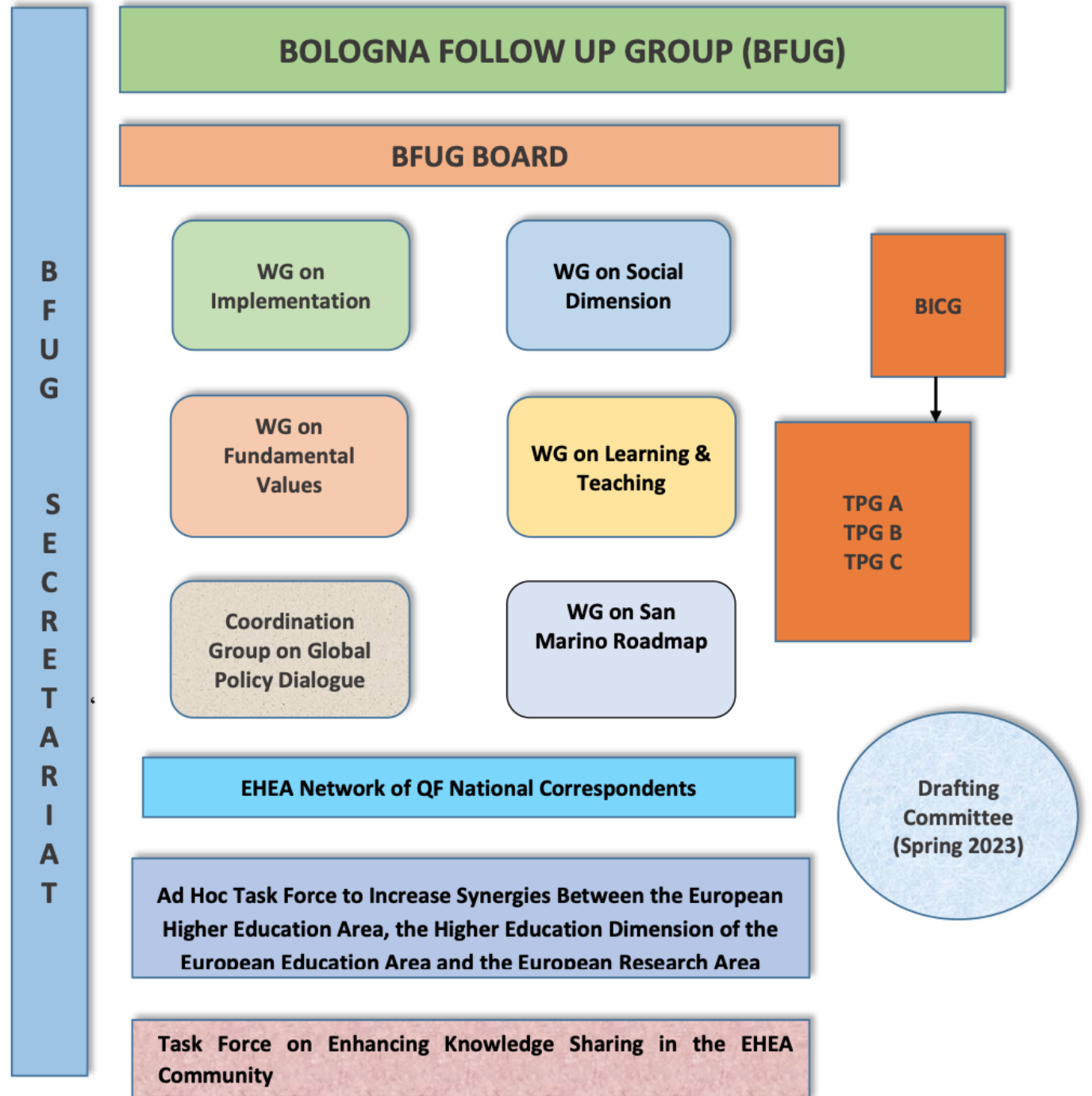# Implementation of the Bologna Process Key Commitments: achivements and challenges

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Coordinator, Prime Minister Office, Albania

BFUG workplan 2021-2024

Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)

The purpose of the BICG:

to facilitate a coordinated implementation of the three Key Commitments

The BICG:

- coordinates the work of the TPGs, keeping an overview

- and facilitates an exchange of experience and best practice between the TPGs

- reports to the BFUG on overall progress

- suggests any further actions to facilitate full implementation of the Key Commitments

- formulates further recommendations

Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs)

- TPG A on NQF and ECTS

Self-certification of the national qualification frameworks to the overarching Qualifications Framework of the EHEA, Complete implementation of the ECTS User's Guide, Short cycle higher education, Multiple purposes and use of the qualifications frameworks by the stakeholders, Study programmes outside of the Bologna three-cycle structure, Relationship between the qualifications frameworks and quality assurance, micro-credentials, learning outcomes, databases, registers, digitalization.

