



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION



Swedish Council for
Higher Education



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Diploma Supplement Autumn webinar 27.11.2025

webinar report

The Autumn webinar had 243 registered participants from around the world. From this report you can find introduction of the topics presented by our speakers, as well as a summary of the discussions.

For the slides, please see our website: <https://www.oph.fi/en/diploma-supplement-network>

Agenda

14.00 Welcome

14.10 Skills Portability Initiative

Koen Nomden (Team Leader Transparency and Portability of skills and qualifications, within the Unit on Skills and Qualifications of the European Commission)

14.30 Study on the use of the DS in Ireland

Naomi Oldenburg, Senior Manager and Alice Long, Senior Executive Officer (Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI))

14.50 Commentaries by students on the Irish DS study

Nora Angelova (Executive Committee Member, European Students' Union)

15.00 Break

15.10 Spotlight on Latin America and the Caribbean: implementation of the DS

Vanja Gutović (Head of Policy Analysis and International Cooperation, UNESCO-IESALC)

15.30 The new Code of Good Practice on Transnational Education - DS as a tool

Baiba Ramina (Head of Latvian ENIC-NARIC)

15.50 Closing remarks

Monica Wendell, Lund University

Skills Portability Initiative

Koen Nomden, Team Leader, Transparency and Portability of skills and qualifications, the European Commission

Context

- The initiative aims to **remove barriers to free movement of workers** and make the EU more attractive to talent.
 - It aligns with the **Commission's 2024–2029 political guidelines**, the **Union of Skills**, and the **Labour and Skills Shortages Action Plan**.
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Key Challenges

- **Insufficient transparency** and understanding of qualifications across Member States.
 - **Fragmented digital credential systems**; lack of EU-wide interoperability.
 - Recognition processes for **regulated professions** are often slow and outdated.
 - For **third-country nationals**, procedures are cumbersome and inconsistent, limiting EU's attractiveness in comparison to other regions
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Proposed Actions

1. **Improve transparency and digitalisation of qualifications**
 - Comprehensive and regularly updated **National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs)**, including micro-credentials.
 - Systematic EU-level access to NQF information.
 - Link qualifications to **skills taxonomies** (e.g., ESCO).
 - Develop an **interoperable digital framework** using the **EU Digital Identity Wallet** for secure cross-border recognition.
2. **Modernise recognition for regulated professions**
 - Expand **automatic recognition** (e.g., physiotherapists, future CTFs for other professions).
 - Review deadlines and streamline processes.
 - Introduce **digital workflows**, AI-powered services, and support for digital credentials.
3. **Simplify recognition for third-country nationals**
 - Create a **common EU legal framework** for recognition and validation.
 - Approved lists of qualifications/providers meeting EU standards.
 - Temporary job opportunities during recognition, adaptation periods, or aptitude tests.

Diploma Supplement

- Seen as a tool to **increase transparency and acceptance** of skills and qualifications.
 - Consultation questions focus on improving its role in supporting portability.
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Next Steps

- Public and targeted consultations (surveys, interviews, workshops).
- Planned adoption in **Q3 2026** as part of the **EU Fair Labour Mobility Package**.

Examination of the Implementation of the Europass Diploma Supplement across Irish Higher Education Institutions

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

Naomi Oldenburg, a Senior Manager at QQI and Alice Long, a Senior Executive Officer at QQI.

Current Situation in Ireland

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is the host organisation for the Irish National Europass Centre and is the European Qualifications Framework – National Contact Point (EQF-NCP) for Ireland, these operations are managed by the Qualifications Information and Learning Opportunities Unit (QILO).
 - DS is issued by HEIs (Designated Awarding Bodies and Higher Education Providers) to graduates—sometimes automatically, sometimes on request.
 - **Section 8 (national system information)** has not been updated for years, despite significant changes in the Irish education landscape.
 - QQI, as the National Europass Centre, is leading efforts to **update the DS template** and improve implementation.
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Study Findings

- **40% of HEIs** have internal processes for updating the DS template.
- **Over two-thirds** issue the DS automatically for major awards.
- Formats vary: some issue **digital**, others **physical**.
- **Promotion is limited**: only 40% actively promote DS benefits to graduates.
- **Admissions use**: most institutions accept DS as part of admissions; 57% promote DS as evidence of qualifications.
- Several HEIs plan to **digitalise and automate DS issuance**.

