

Recognition of Professional Qualifications obtained in foreign states in Latvia

Published: 30.09.2020.

The Ministry of Education and Science coordinates the recognition of professional qualifications in regulated professions.

1.1. What is a regulated profession and the recognition of professional qualifications?

Regulated professions or regulated activities in a profession mean that the regulatory enactments of a country, in this case - of Latvia, prescribe special qualification requirements which must be fulfilled in order to acquire the right to work in the relevant profession or to pursue the activities relevant to the profession.

Each country determines those professions that are regulated, which means the lists of regulated professions vary from country to country. However, the professions of doctor, dentist, pharmacist, nurse of general care, midwife, veterinarian and architect are regulated in almost all countries.

Recognition of professional qualifications is a process during which professional qualifications in certain professions are evaluated in order to determine whether the requirements of a regulated profession in Latvia are fulfilled.

The result of the recognition of professional qualifications is the decision taken by the recognition institutions regarding whether the professional qualification of a person has been recognised or additional requirements (so called "compensatory measures") have been specified: a proficiency test or an adaptation period.

Member countries of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Greece, Croatia, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, Spain, Hungary, Germany, Sweden) as well as the countries of the European Economic Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) and Switzerland form the European internal market. The internal market of the European Union is a single market in which the free movement and movement of goods, services, capital and persons are ensured and where citizens can live, work, study and do business without restrictions.

Recognition of professional qualifications is a mechanism that promotes the free movement of workers. In countries of the internal market, foreign nationals have the same opportunities to pursue professional activity in a regulated profession as nationals of a host country.

In Latvia, professional qualifications obtained in third countries are also recognised, i.e. in countries that are not members of the European Union and the European Economic Area.

1.2. In which cases is the recognition of professional qualifications required?

Recognition of professional qualifications is required if you want to pursue independent professional activity in a profession that is regulated in Latvia.

It should be noted that, in order to acquire the right to pursue an independent professional activity, many regulated professions require not only the recognition of professional qualifications but also the fulfilment of other requirements, such as registration in the register, proof of knowledge of the official language, professional activity insurance, education enhancement on a regular basis. The requirements for each regulated profession can be found on the websites of the recognition institutions listed in the [database of regulated professions](#).

1.3. What are the regulated professions and regulated activities in the profession in the Republic of Latvia?

The professions regulated in Latvia are determined by the law "[On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications](#)". Many regulated professions have specialities that are determined in [Cabinet Regulation No. 460 of 6 June 2006](#) "Regulations regarding the list of specialities, sub-specialities and additional specialities of regulated professions". A list of

regulated professions is available in the [database of regulated professions](#)

Applicants for the recognition of professional qualifications must take into account the fact that the decision regarding the recognition of professional qualifications in both the profession and in a separate professional activity is taken by an institution authorised to do so in accordance with [Cabinet Regulation No. 566 of 19 September 2017, "Regulations on Information Institutions and Institutions Issuing Recognition Certificates of Professional Qualifications Obtained in Foreign States in Regulated Professions"](#).

2. Legal framework

2.1. European Union law

2.1.1. Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Article 53 (former Article 47) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union imposes an obligation to issue a directive on the mutual [recognition](#) of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications.

2.1.2. Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications

[Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications](#) is applicable for the nationals of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Greece, Croatia, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, Spain, Hungary, Germany, Sweden) and nationals of Member States of the European Economic Area (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) and Switzerland who wish to pursue a professional activity, not in the Member State in which that professional qualification was obtained, but in another country as an employed person or self-employed person.

Directive 2005/36/EC aims to facilitate the recognition of professional qualifications for persons wishing to pursue their professional activities in another country of the European Union while protecting the particularly important public interests during the process of recognising professional qualifications.

2.2. Latvian legislation on the recognition of professional qualifications

[- The law "On the Regulated Professions and the Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

The law determines which professions are regulated in Latvia, as well as the requirements for qualification in these professions.

The law lays down rules for the recognition of professional qualifications and rules for the provision of temporary services in regulated professions.

Cabinet Regulations have been issued on the basis of law.

The main Cabinet Regulations are:

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 460 of 6 June 2006 "Regulations Regarding the List of Specialities, Sub-specialities and Additional Specialities of Regulated Professions"](#)

Regulation No. 460 defines all specialities of regulated professions. Within the meaning of Directive 2005/36/EC, specialities are analogous to a regulated profession. An applicant must indicate, on the recognition of professional qualifications, the speciality in which he/she wishes to recognise his/her professional qualifications.