3 working groups: Micro-credentials Self-certification Short Cycle Higher Education

- TPG B on Recognition

Establishing the legal framework to allow the implementation of the LRC; - Establishing the distribution of work and responsibilities among the competent institutions that have the right knowledge and capacity to carry out recognition procedures; - Achieving automatic recognition; - Recognition of alternative pathways; - Ensuring the fair recognition of qualifications held by refugees; - Optimising the potential of digital technology for the recognition agenda and the Diploma Supplemen

- TPG C on QA

Legislative framework in line with the ESG Internal quality assurance Enhancement-oriented use of the ESG The European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes Cross-border Quality Assurance Quality assurance of micro-credentials Quality assurance of European Universities Digitalisation of quality assurance processes

- All TPGs submitted Umbrella Projects for EC support → all TPGs receive support

- Countries members of each TPG prepare the work plan for the respective period

Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs)

Challenges, topics of discussion and reflection

- how to improve participation in the TPG activities

- how to stimulate less active countries

- how to ensure participation countries that need support and those that can give support together in the TPGs

- the core of the Key Commitments to be at the centre of the TPGs' work

Bologna Process Key Commitments - Implementation

National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and ECTS

- NQFs compatible with the QF-EHEA

Recognition and Diploma Supplement

- automatic recognition
- European Qualification Passport for Refugees

Quality Assurance (QA)

- **enhancement-oriented use of the ESG to support innovation in higher education and its quality assurance**

BICG coordinating the peer method for:

TPG A on NQF and ECTS:

    35 Members: 30 countries + 5 organisations

TPG B on recognition:

    46 Members: 38 countries + 8 organisations

TPG C on QA:

    47 Members: 40 countries + 7 organisations

WG on Monitoring

To guide the preparation of the Bologna Process Implementation Report for 2024

To identify sources of reliable, comparable data relevant for the EHEA

To make further progress in improving structured and standardised monitoring of the EHEA

To ensure that accurate comparisons can be made between countries and that implementation and other changes are transparent within as well as between countries

To develop a proposal for the scope of the 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report

To develop and agree the indicators to measure progress, and the data required for the 2024 report with the agreement of the BFUG

To develop suitable data collection material

To ensure that information is collected from all Bologna countries

To guide the drafting of the overall report for approval by the BFUG in advance of the 2024 Ministerial Conference.
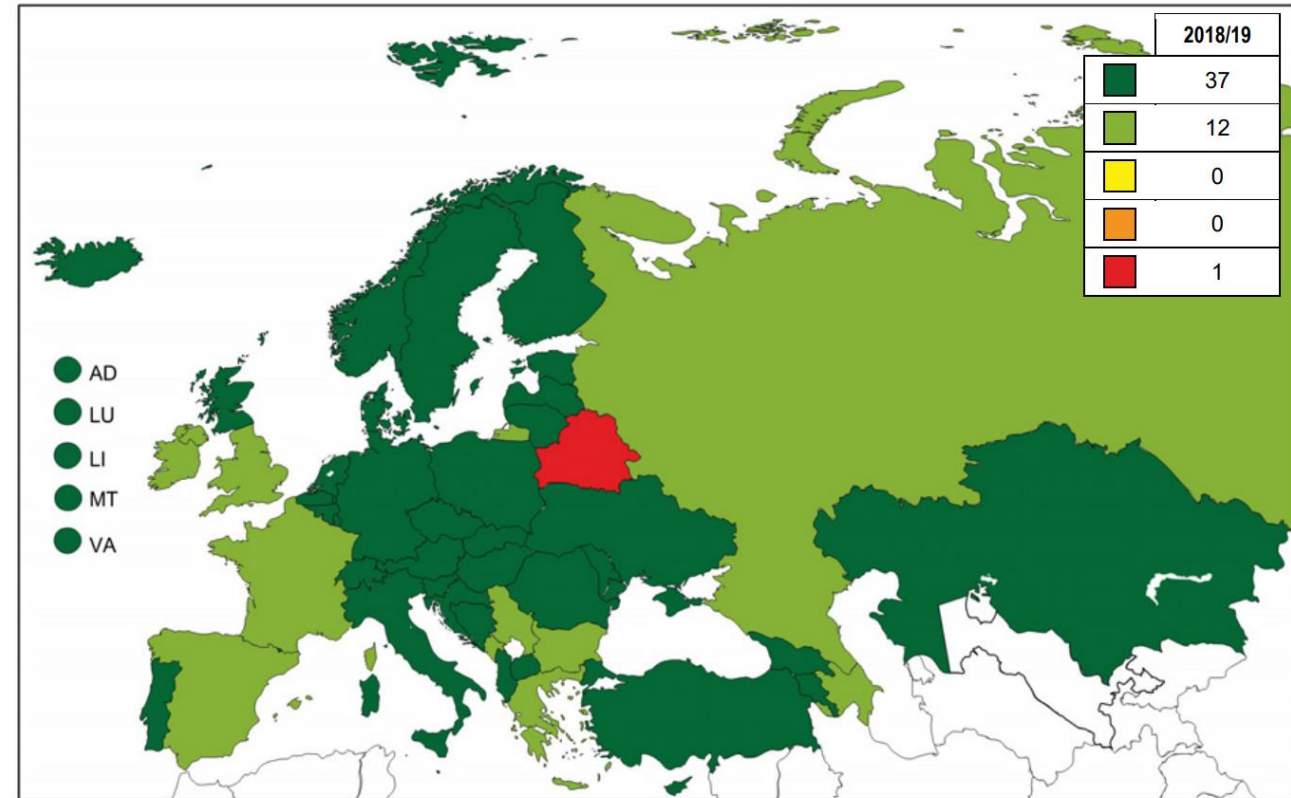
BPIR 2024

Chapter 3: Key Commitments (degree structures, QA and recognition)

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

Figure 2.8: Scorecard indicator n°2:
Stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement, 2018/19

2018/19	
■ (dark green)	37
■ (light green)	12
■ (yellow)	0
■ (orange)	0
■ (red)	1

- AD
- LU
- LI
- MT
- VA

Source: BFUG data collection.

