Quality Assurance and mutual recognition of degrees - through student's eyes

The European Dimension of Quality Assurance
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Andrea Blaettler
Academic Affairs Committee of the European Students' Union (ESU)
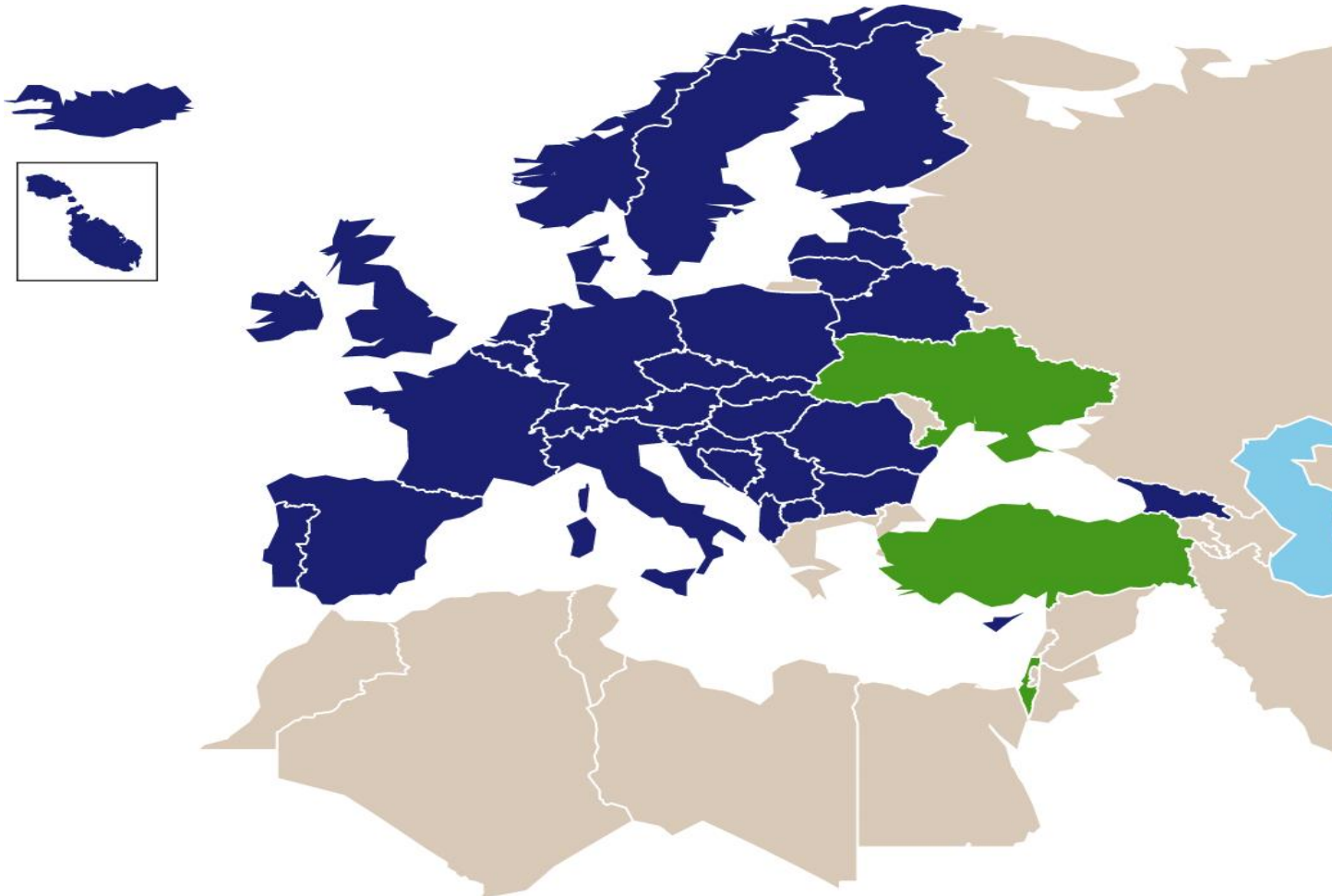
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1) A long story short

- 1982: WESIB was founded by seven unions
- 1989: The Wall fell and WESIB changed to ESIB
- 1999: The Bologna Process starts and ESIB creates content committees
- ESIB turns into ESIB – The National Unions of Students in Europe
- 2007: ESIB is renamed into ESU and celebrates 25th anniversary

