

# Recognition as a key to quality, access, and internationalization for students

By The European Students Union

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The background of the slide is a grayscale photograph of a large conference hall. In the foreground, several microphones on stands are visible, along with the curved edges of desks. Each desk has a small white label with a number, such as '748' and '747'. The hall is filled with rows of similar desks and microphones, receding into the distance under a bright, high-ceilinged environment.

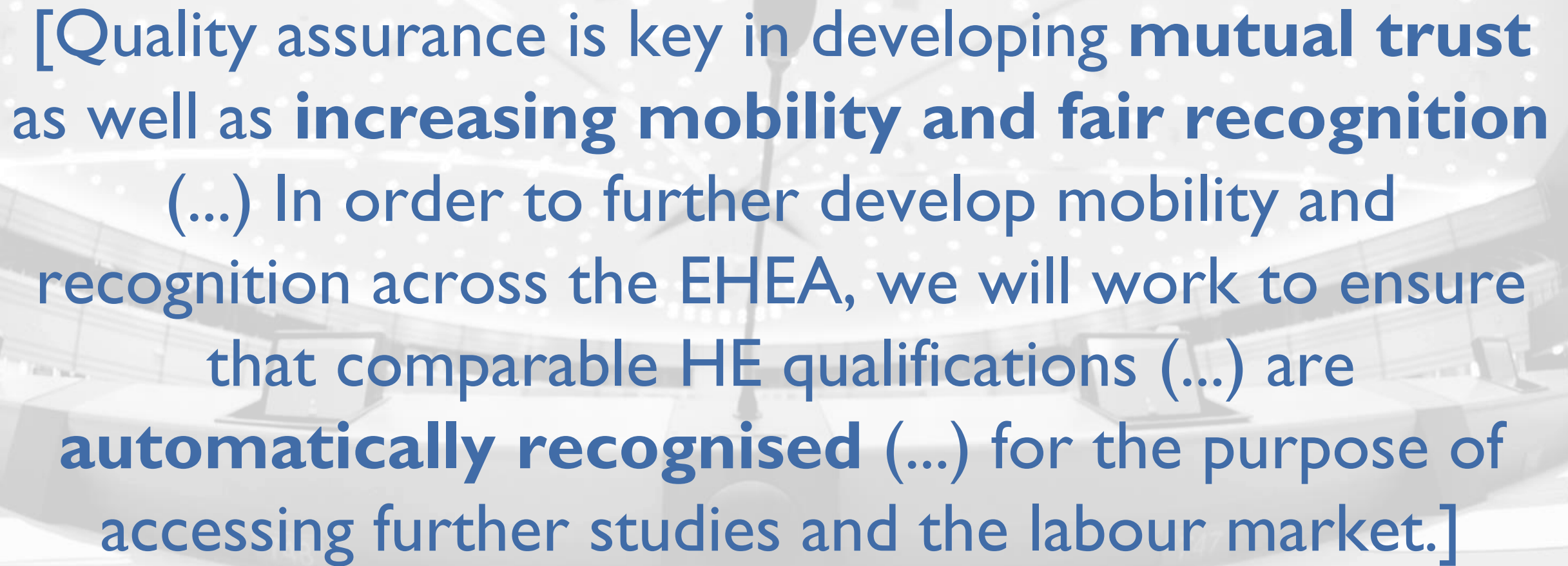
**[Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to: (...), recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.]**

**BOLOGNA DECLARATION 1999(!)**



[Ministers called upon existing organisations and networks such as NARIC and ENIC to promote, at institutional, national and European level, **simple, efficient and fair recognition** reflecting the underlying diversity of qualifications... They also encouraged closer **cooperation between recognition and quality assurance** networks.]

PRAGUE COMMUNIQUE 2001



[Quality assurance is key in developing **mutual trust** as well as **increasing mobility and fair recognition** (...) In order to further develop mobility and recognition across the EHEA, we will work to ensure that comparable HE qualifications (...) are **automatically recognised** (...) for the purpose of accessing further studies and the labour market.]

PARIS COMMUNIQUE 2018



The background of the slide is a faded, grayscale image of a conference room. It shows several microphones on stands, each with a small digital display showing the number '748'. There are also laptops on the table in front of the microphones. The overall tone is professional and academic.