Scorecard categories

|	
■ (dark green)	Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format is issued to first- and second-cycle graduates: ○ to every graduate; ○ automatically; ○ in a widely spoken European language; ○ free of charge.
■ (light green)	Three of the above criteria are met.
■ (yellow)	Two of the above criteria are met.
■ (orange)	Only one criterion is met.
■ (red)	None of the above criteria is met.

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

Figure 2.9: Scorecard indicator n°3:
Implementation of national qualifications frameworks, 2018/19

2018/19	
▪ (dark green)	30
▪ (light green)	12
▪ (yellow)	2
▪ (orange)	5
▪ (red)	1

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- LI
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- VA
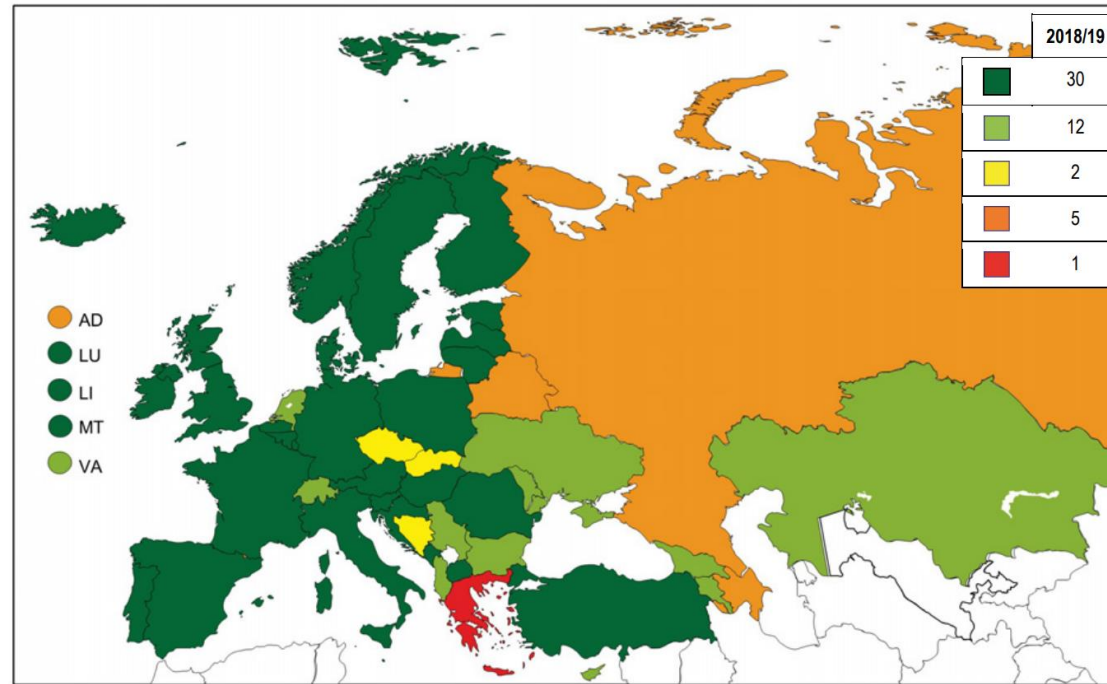
Source: BFUG data collection.

