

The Law on Recognition and Assessment of Foreign Educational Certificates and Qualifications

The Law was published in the “Official Gazette of Montenegro”, No. [57/2011](#), [42/2016](#), and [56/2018](#) – second law (on the day of Montenegro`s accession to the European Union, the provisions concerning the recognition of foreign educational certificates on obtained secondary or higher education for the purpose of practicing regulated professions shall cease to apply), and [60/2025](#).

I. BASIC PROVISIONS

Subject of the Law

Article 1

The recognition and assessment of a foreign educational certificate on obtained and/or commenced education or part of education, as well as the recognition of a foreign qualification at the educational level with a qualification of the same level in Montenegro, shall be carried out in accordance with this Law, unless otherwise regulated by an international agreement.

Recognition of Foreign Educational Certificates

Article 2

Recognition of foreign educational certificates is a formal acknowledgement of the foreign certificate on obtained education, part of education and/or commenced education (hereinafter: recognition of the certificate).

Notwithstanding paragraph 1 of this Article, the recognition of a foreign educational certificate concerning obtained or commenced primary education, or a part thereof, shall be carried out through equivalence with the educational programme for primary education in Montenegro.

Recognition of a Foreign Qualification at the Educational Level

Article 3

The recognition of a foreign qualification at the educational level with a qualification of the same level in Montenegro (hereinafter: qualification recognition) shall be a detailed comparison of the foreign qualification with the corresponding qualification in Montenegro, based on qualification standards.

Partial Recognition of the Document

Article 4

If, in the procedure of foreign certificate recognition or qualification recognition, a substantial difference is established in the educational or study programme, partial recognition of the certificate or the qualification shall be carried out.

Right to Recognition of the Certificate or the Qualification

Article 5

The Montenegrin citizen, as well as a citizen of another country, a stateless person, an asylum seeker, a foreigner under subsidiary protection and a foreigner seeking international protection shall be granted the right to recognition of foreign educational certificates and qualifications.

Purpose of Recognition of the Certificate or the Qualification

Article 6

Recognition of the certificate or the qualification shall be carried out for the purpose of continuing education or employment in Montenegro.

Re-recognition of the Certificate or the Qualification

Article 7

Once recognition of the certificate or the qualification has been performed, it shall not be subject to re-recognition.

The lawfulness of the decision regarding the recognition of a certificate or a qualification may be challenged under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Working Body

Article 7a

For the purpose of protecting the public interest in the field of recognition and assessment of foreign educational certificates and qualifications, the Government of Montenegro (hereinafter: the Government) may establish a special working body which shall prepare an analysis of the situation in this field and provide recommendations to the competent authorities.

For the purpose of drafting the analysis referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the working body shall collect data and documentation concerning employees in state

administration bodies, administrative authorities, public institutions, and other entities exercising public powers, related to their education.

The authorities, institutions, and other entities referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be obliged to submit, at the request of the working body referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the requested data and documentation, including personal data.

The working body referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall process and store personal data in accordance with the law governing personal data protection.

The composition and amount of remuneration for the work of the working body members referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be regulated by an act of the Government, upon the proposal of the Ministry.

Definition

Article 8

A foreign educational certificate is a diploma/degree, joint diploma, double diploma, certificate, school report, student record book, or any other document issued by a competent authority of another state, which confirms the successful completion of an educational or study programme, or part thereof.

A certificate issued by a foreign primary or secondary school implementing an educational programme in Montenegro, confirming the successful completion of an educational programme or part thereof, shall also be considered a foreign educational document.

Joint and double degrees are degrees acquired in accordance with a special law.

Application of the Law

Article 9

The provisions of the Law on General Administrative Procedure relating to the expedited procedure shall apply in the process of recognition of the certificate or the qualification, except in cases where the decision is not rendered in favour of the party.

Costs

Article 9a

The fee for the costs incurred in the recognition procedure of the certificate or the qualification shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the law governing administrative fees.

In the recognition procedure of the qualification, a school, institution, or competent expert body may establish a commission.

