

EFLA Education Committee Paper

Europe-wide recognition of landscape architecture degrees and professional qualifications.

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Working in other European countries is an area where the theory (of recognition) and practice are different. In practice there is no problem in individual nationals from one member state working in another member state of the European Union (for example, the author has worked as a landscape architect on projects in Spain, France, The Netherlands and Germany as a British national). Nor is there much problem working in most other non EU countries as an overseas consultant (work permits outside the EU are something else).

Right to work throughout the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA)

The theory is a little complex. Article 48 of the Treaty of Rome provides for freedom of movement of workers within the European Union; Article 52 provides for freedom to operate as a self-employed person and to set up and manage companies in all member states. All EU citizens are entitled to find work throughout the EU on a salaried basis. All EU citizens can be self-employed professionals throughout the EU.

Subsequent to the Treaty of Rome there have been various systems to enact these Articles and provide for the right for citizens of member states to work, seek work, set up a business or to provide services in any other member European Union country. In most instances these provisions also apply to Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, which are also member states of the European Economic Area (EEA) and note Switzerland may well agree a similar bilateral treaty in 2001.

There are currently three different systems enabling people to transfer qualifications and skills between member states:

- Transitional Measures Directives,
- Sectoral Directives
- General System Directives

Transitional Measures apply to crafts or trades people. Sectoral Directives apply to professional qualifications requiring tertiary (i.e. higher or university level) education. Initially the European Commission tackled the problem profession by profession e.g. architects, doctors, surgeons etc. but had lots of problems with this approach (the Architects' Directive took seventeen years to complete).

The European Commission then chose to evolve a more flexible means of recognising the professions and this is known as the General System of Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications operated by two Directives: 89/48/EEC (the first Diploma Directive) and 92/48/EEC (the Second Diploma Directive). These two directives cover all regulated professions, occupations and titles not covered by the Transitional Measures and the Sectoral Directives. The General System covers landscape architects.

The principles of the General System (Système Général) are that a professional qualified in one member country should be treated as qualified to operate in another member country. There is no attempt to standardize education or training. This requires mutual trust in the validity of professional or vocational training throughout the EU and EEA. However, there is a proviso that where there do appear to be substantial differences between education and training in one country and another then the migrant may be asked to compensate for these differences.

EU/EEA recognition of professional qualifications.

Under General System Directives 89/48/EEC and 92/51/EEC there are national co-ordinators in one or more of the government ministries. Usually these are either education/science ministries or trade and industry ministries because of Single Market aspects. For example, Directive 89/48 is coordinated by the Department for Trade and Industry in the UK and in Germany by the

Bundersministerium fur Wirtschaft und Technologie (and one of the equivalent Lander ministries). In the UK, Directive 92/51 is coordinated by the Department for Education and Science. In France both Directives are coordinated by the Direction des Affaires Juridiques of the Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de la Recherche et de la Technologie. An individual can initially approach the national co-ordinator in the host country.

Normally the national co-ordinator will then refer the applicant to the "competent national authority": for example, the UK Department of Trade and Industry would refer a French landscape architect to the Landscape Institute in the UK. However, the paysagiste from Paris could as easily apply to the Landscape Institute directly. Similarly (to give a specific example) German students at the University of Greenwich in the United Kingdom tend to apply directly to the relevant German Lander authority when they wish to register as landscape architects in Germany. Look to the European Union web site under Citizens Direct / Dialogue avec les Citoyens for these contacts

European recognition of academic qualifications

In brief, there is no international, European regulation of academic awards either outwith or within the European Union. For example, a German Diplom (five years undergraduate study from a broad secondary school leaving base) and an English or Welsh Bachelors degree (three years undergraduate study from a narrow secondary school leaving base) are different. The British would say that a five year German diplom is at the same level as the English bachelors degree: the Germans would say the diplom is at a higher level. But the Germans probably would say that the British "Diploma Landscape Architecture" (which is taken after the BA) is not recognised. Even within the United Kingdom there are fundamental differences: a Scottish Masters degree is four years and is taken by the English as equivalent to an English three year bachelors degree.

However, within the EU there is a system of guidance on academic equivalence. These are the NARIC's (National Academic Information Centres). They were set up in response to EU Directive 92/51EEC (Second Diploma Directive) and have been established in each EU or EEA country. Sometimes these NARIC's are within Education Ministries (as in Germany, Belgium, and France) sometimes they are independent agencies or quangoes such as the Danish Rector's Conference Secretariat, or the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education.

As noted above, the EU General System applies only to fully qualified professionals. Students wishing to undertake part of their training or studies in another member country may have difficulty in using an academic qualification in another member country. Such recognition usually remains the province of the member state and/or university. For example, German universities sometimes may be reluctant to accept an English three year BA Landscape Architecture as equivalent to their five year Diplom. This really depends on the judgement of the individual university authorities though the NARIC's are a useful first point of enquiry before a student applies to an individual university in a country abroad.