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 419 of 28 June 2016 "Regulations on the Procedure for Exchange and Supervision of Information within the Internal Market Information System, the Liability of the Institutions Involved in the Exchange of Information and the](#)

[Procedure for Issuing the European Professional Card](#)

Establishes the procedure for issuing the European Professional Card. These regulations prescribe which institutions to contact to obtain the European Professional Card and what the procedure is for obtaining the European Professional Card.

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 827 of 20 December, 2016, "Procedures for Recognition of Professional Qualifications for Permanent Professional Activity in the Republic of Latvia"](#)

Cabinet Regulation No. 827 determines which institutions to contact to recognise his/her professional qualifications and what documents are to be submitted. Regulation No. 827 determines which decisions the institutions involved in taking decisions on the recognition of professional qualifications shall take, and for how long.

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 71 of 31 January, 2017, "Regulations Regarding Additional Requirements for the Recognition of Professional Qualification Obtained in Foreign States in Professions Regulated in the Republic of Latvia"](#)

Regulation No. 71 is applied in the case that the recognition institution concludes that the professional qualification of the applicant does not comply with the requirements for the relevant profession in Latvia.

In cases where the educational and professional qualifications of the applicant differ significantly from the requirements for education and professional qualifications in Latvia in the relevant profession, the recognising institution shall take a decision to determine the additional requirement - an aptitude test or an adaptation period.

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 168 of 28 March, 2017, "Procedures for the Provision of Temporary Professional Services in a Regulated Profession in the Republic of Latvia"](#)

Regulation No. 168 determines the procedure for the provision of temporary services in regulated professions in Latvia. In these cases, professional qualifications should not be recognised, but applicants should directly contact the recognition institution (not the information institution, as in the case of the recognition of professional qualifications).

The temporary service provider must submit a declaration, which must be accompanied by the documents specified in Regulation No. 168.

In certain cases, where the temporary service is provided in a regulated profession relating to public health and safety, the recognition institution may order a proficiency check of the service provider. The institution may determine such examination if it finds that the evidence of formal qualifications of the applicant for the provision of temporary services shows that the applicant has not learnt any significant substantive issues and the lack of this knowledge or skills may endanger the health or safety of the recipient. The recognition authority may organise the proficiency check for this part of the professional knowledge only.

The professions in which a proficiency check of a temporary service provider may be determined are set out in the Annex to Regulation No. 168.

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 566 of 19 September, 2017, "Regulations on Information Institutions and Institutions Issuing Certificates of Recognition of Professional Qualifications Obtained in Foreign States in Regulated Professions"](#)

Regulation No. 566 determines the information institutions to which applicants for the recognition of professional qualifications may submit their applications, and institutions which issue certificates of recognition of professional qualifications in regulated professions, i.e. institutions which make a decision regarding the recognition of professional qualifications.

Each regulated profession has a designated information institution and an institution that issues a certificate of recognition of professional qualifications. The database of regulated professions provides information on the competent institutions for each regulated profession.

[- Cabinet Regulation No. 103 of 5 March, 2019, "Procedures for Covering Expenses Related to the Recognition of a Person's Professional Qualification"](#)

Recognition of professional qualifications and proficiency check of temporary service providers, as well as issuance of the European Professional Card in Latvia is a paid service and Regulation No. 103 sets their fees.

The amount of the fee for the recognition of professional qualifications is 240 euros; this amount must be paid into the bank account of the information institution and confirmation of payment must be attached to the application for the recognition of professional qualifications.

The fee for a proficiency check of a temporary service provider - up to 100 euros - must be paid directly to a bank account of an institution that issues certificates of recognition of professional qualifications in regulated professions. In the written decision to carry out a proficiency check of a temporary service provider, the institution will also indicate the bank account to which payment shall be made.