1) 45 members in 38 countries-> over 11 millions of students in Europe
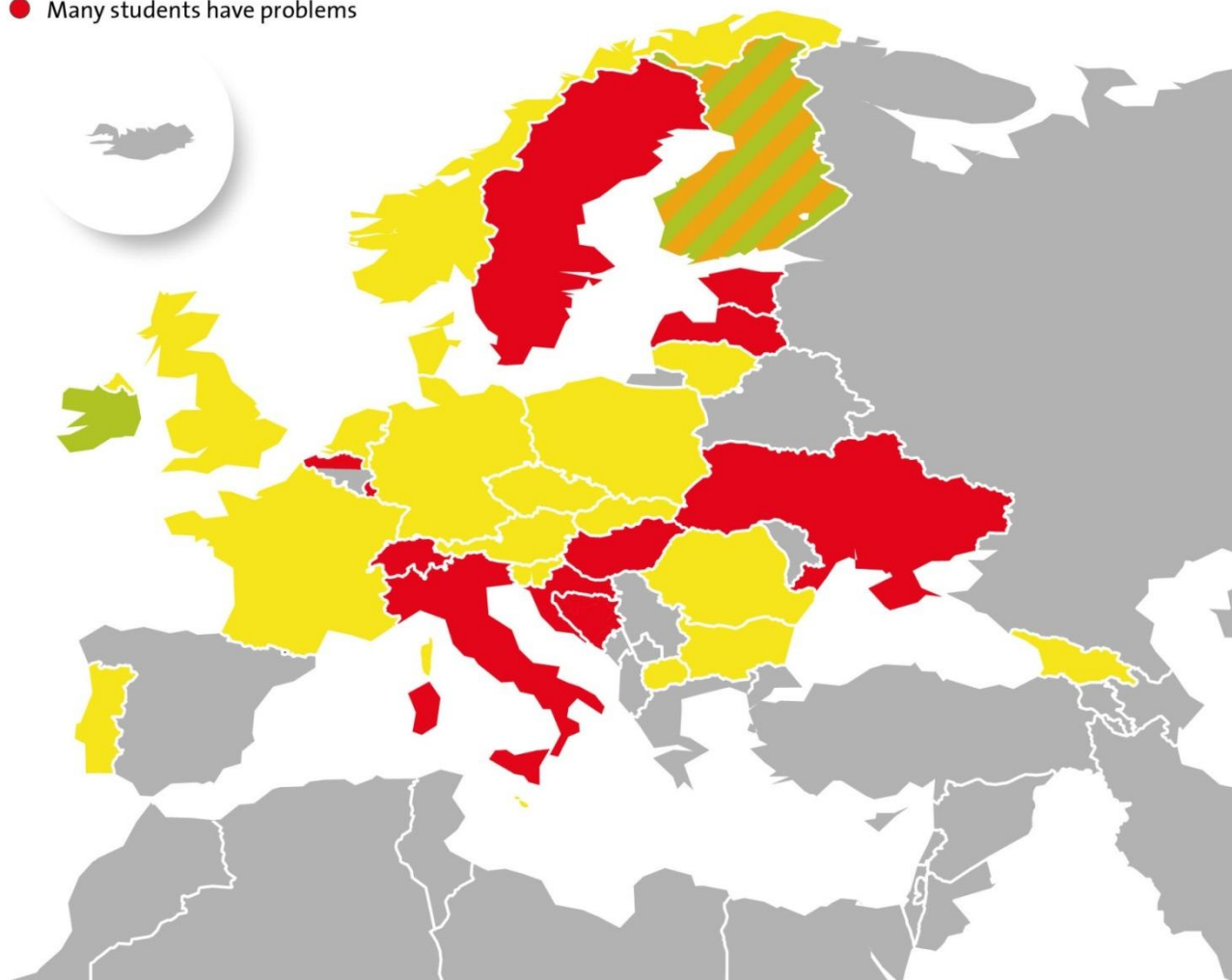
BAFL (2010)

BWSE 09

2) Recognition – state of the art

- Without properly functioning recognition of all types of learning the mainstream goals of the Bologna process will fail!
- Legal implementation versus practical implementation of legal texts
- Continuous problems with recognition of credit recognition signalled by national unions of students
  -> an indication of problems with recognition in general

fig. 21—Situation of national students returning from a period of study abroad encountering problems with the recognition of their credits

- None or almost none have problems
- Some students have problems
- Depends on where they were studying
- Many students have problems