Why Act Now

- The DS strengthens **graduate employability** and **international trust** in qualifications.
 - Updating templates ensures **accurate representation** of a national system.
 - Promoting DS use benefits **students, employers, and institutions**.
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Identified Next Steps for HEIs

- **Review and update your DS template** regularly.
 - **Promote DS benefits** to graduates and employers.
 - **Explore digitalisation** for efficiency and accessibility.
 - Collaborate with national authorities to ensure **consistent, updated information**.
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QQI Actions

- Updating Section 8 of the Irish DS template.
- Producing resources and awareness campaigns.
- Planning follow-up surveys to track progress.

Commentary by students on the Irish DS study

Nora Angelova, Executive Committee Member, European Students' Union

Diploma Supplement (DS) and the Europass ecosystem play a crucial role in Europe. The DS is not just another administrative document—it is an empowering tool for students. The European Students' Union (ESU) fully supports the DS, and its quality is essential.

Students should not face administrative hurdles to obtain a proper DS after graduation. The DS must be a trustworthy document for employers as well.

Why is this important?

- Student and graduate mobility is still uneven; some have better opportunities than others.
- A high-quality DS available to all graduates, regardless of where they studied, promotes equality.
- Mobility depends on the recognition of achievements and skills. Currently, the burden of proof lies with graduates, when the DS should be the tool doing this work instead: a widely used and accepted DS important.
- Although the DS may seem like a small document, it can have a **huge impact**.

The DS must always reflect current realities and remain up to date. Furthermore, students cannot benefit from a document they do not know about—informing them is essential.

Conducting studies on the DS is good practice, and follow-up research is recommended.

Diploma Supplement in Latin America and the Caribbean

Vanja Gutović, Head of Policy Analysis and International Cooperation, UNESCO IESALC

1. Key Framework

- **UNESCO Buenos Aires Recognition Convention (2019):**
 - Encourages defining and adopting the DS or similar instruments.
 - Promotes standardized terminology, achievement levels, and classification using UNESCO's ISCED system.
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2. Regional Initiatives

- **SIACES Proposal (2019):** Regional effort to introduce DS.
 - **Feasibility Study (2024):**
 - **Building blocks:** Government support, institutional roles, student information systems, digital credentials.
 - **Challenges:** National qualification frameworks, credit transfer, translation costs, inclusion of soft skills/micro-credentials, employer recognition.
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3. Developments in Specific Countries

- **Central America:** CSUCA pilot project.
 - **Uruguay:** 2024 national decree under Buenos Aires Convention.
 - **Argentina:** Ministry of Education resolutions (2017, 2023).
 - **Chile:** Proposal to update qualifications structure.
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4. Overall Message

- The DS is seen as a strategic tool for **academic mobility, recognition, and integration** within the region, but requires strong policy support and technical infrastructure.

The new Code of Good Practice on Transnational Education – DS as a tool

Baiba Ramina, Head of Latvian ENIC-NARIC

Purpose of the Code

- Prevent fraudulent practices in **Transnational Education (TNE)**.
 - Provide a solid foundation for **fair recognition** of TNE qualifications.
 - Respond to increased learner mobility and international cooperation.
 - Enhance **quality assurance** in TNE.
 - One of the key challenges remains in information provision about TNE
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Key Updates

- The Code of Good Practice has been revised (previous versions: 2001 Riga, 2007 Bucharest; new version: 2025 Paris).
 - Updated definitions emphasize:
 - Movement of **faculty, learners, knowledge, programmes, and curricula** across borders.
 - Inclusion of **distance and blended learning**.
 - Transparency on awarding and providing institutions.
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Recommendations for TNE

- HEIs and national authorities must:
 - Provide **clear information** on quality assurance and programme status.
 - Adopt measures to **eradicate diploma mills and fraudulent qualifications**.
 - Ensure transparency about awarding and administering institutions—**as foreseen in the Diploma Supplement format**.
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Role of the Diploma Supplement

- **Lisbon Recognition Convention Article IX.3:** Parties should promote the use of the **UNESCO/Council of Europe Diploma Supplement** or comparable documents.
- DS is a key tool for:
 - **Transparency** in TNE qualifications.
 - Facilitating **fair recognition** decisions.
- Subsidiary texts:
 - Recommendation on joint degrees (2004).
 - DS model (2007).
 - Revised DS template (2019).