The colours in the figure indicate that the country has completed all steps related to a specific colour and all preceding steps. The red colour is an exception, countries having completed step 1 or step 2 also obtain this colour.
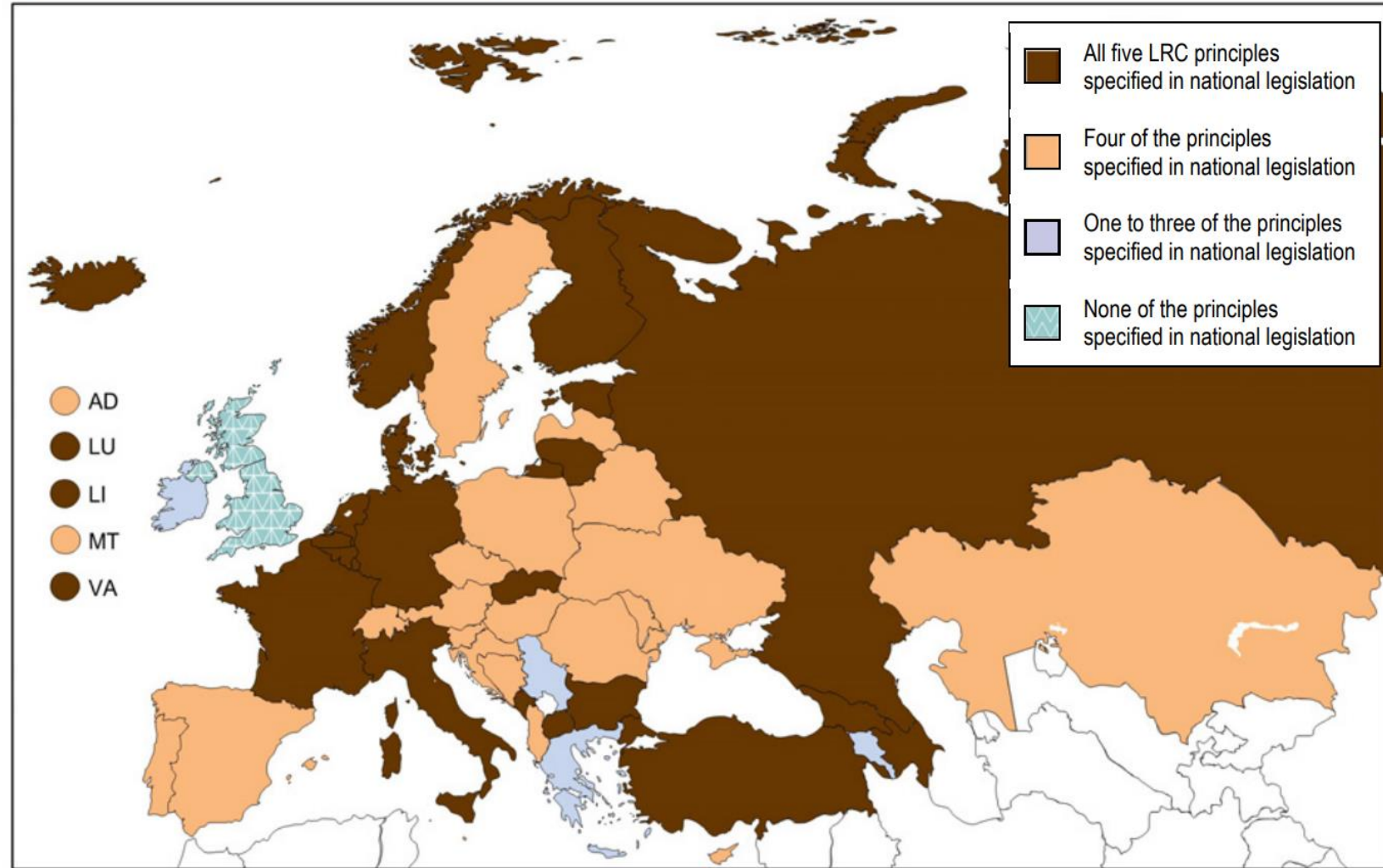
Scorecard categories

▪ (dark green)	**Steps 10-11:** ○ 11. Stakeholders* use the NQF (as a reference point) for at least one specific agreed purpose. ○ 10. The NQF has self-certified its compatibility with the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area.
▪ (light green)	**Steps 7-9:** ○ 9. Qualifications have been included in the NQF. ○ 8. Study programmes have been re-designed on the basis of the learning outcomes included in the NQF. ○ 7. Implementation of the NQF has started with agreement on the roles and responsibilities of higher education institutions, quality assurance agency(ies) and other bodies.
▪ (yellow)	**Steps 5-6:** ○ 6. The NQF has been adopted in legislation or in other high level policy fora. ○ 5. Consultation/national discussion has taken place and the design of the NQF has been agreed by stakeholders.
▪ (orange)	**Step 4:** The level structure, level descriptors (learning outcomes), and credit ranges have been agreed.
▪ (red)	**Steps 1-3:** ○ 3. The process of developing the NQF has been set up, with stakeholders identified and committee(s) established. ○ 2. The purpose(s) of the NQF have been agreed and outlined. ○ 1. Decision to start developing the NQF has been taken by the national body responsible for higher education and/or the minister.

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

Figure 3.6: Principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in national legislation, 2018/19