3) Basic requirements for improved recognition

- Without proper implementation of basic Bologna concepts / tools and quality assurance of those, recognition across the EHEA can hardly emerge:
  - ▫ Degree structures (cycles)
  - ▫ Curriculum planning and evaluation
  - ▫ ECTS
  - ▫ Diploma Supplement
  - ▫ Qualification Frameworks

fig. 25—Reform of degree structures in Europe

- 3 cycles in place and fully operational
- 3 cycles in place with outstanding issues
- 1st and 2nd cycles in place and 3rd cycle yet to be reformed
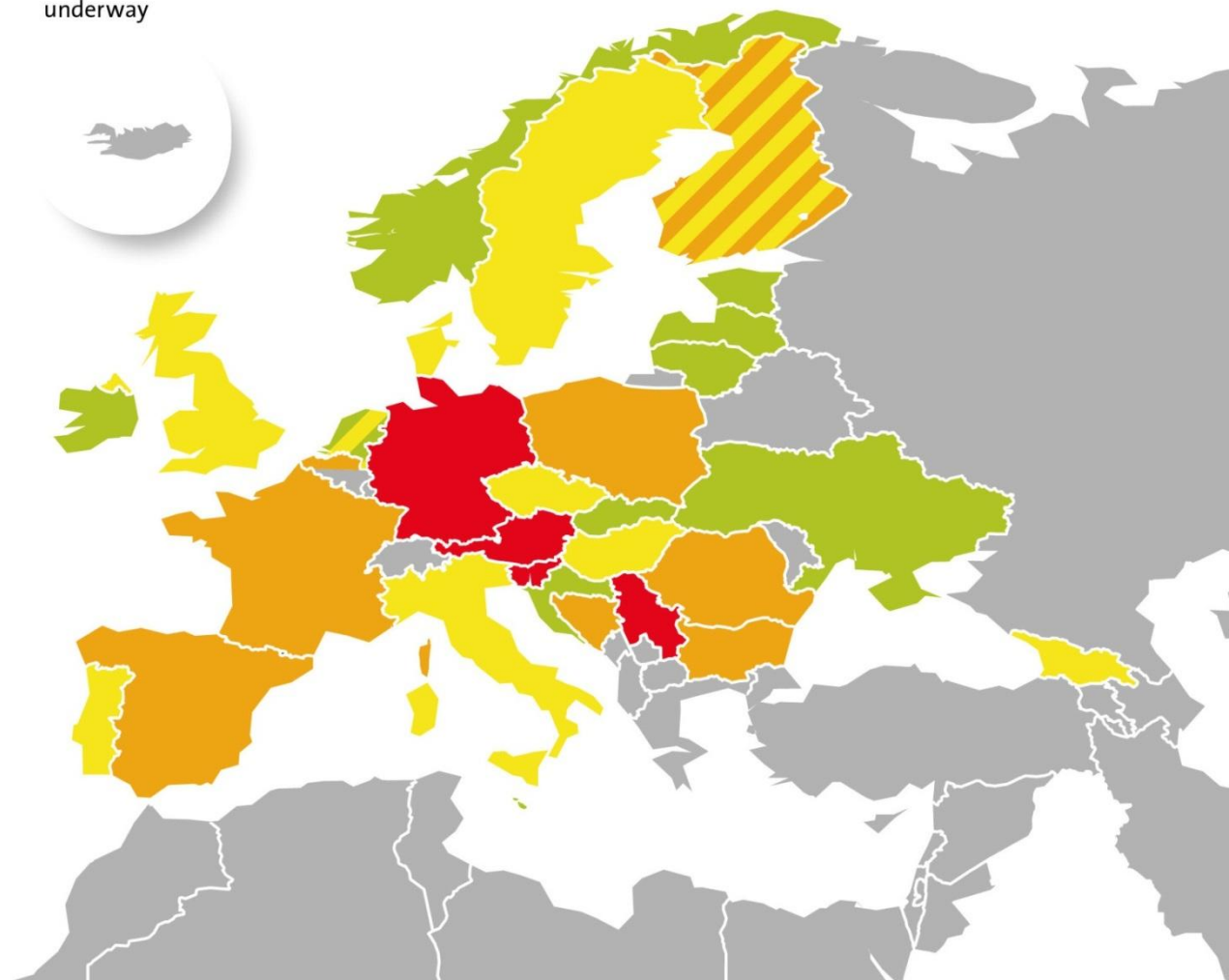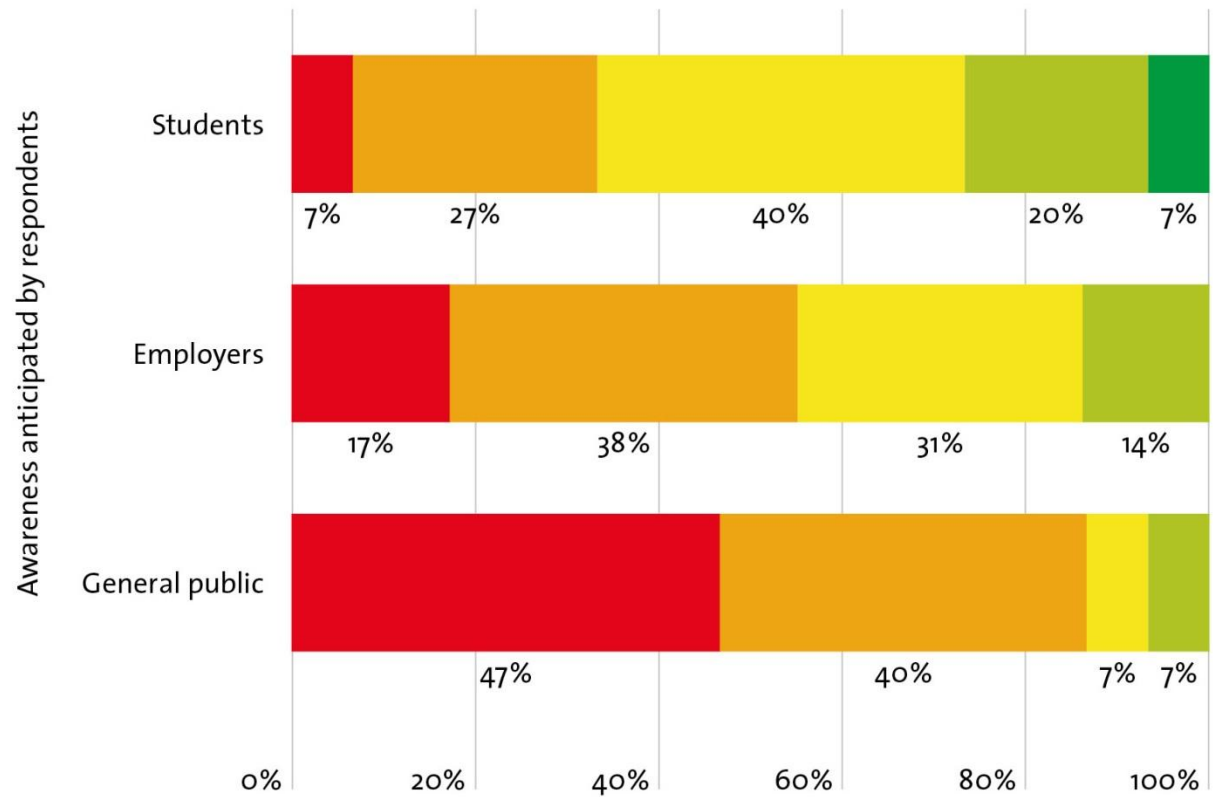- 1st and 2nd cycle reform still underway