- HEIs should issue a **Diploma Supplement or comparable document** for TNE programmes.
 - DS should clearly state:
 - Nature and status of both awarding and providing institutions.
 - Programme details for recognition purposes.
 - National Information Centres and HEIs should provide **accurate, reliable, and accessible information** on:
 - Quality assurance standards.
 - Status of institutions involved in TNE.
 - Appeal procedures and learner rights.
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Why DS Matters for TNE

- Protects learners from fraudulent practices.
- Builds trust in qualifications across borders.
- Supports **recognition aligned with Lisbon Recognition Convention principles**.

Summary of the chat discussions

1. Issuing the Diploma Supplement (When)

- *General Question in the chat:* In terms of issuing the DS, I've seen the DS issued ahead of the issue of the final parchment with a date of degree conferral (Italy was the last example). For evaluation purposes, should we wait for the parchment issue? Or can we state the degree has been awarded based on the DS confirmation of degree conferral?
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2. Issuing Practices (Legislation / Mandatory by law or Not)

Some answers collected from the participants.

- In Slovenia DS is compulsory by law in HE in Slovene and English passed by the Minister of higher education.
- Greece provides a DS along with the respective degree in two languages (Greek and English). The DS is provided by the higher education institutions, while graduates simultaneously have access to an official state platform where they can search for information about their basic degree and the setting of the DS.
- Portugal: DS legislated since 2008, free, issued in two languages.
- Finland: the HE legislation stipulated that HEIs must issue a supplement to the diploma that will work in an international context. In practise this means the DS.
- Flanders (Belgium): DS introduced before Bologna Process, changed in 2004 to align with DS Model. In the Flemish community of Belgium the DS is compulsory awarded together with the HE qualification. The DS is free of charge and also awarded automatically in English. In case the language of instruction of the HE programme is

for example French, that the DS is also awarded in French.

→ Most recent legislation: *Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering tot vaststelling van de vorm van het hogeronderwijsdiploma en de inhoud van het bijbehorend diplomasupplement*.

- Sweden: The DS is mandatory by law, provided free of charge and issued in English. The students can share their DS, through a code, with potential employers, new institutions, etc. Verification is made directly in the Swedish national student register (Ladok)
- Romanian legislation explicitly mentions that DS is issued in Romanian language and in another widely-spoken language, free of charge and it can be digitally signed and electronically transmitted.
- Norwegian higher education institutions must issue a DS alongside a higher education degree by law, but it is not compulsory to issue a DS for higher vocational education at level 5 in Norway.
- In Austria there is a regulation in the Universities Act, where it is written that the DS has to be given as a compulsory attachment besides the academic diploma. The Minister of Science/ Higher Education has to establish the content of the DS in a regulation to the law, in accordance with the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in the European Region. It is free of charge.
- In Latvia DS are mandatory in HE, on other levels there is additional documentation, but not as comprehensive as DS. For VET qualifications there is possibility to issue a DS, too, but it is not mandatory
- In Germany DS is compulsory for all Bachelor and Master degrees.