**[automatic recognition is still rarely available to students. According to national student unions, the biggest barriers for automatic recognition is the fact that not all EHEA countries have consistently implemented all the Bologna tools and the lack of trust between EHEA countries.]**

**Bologna with Students' Eyes 2018**

# Why does recognition matter for students?

## Mobility and credit recognition

Basis for thinking of mobility

Personal development of students – extracurricular activities, application of








## Diploma recognition

Equal chances in access to quality education

QA enhancement

Trust to HEIs

*Fig. 7.2: Is Recognition of Prior Learning possible in your country?*

-  EHEA country with no ESU member
-  Not applicable
-  No, no work has been done in order to enable RPL
-  No, not yet, but some initiatives are being developed
-  Other
-  Yes, there are some initiatives
-  Yes, there are established systems

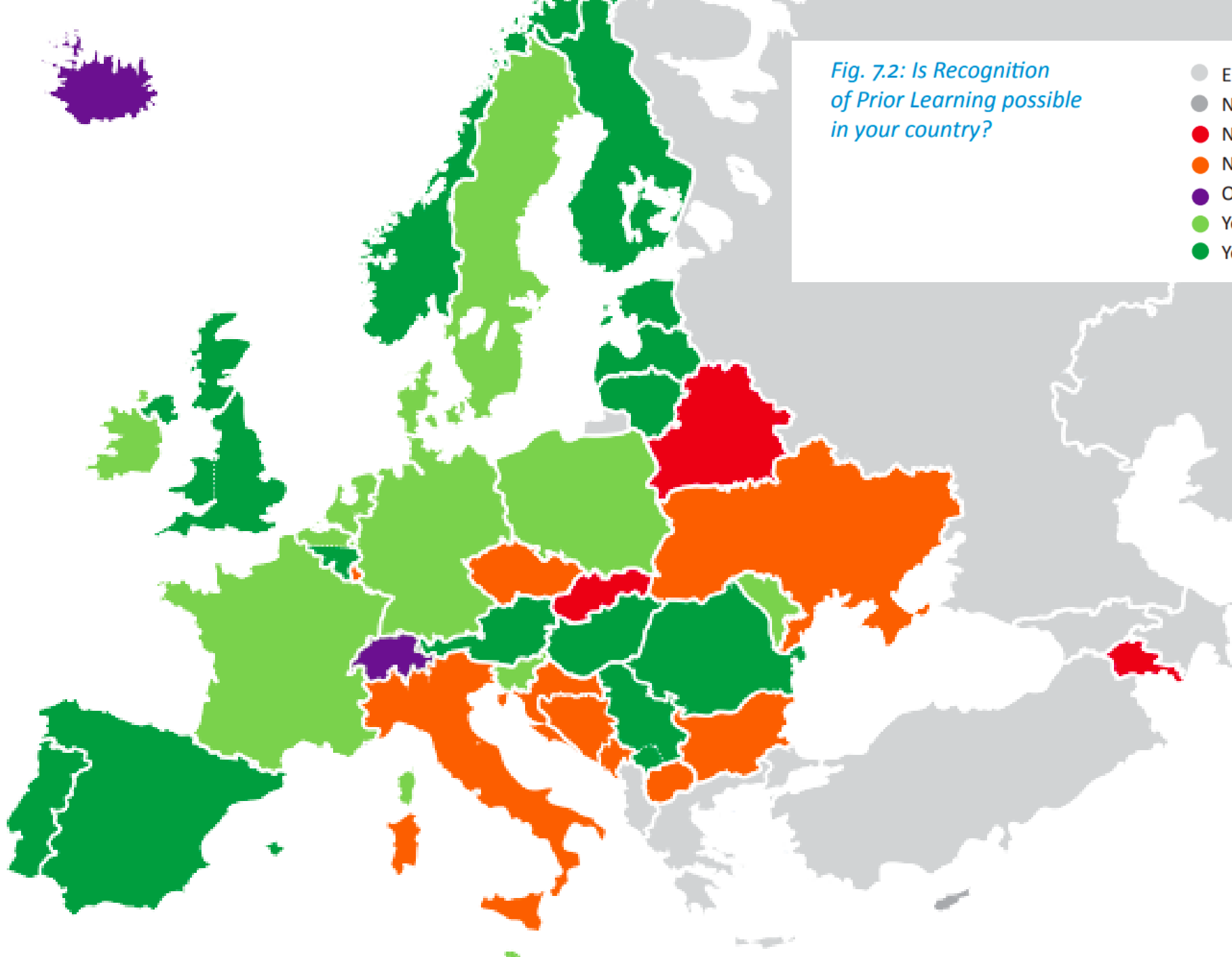
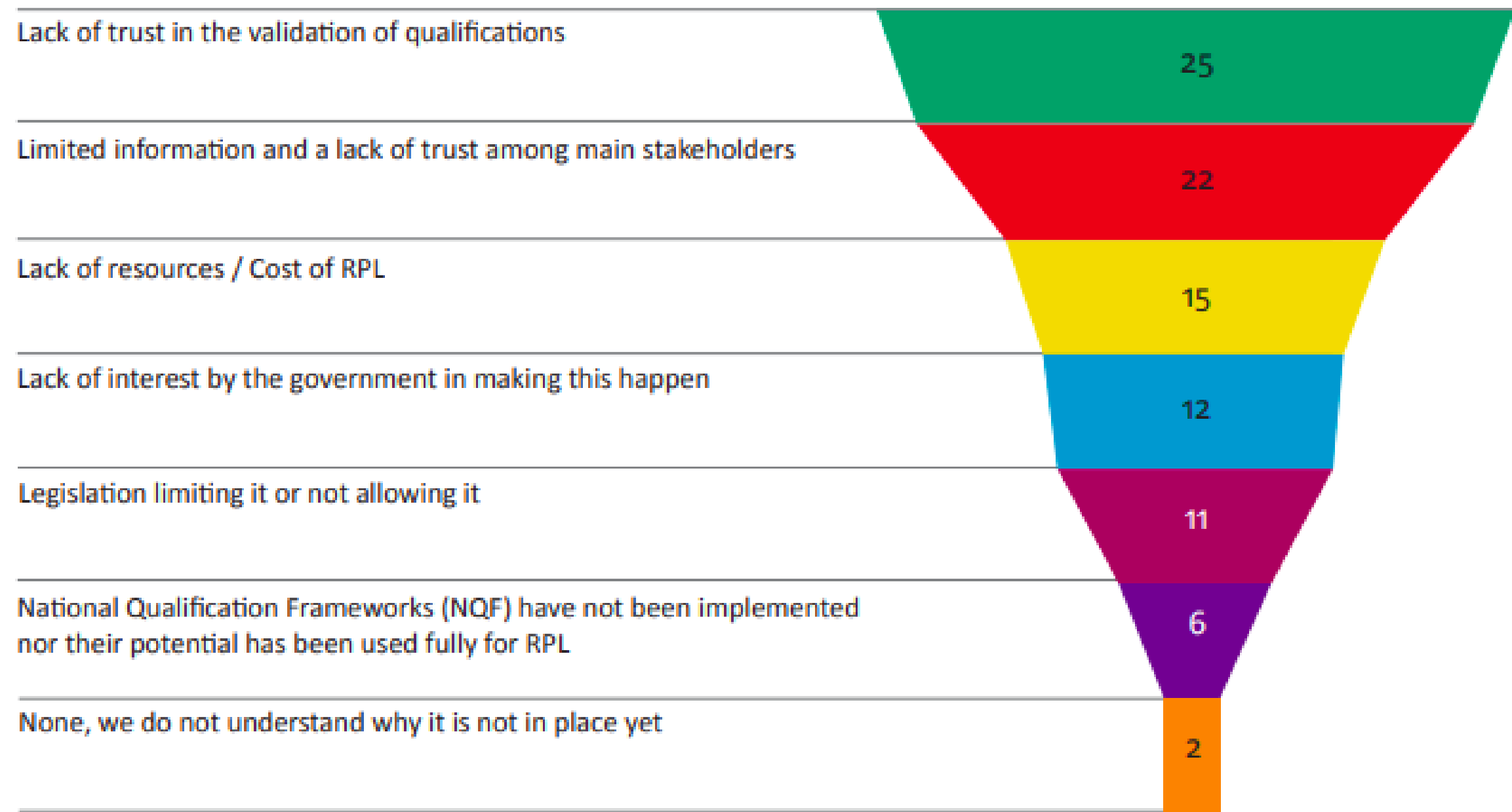