fig. 34—Awareness about the Diploma Supplement as anticipated by NUSes

- No awareness
- Little awareness
- Some awareness
- Some awareness and increasing
- Fully aware

3) Basic requirements for improved recognition

- Institutional recognition procedures and quality assurance of those
  -> coherence
- Trust between HEIs
  -> yet, chicken and egg issue…

4) Relation between QA and recognition

- QA as a chance for real transparency of and between HEIs versus reputation based perception of HEI's quality
- QA's main functions are establishing accountability and trust between and within HEIs

→ These are essential requirements for functioning mutual recognition in the EHEA

5) Requirements for QA to foster recognition better

- Functioning QA of both programmes and institutions
- Actually realising internal QA and linking external QA concretely to the internal mechanisms

5) Requirements for QA to foster recognition better

- QA must be linked to the implementation of the basic Bologna tools:
    - Degree structures (cycles)
    - Curriculum planning and evaluation
    - ECTS
    - Diploma Supplement
- QA must take into account all forms of learning

5) Requirements for QA to foster recognition better

- provision of accessible, understandable information on QA procedures and decisions
-> academic infrastructure of the EHEA has been created, but over viewing information is missing
-> information database of the EHEA needed: should be included in the Bucharest Bologna Communiqué (E4 discussion)
- link QF <-> QA

6) Conclusion: How to improve recognition in the EHEA?

- QA of programmes and HEIs, taking into account all forms of learning
- Functioning internal QA and linking external QA concretely to the internal mechanisms
- → Correct implementation of basic Bologna tools and QA of those
- → Institutional recognition procedure and QA of those
- provision of accessible, understandable information on QA procedures and decisions

Thank you for your attention;

I am looking forward to our discussion!

Andrea Blaettler
Academic Affairs Committee, ESU

andrea@esu-online.org
www.esu-online.org