Legend:
- All five LRC principles specified in national legislation
- Four of the principles specified in national legislation
- One to three of the principles specified in national legislation
- None of the principles specified in national legislation
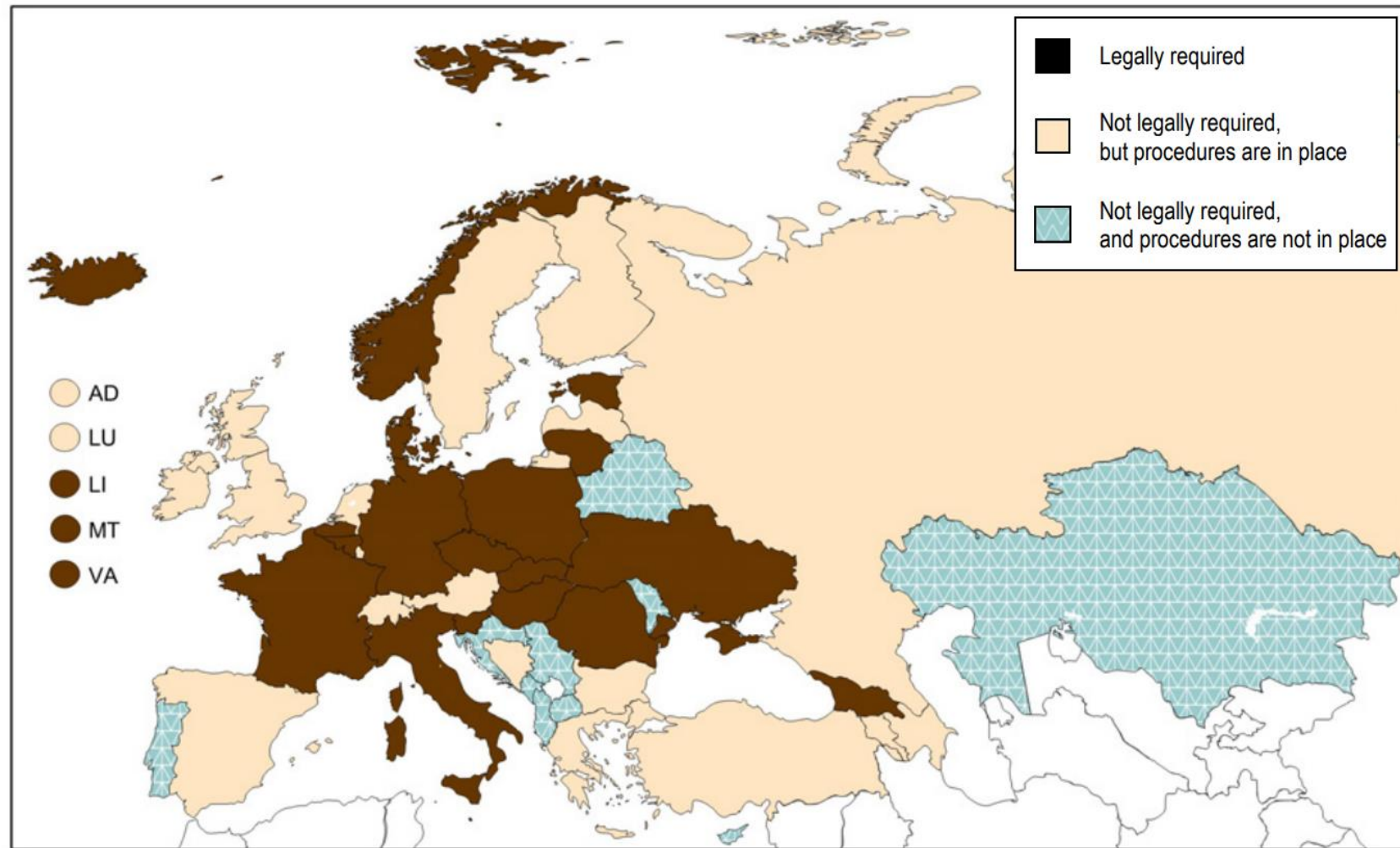
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Source: BFUG data collection.

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

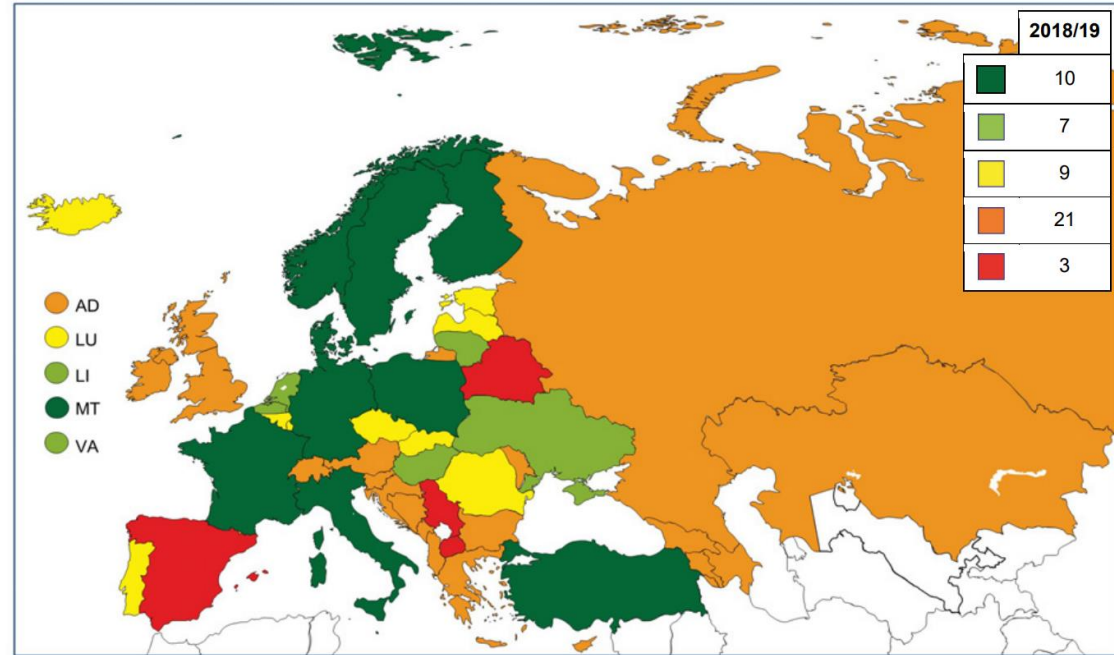Figure 3.7: Implementation of Article VII of the LRC at national level, 2018/19

Legend:
- Legally required
- Not legally required, but procedures are in place
- Not legally required, and procedures are not in place

AD
LU
LI
MT
VA

Source: BFUG data collection.