Figure 7.3: Main barriers to recognition of prior learning





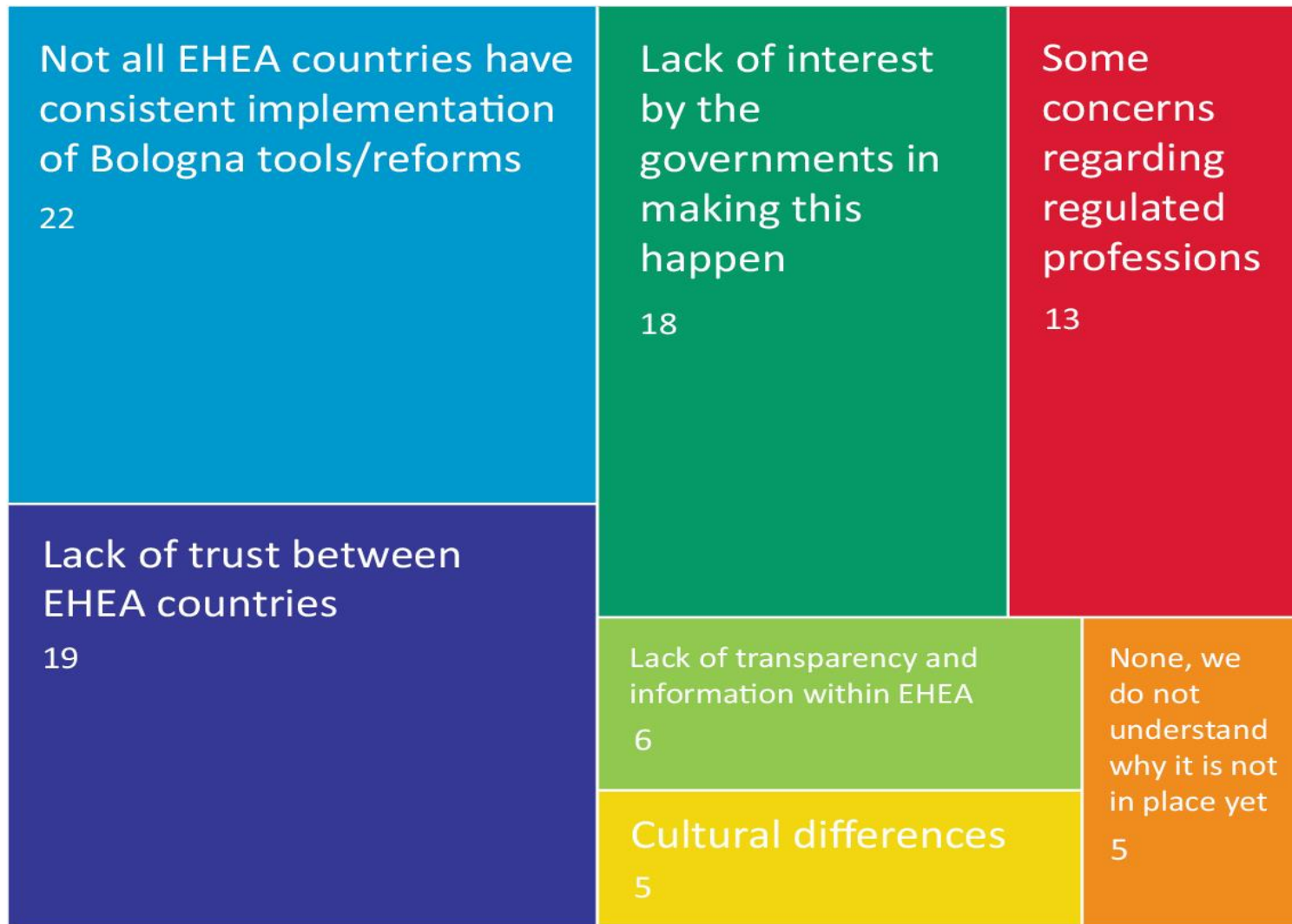
# Recommendations for RPL

- Recognition of prior learning should be included in national strategies which deal with higher education in order to promote at all levels (national, institutional) an understanding of RPL as complementary to formal education.
- Recognition of prior learning should be developed in close connection to the shift towards student-centred learning and flexibilisation of study programs.
- Expertise on ways of assessing and validating the outcomes of informal and non-formal learning needs to be further developed in all the national contexts and disseminated to the higher education institutions staff.

# Recommendations for RPL

- Further development of recognition should not be limited only to formal education, but should also include qualifications gained through prior learning, extracurricular activities and non-formal trainings, which will also empower the role of lifelong learning in society and improve access to education.
- Accessibility to those non-formal training and extracurricular activities within the European Education Area should be ensured to all students.