- Automatic recognition of professional qualifications in sectoral professions is based on the following Cabinet Regulations:

In the medical profession:

- [Cabinet Regulation No. 207 of 29 March, 2005 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of a Medical Practitioner, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

In the profession of a pharmacist:

- [Cabinet Regulation No. 124 of 15 February, 2005 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of a Pharmacist, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

In the profession of a midwife:

- [Cabinet Regulation No. 149 of 1 March, 2005 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of a Midwife, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

In the profession of an architect:

- [Cabinet Regulation No. 164 of 21 March, 2017 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of an Architect, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

In the profession of a nurse of general care:

- [Cabinet Regulation No. 351 of 24 May 2005 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of a General Care Nurse, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

In the profession of a dentist:

- Cabinet Regulation No. 125 of 15 February, 2005 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of a Dentist, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"

In the profession of a veterinarian:

- [Cabinet Regulation No. 320 of 10 May 2005 "Regulations On Documents Certifying the Education and Professional Qualification of a Veterinarian, which are Recognised by Applying the Special System of Recognition of Professional Qualifications"](#)

Recognition of professional qualifications in the profession of a lawyer for applicants from European Union Member States takes place in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 53 of the Law "On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications" and the procedure laid down in Part Seven of the Advocacy Law of the Republic of Latvia. Article 4 of the Advocacy Law of the Republic of Latvia determines that foreign lawyers may only practice in Latvia in accordance with the international treaties of the Republic of Latvia on legal aid.

Recognition of professional qualifications in maritime professions takes place in accordance with the requirements of Section 51 (1) of the Law "On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications" and the requirements of regulatory enactments in the field of certification of seafarers. The main special international and national legal acts regulating the field of maritime are the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (as amended) (STCW Convention) and the resulting Cabinet Regulation No. 895 of 22 November, 2005 "Regulations Regarding the Certification of Seafarers".

3.3. Professional qualification recognition process and decisions

Recognition of professional qualifications in Latvia is a two stage process:

- 1) The information institution accepts an application, assesses whether all the necessary documents have been submitted and whether the duration and level of the acquired education corresponds to the degree specified in the Latvian education system in accordance with the regulatory enactments' requirements for work in the relevant regulated profession;
- 2) The institution that issues professional qualification recognition certificates (recognition institution) assesses the content of the education and professional qualification acquired by the applicant and the compliance with the requirements set in Latvia in the relevant regulated profession and takes a decision on the recognition of professional qualification or sets additional requirements.

After an assessment of the documents submitted by the applicant, the recognition institution may take the following decisions:

- 1) Recognise a professional qualification if the applicant's qualification obtained in foreign states complies with the requirements set in Latvia;
- 2) Not to recognise a professional qualification if the qualification obtained by the applicant does not comply with the requirements set in Latvia for work in the relevant regulated profession;
- 3) Determine additional requirements (see below);
- 4) Recognise part of the professional activities of the regulated profession.



3.5. Possibilities for disputing decisions on the recognition of professional qualifications

All decisions taken by recognition institutions on the recognition of professional qualifications are administrative acts and may be disputed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Law. Article 43, paragraph five of the law "On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications", a decision taken by a recognition institution may be disputed in the ministry which is responsible for the branch of activity of the relevant profession.

Article 79 of the Administrative Procedure Law determines that an administrative act may be disputed within 1 month after its issuance, but if the issued administrative act does not indicate within what term it may be disputed, this decision may be disputed within one year from the date of issue.

4. Provision of temporary services

Cabinet Regulation No. 168 of 28 March, 2017, "Procedures for the Provision of Temporary Professional Services in a Regulated Profession in the Republic of Latvia"

Temporary services in regulated professions in Latvia can be provided by citizens of the Member States of the European Union and the Member States of the European Economic Area, as well as citizens of Switzerland, who have the right to pursue a professional activity in one of these countries, i.e. they have "legal status" in these countries.

5. Where can the information be found?

In Latvia, the support centre designated by Directive 2005/36/EC is the [Academic Information Centre](#).

The Academic Information Centre provides information on the procedure of recognition of the regulated professions and professional qualifications in Latvia.

A database of regulated professions is [available on the website of the Academic Information Centre](#).

The Academic Information Centre provides consultations to visitors in person, by telephone and electronically.

Academic Information Centre Contacts

Office address:

Dzirnavu iela 16, 3rd floor, Riga

Post address:

Valņu iela 2, Riga, LV-1050

Visiting hours:

Mondays 14:00 - 18:00

Tuesdays 9:00 - 13:00

Thursdays 13:00 - 17:00

Phone: (+371) 67225155

E-mail: prof@aic.lv

5. Information institutions in the field of regulated professions and institutions that recognise professional qualifications

Information institutions regarding regulated professions

7. Useful websites

European Commission Regulated Professions Database

<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/>

EURES – The European Job Mobility Portal <http://ec.europa.eu/eures/home.jsp?lang=en>

Guidelines for the use of Directive 2005/36/EC

<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/40185>

<https://www.izm.gov.lv/en/recognition-professional-qualifications-obtained-foreign-states-latvia>