The costs of the work of the commission members referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be borne by the school, institution, or competent expert body, in accordance with the act on the establishment of the commission.

Use of Gender-Sensitive Language

Article 10

All masculine-gender terms used in this Law to refer to natural persons shall be understood to include the feminine gender.

II. RECOGNITION OF CERTIFICATES

Competence

Article 11

Recognition of a foreign educational certificate on obtained primary, secondary (general or vocational), higher vocational, and higher education for the purpose of employment shall be carried out by the state administration authority competent for education affairs (hereinafter: the Ministry), through the National Information Centre (hereinafter: the ENIC Centre), as a separate organisational unit of the Ministry.

Recognition of a foreign educational certificate on obtained, commenced, or partial primary, secondary (general or vocational), and higher vocational education for the purpose of continuing education shall be carried out by the respective educational institution where the individual intends to continue their education (hereinafter: the school).

Recognition of a foreign educational certificate on obtained, commenced, or partial higher education for the purpose of continuing education shall be carried out by the respective higher education institution where the individual intends to continue their education (hereinafter: the institution).

The ENIC Centre

Article 12

The ENIC Centre is an information centre and a member of the European Network of Information Centres on academic recognition and mobility (ENIC – European Network of Information Centres).

Competence of the ENIC Centre

Article 13

The ENIC Centre shall perform tasks related to the recognition of obtained primary, secondary (general or vocational), higher vocational, and higher education, in accordance with this Law.

In performing the tasks referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the ENIC Centre shall:

- 1) carry out the recognition procedure of foreign educational certificates;

- 2) – **deleted** –
- 3) provide information on the recognition procedure of foreign educational certificates to institutions, employers, ENIC partners, and other organisations;
- 4) cooperate with the ENIC network in the development of national qualifications frameworks within the European Higher Education Area;
- 5) contribute to the further improvement of the education system in Montenegro;
- 6) update and provide information on education systems, foreign educational certificates and their relation to educational certificates in Montenegro, regulations on certificate/qualification recognition, information on recognised or accredited institutions, admission requirements, etc.;
- 7) update information on the education system of Montenegro, in the format set out in the annex to the Joint ENIC/NARIC Charter of the Activities and Services of ENIC/NARIC Centres;
- 8) perform tasks of national and international importance as prescribed by the Lisbon Recognition Convention for higher education in the European region;
- 9) carry out other tasks, in accordance with regulations and the Joint ENIC/NARIC Charter of the Activities and Services of ENIC/NARIC Centres.

Criteria for Recognition of a Certificate for the Purpose of Continuing Education

Article 14

In the recognition procedure of a certificate for the purpose of continuing education, depending on the previously obtained education or part of the education, the following shall be determined and assessed:

- 1) whether the institution that issued the diploma is recognised or accredited by the competent authority in the country where the educational certificate was issued;
- 2) the education system in the country where the foreign educational certificate was obtained;
- 3) the duration and level, i.e. degree, of education;
- 4) the authenticity of the educational certificate;
- 5) other circumstances relevant to the recognition of the certificate for the purpose of continuing education.

In addition to the criteria referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the recognition procedure of a certificate for the purpose of continuing education may also include an assessment of admission requirements and the educational or study programme.

Apart from the criteria referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article, in the recognition procedure of a certificate on transnational education obtained by students in a country different from the one in which the educational certificate was issued, it shall also be determined whether the institution delivering the study programme is recognised or accredited by the competent authority in the country where the study programme was delivered.

An educational certificate obtained without attending classes and undergoing a knowledge assessment process (Diploma mill) shall not be recognised.

Criteria for Recognition of a Certificate for the Purpose of Employment

Article 15

In the recognition procedure of a certificate for the purpose of employment, the following shall be determined and assessed:

- 1) whether the institution that issued the diploma is recognised or accredited by the competent authority in the country where the educational certificate was obtained;
- 2) the education system in the country where the foreign educational certificate was obtained;
- 3) the duration and level, i.e. degree, of education, without comparison of the educational or study programme;
- 4) the authenticity of the educational certificate;
- 5) other circumstances relevant to the recognition of the certificate for the purpose of employment.