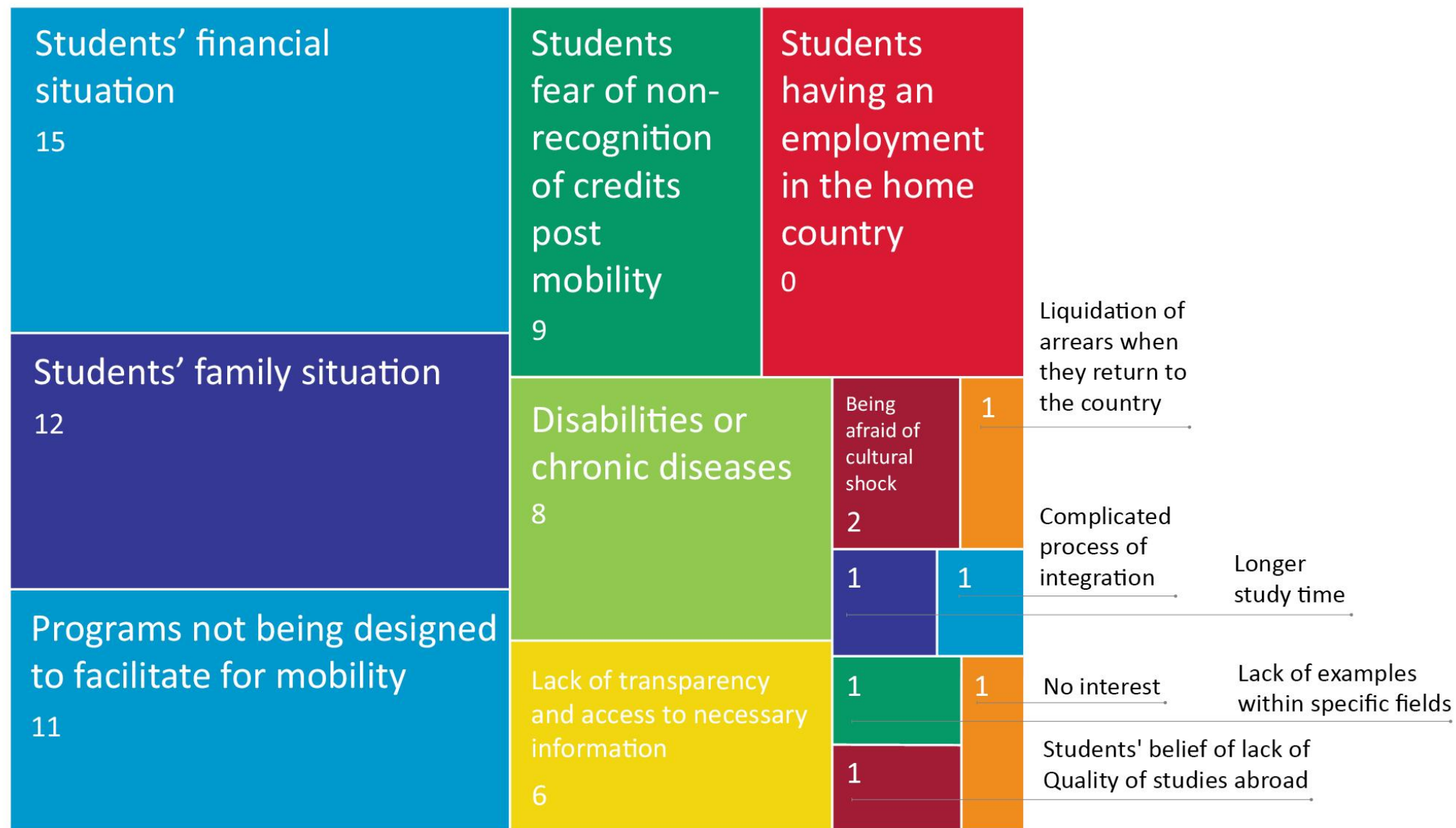
*Fig. 7.1: Main barriers to automatic recognition*



# Recommendations for automatic recognition

- Recognition procedures need to be simplified in order to be more accessible to all students. This especially goes for credit recognition outside of mobility programs.
- Implementation of all Bologna tools in a proper, systematic and thorough manner needs to finally be ensured through the Bologna working bodies as well as more reliable and comparable quality assurance processes at national levels.
- The procedures needs to be trust based, the division for better and worse HE education needs to end
- Political priority to the recognition procedures
- Eligibility of students means equal chances to study
- Procedures need to be free of charge

Fig. 8.5: Obstacles preventing outgoing mobility



# Recommendations for mobility and credits recognition

- Programs when designed need to foresee a possibility of mobility
- Clear, automatic and working procedures for recognition of mobility credits
- Staff training on procedures
- Less red tape – no need to repeat the agreement three times if it does not work in the end
- Recognition of credits outside of mobility need more focus. Mobility programs (usually Erasmus+) have had a positive effect on recognition since they provided institutions with a framework and streamlined procedures which are non-existent in other forms of recognition



# BOLOGNA WITH STUDENT EYES 2018

The Final Countdown



# Final remarks

- Students do not feel well informed about recognition
- HEI staff needs to be well trained
- All procedures needs to be transparently communicated and be free of charge
- The commitments need to be followed and no trust issues should be in place
- QA should support recognition, especially in terms of transparency and students' participation

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THANK YOU!

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