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

2018/19

10	
7	
9	
21	
3	

AD
LU
LI
MT
VA

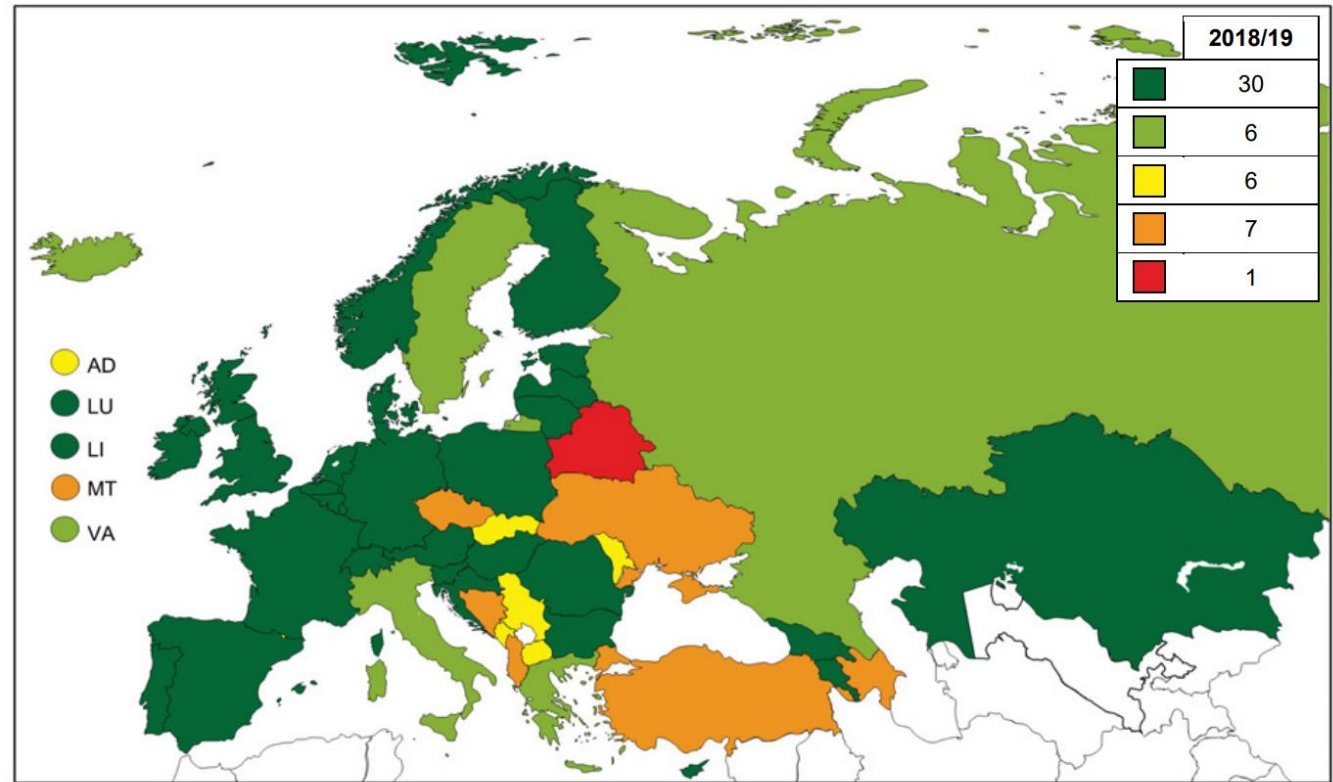*Source:* BFUG data collection.

Scorecard categories

(dark green)	Automatic recognition is in place, meaning that all higher education qualifications issued in other EHEA countries are recognised at system level on an equal level with comparable ([38]) academic qualifications in the home country and give the right to be considered for entry to a programme of further study at the next level.
(light green)	Automatic recognition is in place for a subset of EHEA countries, meaning that all higher education qualifications issued in these countries are recognised at system level on an equal level with comparable academic qualifications in the home country and give the right to be considered for entry to a programme of further study at the next level. All of the following conditions apply to recognition practice: • National legislation has been reviewed and, if necessary, modified to ensure that the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) are respected. • Higher education institutions or recognition bodies receive clear guidance on properly implementing the principles of the LRC. • Recognition decisions are taken within a four month limit. • Appeals procedures are in place, and decided within a clear and reasonable time limit. • Recognition practice in HEIs is monitored by external quality assurance in line with the European Standards and Guidelines 2015.
(yellow)	Automatic recognition at system level takes place with a subset of European countries. For qualifications from other countries, some but not all of the conditions apply to recognition practice.
(orange)	There is no automatic recognition. At least two of the conditions apply to recognition practice.
(red)	There is no automatic recognition. Less than two of the conditions apply to recognition practice.