Opinion

Article 15a

During the recognition procedure of foreign educational certificates on obtained primary, secondary (general or vocational), higher vocational, and higher education for the purposes of employment, the Ministry may request an opinion from the National Council for Education (hereinafter: the Council), i.e. the Agency for Control and Quality Assurance of Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency), about:

- 1) the structure of the educational and/or study programme, including its credit evaluation and/or learning outcomes (level of knowledge, skills, and competences);
- 2) enrollment requirements; and
- 3) the extent of practical training within the educational and/or study programme, including the duration of training conducted at the institution and/or at the employer, in accordance with the educational and/or study programme.

Once issued, the opinion of the Council and the Agency for a specific foreign educational and/or study programme shall be considered for all subsequent cases of foreign educational certificate recognition when the foreign educational certificate is obtained by completing the same educational and/or study programme at the same institution.

Initiation of the Recognition Procedure of Certificates

Article 16

The recognition procedure of a certificate shall be initiated upon the request of the certificate holder, their parent, guardian, adoptive parent, foster parent, or a person authorised by the holder.

The request referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be submitted in writing or electronically, accompanied by the required documentation.

The Ministry shall prescribe in more detail the manner of submitting the request, the required documentation, and the method of collecting the decision.

Submission of Requests

Article 17

- deleted -

Authenticity Verification

Article 18

- deleted -

Time Limit for Rendering a Decision

Article 19

- deleted -

Decision

Article 20

In the recognition procedure of the certificate, a decision shall be rendered.

An administrative dispute may be initiated against the decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

In the decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the title of the foreign educational certificate, the acquired level of education, the name of the qualification, professional title, etc., shall, as a rule, be written in the language of the original educational certificate and in the Montenegrin language, indicating the country of issuance.

Notwithstanding paragraph 3 of this Article, the decision on the recognition of a certificate concerning obtained, commenced, or partial primary education shall also recognise and establish equivalence between the foreign educational certificate and the educational certificate for primary education in Montenegro.

The reasoning of the decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall include, in particular: the name and surname of the holder of the foreign educational certificate, data on the educational certificate, the status of the school or institution, information on the study programme, the field and level of education in the country where the diploma was obtained, and other circumstances relevant to the recognition of the certificate referred to in Article 14 or Article 15 of this Law.

Clause

Article 21

The dispositive portion of the decision under Article 20 of this Law shall be entered on the certified copy of the translation of a foreign educational certificate, or the certified photocopy (recognition clause).

Assessment of Previously Acquired Competences of Asylum Seekers and Foreigners under Subsidiary Protection

Article 21a

An asylum seeker or a foreigner under subsidiary protection who, for justified reasons, is unable to provide the necessary documentation proving a foreign qualification shall undergo an assessment of previously acquired competences.

The assessment referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be carried out on the basis of an informational document concerning the foreign educational certificate, following which the Ministry shall issue an opinion on the assessment of the competences acquired by the asylum seeker or the foreigner under subsidiary protection.

The Ministry shall prescribe in more detail the manner of assessing previously acquired competences, as well as the content and method of submitting the document referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article.

Temporary Suspension of Recognition

Article 21b

For the purpose of protecting the public interest, in areas of public importance (education, healthcare, security, etc.), the Government or an institution offering a comparable educational or study programme may temporarily suspend the recognition of foreign educational certificates if:

- the institution at which the educational certificate was obtained is subject to pre-criminal or criminal proceedings;
- the institution at which the educational certificate was obtained has been prohibited from operating due to unlawful activities;
- the number of requests for recognition of certificates submitted to the ENIC Centre is disproportionately higher than the number of educational certificates issued by higher education institutions in Montenegro for the same or similar qualification.

III. RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

Recognition

Article 22

The recognition and assessment of a qualification shall be carried out by the school or institution that implements a comparable educational or study programme, in accordance with the act of the school or institution.

If no school or institution in Montenegro implements a comparable educational or study programme, the recognition and assessment of qualifications shall be carried out by the competent expert body.

