase this understanding.

Member State	Competent Authority	Professional Body/Statutory Regulator is responsible for listing qualifications in the PQD	Standard national or regional level process for approving qualifications before being notified	Confirmation that Article 46 requirements are formally and explicitly addressed in national/regional accreditation requirements	Standard national or regional accreditation processes for approving qualifications	Standard national or regional accreditation processes for approving access to market requirements	Published standard or learning outcomes/standard of knowledge, skills and competence for use in accreditation of qualifications	Universities and other bodies subject to other quality assurance processes
Bulgaria	Chamber of Architects of Bulgaria (CAB)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Croatia	Croatian Chamber of Architects	Yes	■	■	■	Yes	No – planned	Yes
Czech Republic	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Ministry of Education and Culture	No	No	No	No	■	■	Yes
France	Secretariat General aux Affaires Europeenes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Germany	German Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMWi) Berlin	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No – the Chamber of Architects and the universities are working with the accreditation organisations to	Yes

							develop them	
Ireland	RIAI	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Italy	CNAPPC with Ministry of University and Research	Yes - jointly	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Lithuania	Ministry of Environment	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malta	Periti Warranting Board	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
The Netherlands	Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Portugal	Ordem dos Arquitetos	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Slovenia	Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning	No	No	■	Yes	Yes	No	No
Spain	Ministry de Educacion Cultura y Deporte and Agencia Nacional de Evaluacion de la Calidad y Acreditacion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Sweden	Ministry of Education	No	No	Yes	No	■	No	Yes
Switzerland	State Secretariat of Education, Research and Innovation SERI	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Turkey	Council of Higher Education/Ministry of EU Affairs	N/A	■	■	■	■	Yes	Yes

United Kingdom	Architects Registration Board	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Appendix 1: Overview of Responses

Appendix 2: Responding Member Organisations

State	Organisation
Bulgaria	Chamber of Architects in Bulgaria (CAB)
Croatia	Croatian Chamber of Architects
Czech Republic	CKA (Czech Chamber of Architects) and MSMT (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)
Estonia	Ministry of Education and Research
Estonia	Union of Estonia Architects
Finland	Finnish Association of Architects SAFA
France	CNOA France
Germany Bavaria	BAK Bundesarchitektenkammer
Ireland	RIAI
Italy	Italian Architect's National Council (CNAPPC)
Lithuania	Ministry of Environment
Malta	Periti Warranting Board
The Netherlands	Bureau Architectenregister
Portugal	Ordems dos Arquitetos
Slovenia	Chamber of Architecture and Spatial Planning of Slovenia
Spain	Consejo Superior de los Colegios de Arquitectos de Espana (CSCAE)
Sweden	Architects of Sweden
Switzerland	State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation SERI
Turkey	Chamber of Architects of Turkey
United Kingdom	Architects Registration Board
United Kingdom	The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)