# What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

Figure 3.1: Scorecard indicator n°4:
Stage of development of external Quality Assurance system, 2018/19

2018/19	
	30
	6
	6
	7
	1

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LI
MT
VA

Source: BFUG data collection.
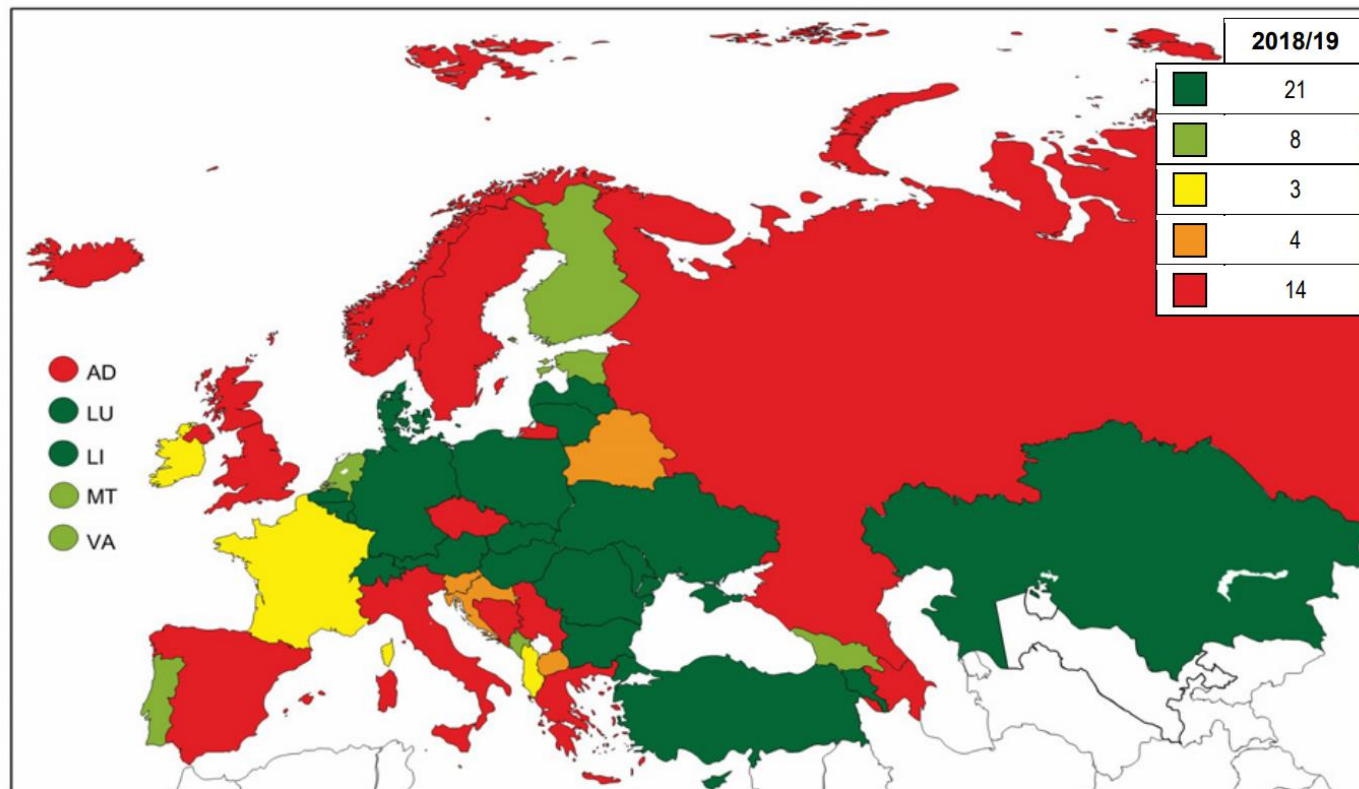
Scorecard categories

	A fully functioning Quality Assurance system is in operation nationwide, in which all higher education institutions are subject to regular external Quality Assurance by an agency that has successfully demonstrated compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG) through registration on EQAR.
	A Quality Assurance system is in operation nationwide and is aligned to the ESG, but the agency/ies performing external Quality Assurance are not registered in EQAR.
	A fully functioning Quality Assurance system is in operation nationwide, but only some higher education institutions are subject to regular external Quality Assurance by an agency that has successfully demonstrated compliance with the ESG through registration on EQAR.
	A Quality Assurance system is in operation nationwide, but has not (yet) been fully aligned to the ESG.
	No Quality Assurance system is in operation.