The expert body referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article shall be a professional association composed of experts in the specific field for which the recognition of the qualification is requested.

If there is no professional association referred to in paragraph 3 of this Article, the recognition procedure of a qualification shall be carried out by a commission established by the Ministry, composed of experts in the specific field.

Based on the report of the commission referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article, the Ministry shall render a decision on the recognition of the qualification.

Request for the Recognition of a Qualification

Article 23

The recognition procedure of a qualification shall be initiated upon the request of the qualification holder, their parent, guardian, adoptive parent, foster parent, or a person authorised by the holder.

Supplementary or differential courses

Article 23a

If, in the recognition procedure of a qualification, a substantial difference is determined between the foreign educational or study programme and the publicly recognised or accredited study programme in Montenegro, a decision shall establish the obligation to take supplementary or differential courses.

The decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall specify the exam terms and manner of taking supplementary or differential courses.

Decision

Article 24

In the recognition procedure of a qualification, a decision shall be rendered, against which an administrative dispute may be initiated.

The decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall recognise the foreign qualification as equivalent to the corresponding qualification in Montenegro.

Time Limit for Rendering a Decision

Article 25

The Ministry, school, institution, or competent expert body shall be obliged to decide on the request for qualification recognition within 30 days from the date of submission of the request.

IV. REGISTER AND RECORDS

Register

Article 26

The Ministry shall keep a register of recognised certificates in both written and electronic form, which shall include, in particular, the following data:

- 1) the name, surname, and unique master citizen number or other personal identification data of the holder of the foreign educational certificate;
- 2) data on the foreign educational certificate concerning obtained primary, secondary (general or vocational), higher vocational, and higher education;
- 3) information on the educational or study programme;
- 4) the number and date of issuance of the decision on the recognition of the certificate.

A more detailed content and manner of keeping the register referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be prescribed by the Ministry.

Records

Article 27

The school or institution shall be obliged to maintain documentation and records of the decisions issued regarding the recognition of certificates and qualifications, in accordance with the regulations governing the relevant field of education.

IVa. SUPERVISION

Supervision over the Implementation of the Law

Article 27a

The Ministry shall supervise the implementation of this Law and other regulations adopted on the basis of this Law.

V. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Recognition of Obtained Education

Article 28

Educational certificates issued in the republics of the former SFRY shall not be subject to the recognition procedure under the provisions of this Law if they were obtained before the date of international recognition of those republics.

Educational certificates obtained in the Republic of Serbia before January 25, 2008, shall not be subject to the recognition procedure under the provisions of this Law.

Initiated recognition procedures

Article 29

The procedure for recognition of certificates initiated prior to the entry into force of this Law shall be completed in accordance with the regulations under which they were initiated.

Secondary Legislation

Article 30

The regulations for the implementation of this Law shall be adopted within six months from the date this Law enters into force.

Until the adoption of the regulations referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the regulations in force before this Law enters into force shall apply, provided they are not in conflict with this Law.

Initiated procedure

Article 30a

The recognition procedure of a foreign educational certificate or a qualification initiated prior to the entry into force of this Law shall be completed in accordance with the regulations under which they were initiated.

Secondary Legislation

Article 30b

The regulation referred to in Article 26, paragraph 3 of this Law shall be adopted within six months from the date this Law enters into force.

Initiated procedures

Article 30c

The recognition procedure of a foreign educational certificate or a qualification initiated prior to the entry into force of this Law shall be completed in accordance with the regulations under which they were initiated.

Alignment of Regulations

Article 30č

The regulations for the implementation of this Law shall be adopted within one year from the date this Law enters into force.

Until the adoption of the regulations referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, the regulations in force before this Law enters into force shall apply, provided they are not in conflict with this Law.

Repeal of Existing Legislation

Article 31

Upon the entry into force of this Law, the Law on Recognition and Assessment of Educational Certificates ("Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 4/08) shall cease to be valid.

Entry into Force

Article 32

This Law shall enter into force on the eighth day following its publication in the "Official Gazette of Montenegro".