3. Other Topics

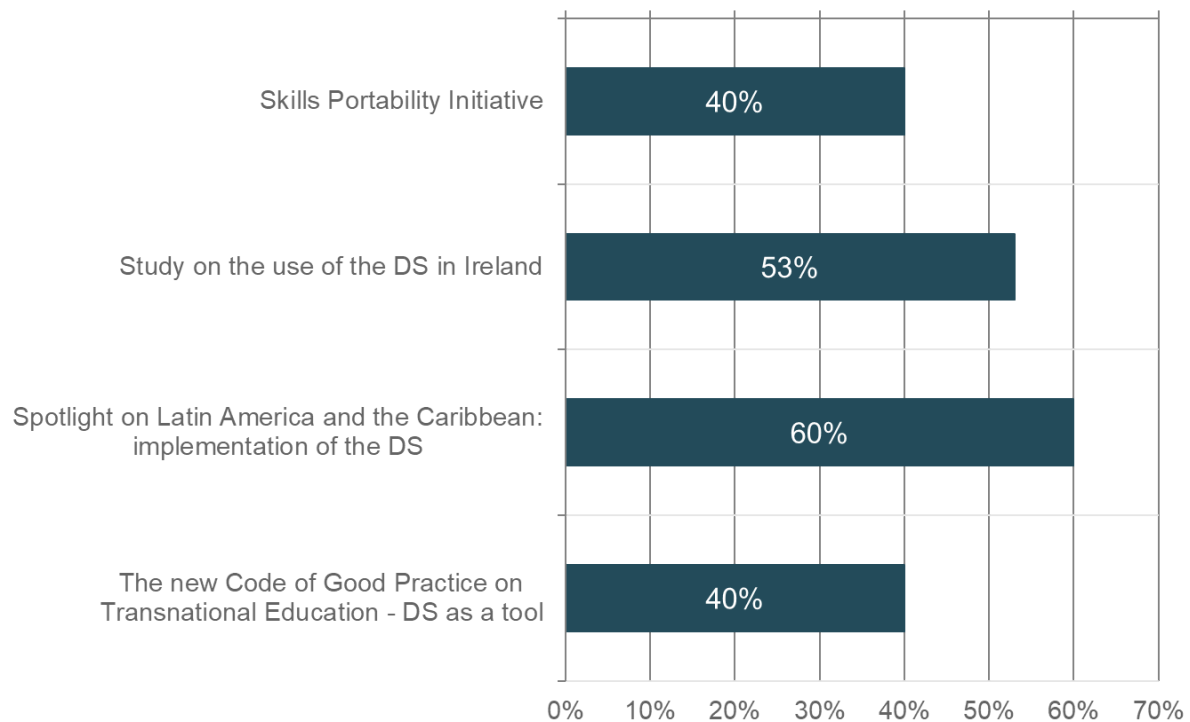
- DS Model includes possibility to inform on access to labour market:
 - 5. INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION**
 - 5.1. Access to further study
 - 5.2. Professional status (if applicable)
- Authenticity of documents: For issuing digital documents, they should possess verification like a qualified electronic signature or a verification website and key.
- Certificate Supplement: Work ongoing through Europass/EQF project group; reviewing template and digitalisation; stakeholder survey coming soon.
- Another interesting perspective: how are graduates informed about the DS; e.g., is it the responsibility of individual NECs, are there national information resources etc.? E.g. in Portugal information is provided online:
<https://www.dges.gov.pt/en/pagina/suplemento-ao-diploma>

Visit the Padlet for links and more information

Before, during and a week after the webinar a Padlet board was open for discussion and sharing relevant links on the topics. You can visit the board here: [Diploma Supplement Autumn webinar](#) - it is closed for comments but you can access all the information presented there.

Webinar feedback

Which of today's topics you found to be most relevant or interesting to you?



Next Webinar Suggestions

Updates on previous progress.
Employer perspective on DS use.
Global DS chart: adoption year, languages, links.
Research: DS issuance & learning outcomes.
Regional focus: Africa (West/North), Asia-Pacific.
Legal aspects: Is DS compulsory? Languages? Case studies.
Quality improvement: Make DS more useful.
Recognition use if employers hard to reach.

General feedback: Positive on initiative and online format; helpful for evaluators; appreciated global participation.

Closing remarks

Monica Wendel, Lund University

The webinar offered eye-opening insights to the Diploma Supplement, the different practices and developments in Europe. As realities differ from country to country, we operate within diverse frameworks of routines and regulations. Yet we share a lot in common and we all remain committed and motivated to keep advancing and improving.

Thank you to all participants and speakers for your active presence and valuable contributions. A special thank you to the representative of the student union for insightful reflections, which provide meaningful input to the ongoing development efforts.