One way of sidestepping this problem is a network of university courses, which aim to foster exchanges. For instance, both Leeds Metropolitan and Greenwich University landscape courses are part of the European Landscape Educational Exchanges (ELEE) network and there are other such networks or bilateral exchanges, generally supported by the European Union under the Socrates programme

The European Space for Higher Education

The Bologna Declaration in June 1999 of 29 European Ministers of Education (most of Europe except the C.I.S. countries e.g. Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine, etc.) discussed a change over to basically an American pattern of tertiary (i.e. university level) education awards. This began with the Sorbonne Declaration of 1998 by the French, German British and Italian ministers of education. Bologna involves a three year, undergraduate awards followed by a two year Masters level award, together with an extension of the credit transfers (the ECTS/ European Credit Transfer System operational since 1989). This is a move to what is popularly the bachelor degree (BA or BSc) after three years, the Masters degree (MA or MSc) after five years and the doctorate (PhD) subsequently usually within and further two or three years.

There was another meeting of these ministers in Prague in May 2001 and many European countries are working to implementing these ideas. For example, in the UK the Department of Education and Employment propose to implement Bologna by 2006. In France, the Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche propose (in their paper of 4.10.2000) a new vocational degree (the baccalaureat + 3 diploma) and the new Mastaire to be taken five years after the baccalaureat. Effectively the Czechs have already implemented a Bologna system. The aim is to have this system operational Europe-wide by 2010. Further countries are also joining: Croatia, Cyprus and Turkey joined in 2001.

The Bologna Declaration is covered in "<http://www.unige.ch/eua>" which is the European University Association's web site. This also covers the European Higher Education Convention of 29-30 March 2001 in Salamanca and the Education Ministers' Higher Education Summit 18-19 May 2001 Prague. The next ministerial conference will be in Berlin in 2003.

It is also worth mentioning the moves to a global accreditation system being pursued by the International Association of University Presidents and the Global Alliance for Transnational Education ("<http://www.eduagte.org/>")

Other European Measures

The European Foundation for Landscape Architecture publishes a list of European landscape architecture schools (ref. <http://www.efla.org>). At present this list is being updated and so the EFLA recognition has not been comprehensively revised. However, it is a useful effective list of landscape schools (and in respect of the UK also of landscape courses within schools). The basis of the EFLA recognition is that the national professional organisation's own recognition (where such a system operates) is accepted as a basis, subject to information, which can be referred to in Brussels. EFLA only undertakes its own inspections if there is no local national recognition system for landscape schools. Of the EFLA national member associations only the French FFP has stated that it accepts EFLA school recognition automatically as a qualification for membership.

Scandinavian and UK Landscape Education Recognition: The landscape architecture institutes of the three main Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Norway and Denmark) and the UK also signed an accord in 1977 which gave mutual recognition to educational qualifications recognised by the institutes as leading to their own professional membership. Do a Landscape Institute accredited university landscape degree in the UK and you can use it to become a member of the Norwegian landscape association. Via EFLA, the Landscape Institute has also offered to extend such mutual recognition to other individual EFLA member national organisations subject to direct discussion.

Summary

In summary there is no practical difficulty in practising as a landscape architect in other European Union countries. As of right landscape architects can work and be in salaried employment if the profession is recognised. There may be problems in getting educational qualifications recognised elsewhere both by other academic institutions. For instance, some German Lander authorities tend to have problems with British professional graduate entry diplomas though not with the lower qualification of a Bachelors degree. For guidance, the recognised system of European landscape education recognition is the EFLA system.

There may also be problems in the title one uses. For instance, in Spain, where there is no formal state recognition of the landscape profession, the term paisajista is advisable rather than arquitecto paisajista because the Colegio of Architects is jealous of the use of title arquitecto.

This paper of course just deals with the formal matters of professional and educational recognition: it does not deal with the more fundamental matters of dealing with other cultures and ecological matters or indeed the absolute necessity, of using the national languages. If you do not know the culture and language then you must tie in with a local professional.

Working in different European countries is stimulating and there should be no practical difficulty in working as a landscape architect. Getting recognition for your home country's educational degree may

be more problematic, unless you are Swedish, Danish, Norwegian or British and wish to work in those countries.

Useful web sites are:

- The European Union site is www.europa.eu.int/Europedirect for the multi-lingual explanations of rights and procedures. This lists NARIC's and Profession Co-ordinators
- The European Foundation for Landscape Architecture site www.efla.org lists EU landscape architecture/design courses and the current stage of their recognition by EFLA. This is bilingual: French and English.
- The UK Department for Trade and Industry site: www.dti.gov.uk/Europe/pahej.html includes an online version of the booklet Europe Open for Professions which is the best plain English language introduction the General System. This is a joint DTI and DfEE publication. Unfortunately the appendices listing national NARICs and Profession Co-ordinators are not included on the web site, to obtain the full copy contact the DTI (ref. DTI Pub 2691), or refer to Europe Direct as above.
- "<http://www.unige.ch/eua>" is the EUA European University Association/ AEU Association Européen de l'Université web site, which is to be bilingual French/English. As of 16 April 2001 "les pages en français sont en cours de construction".

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