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

Figure 3.4: Scorecard indicator n°7:
Level of openness to cross border Quality Assurance of EQAR registered agencies, 2018/19

	2018/19
(dark green)	21
(light green)	8
(yellow)	3
(orange)	4
(red)	14

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- LI
- MT
- VA

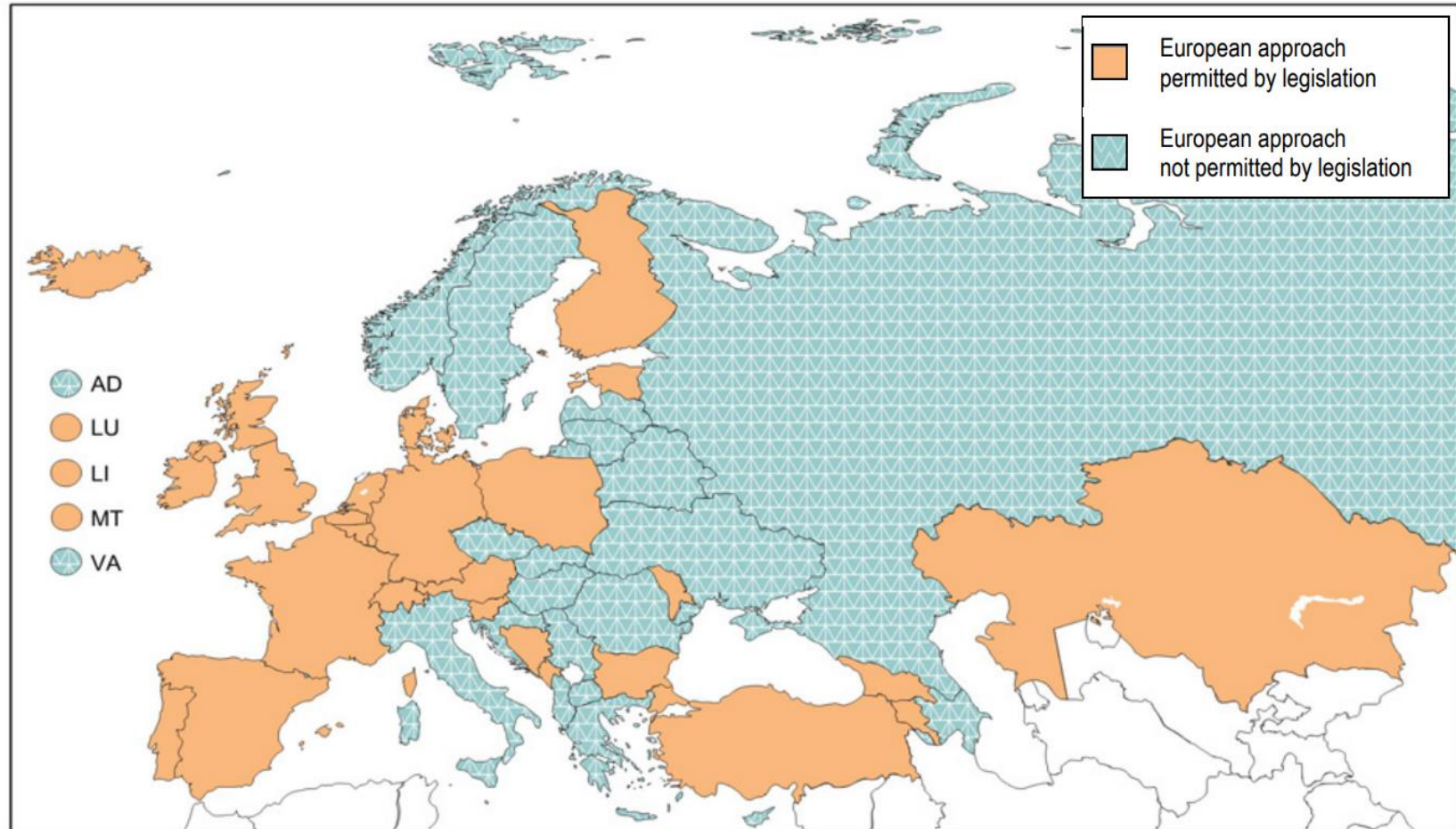*Source:* BFUG data collection.

Scorecard categories

(dark green)	**All institutions and programmes** can choose to be evaluated by a suitable quality assurance agency from outside the country to fulfil their obligations for external quality assurance, while complying with national requirements. EQAR registration always serves as a criterion for agencies to be allowed to carry out cross-border evaluation/accreditation/audit.
(light green)	**All institutions and programmes** can choose to be evaluated by a suitable quality assurance agency from outside the country to fulfil their obligations for external quality assurance, while complying with national requirements. EQAR registration does not always serve as a criterion for agencies to be allowed to carry out cross-border evaluation/accreditation/audit.
(yellow)	**In some cases, institutions and/or programmes** can choose to be evaluated by a quality assurance agency from outside the country to fulfil their obligations for external quality assurance, while complying with national requirements. EQAR registration always serves as a criterion for agencies to be allowed to carry out cross-border evaluation/accreditation/audit.
(orange)	Discussions are on-going or plans have been made to establish a legal framework allowing EQAR-registered agencies to operate in the country.
(red)	Institutions and programmes cannot be evaluated by quality assurance agencies from outside the country to fulfil their obligations for external quality assurance, and no plans are being discussed.

What has been achived so far?

BPIR 2020

Figure 3.5: Countries allowing the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, 2018/19

Source: BFUG data collection.

Thank you and see you in Tirana in 2024 for the EHEA Ministerial Conference and the Global Policy Forum