

# **Lifelong Learning Policies in Southeastern Europe: From Emulation of EU Policies to Tailor-Made Reforms?**

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# Rationale of LLL in the EU

- emphasis on training and not merely ‘education’
- shift from the supply side and teaching input to the demand side and learning outcomes
- National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) are major instruments for reform
  - classify all qualifications in a country’s educational system (e.g. UK has 50k qualifications)
  - reveal their interrelations according to skills, competences and knowledge
  - are cross-sectoral: from primary to higher education

# Rationale cont.

- **state as strategic planner** of education
  - significant shift of responsibility notably in adult education that historically has been financed by the learning individual or the employer
- strengthen **employers** and the connection to the **labour market**
- inclusion of all relevant stakeholders and **social partners** who have to be committed to implement these reforms

## EQF as meta-framework

		<b>Knowledge</b>
		In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.
<b>Level 1</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 1 are	• basic general knowledge
<b>Level 2</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 2 are	• basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study
<b>Level 3</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 3 are	• knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study
<b>Level 4</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 4 are	• factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study
<b>Level 5*</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 5 are	• comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge
<b>Level 6**</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 6 are	• advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles
<b>Level 7***</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 7 are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research</li> <li>• critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields</li> </ul>
<b>Level 8****</b>	The learning outcomes relevant to Level 8 are	• knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields

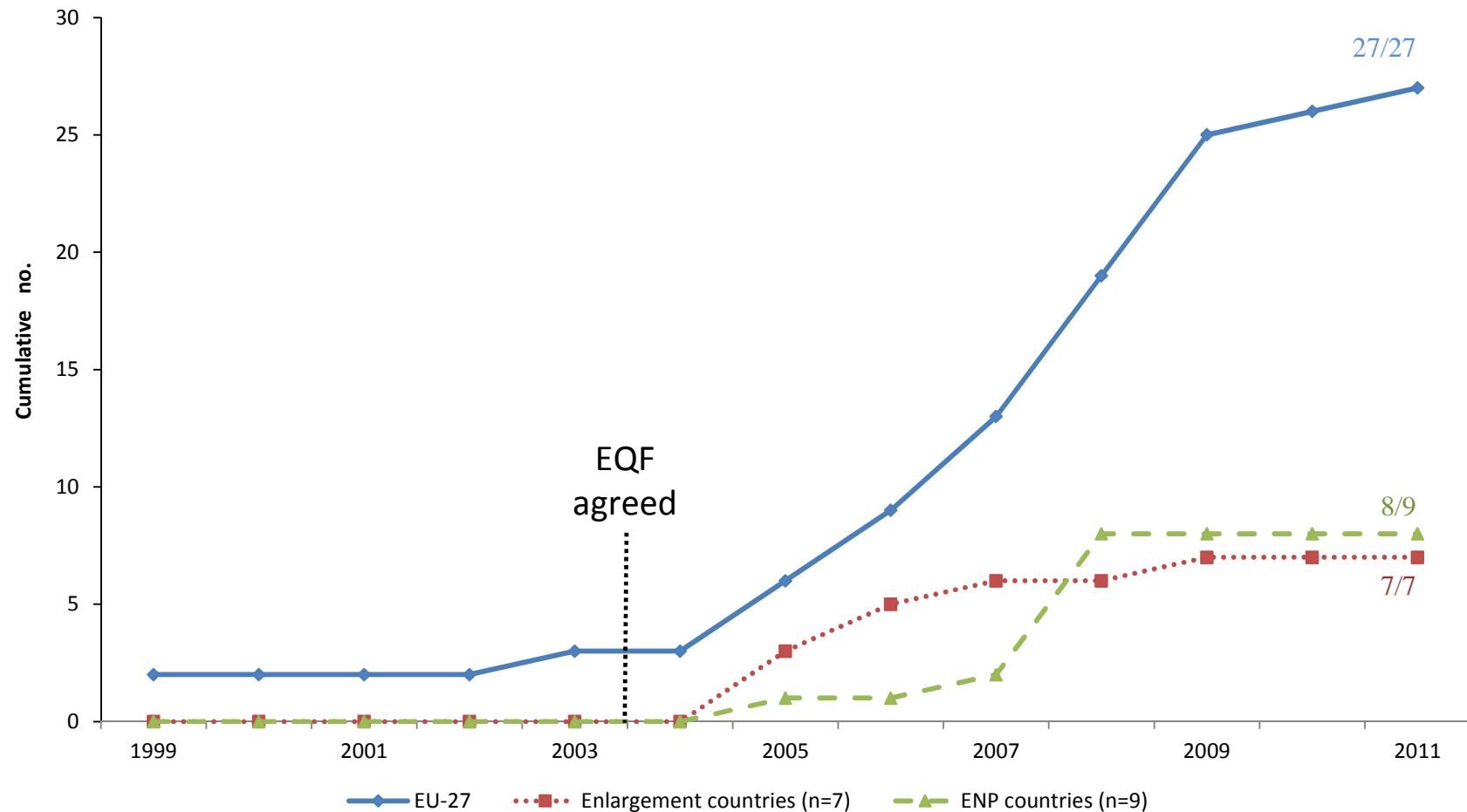


# Why do SEE governments adopt NQFs?

- 4 mechanisms of policy diffusion (Simmons and Elkins, 2004, Simmons et al., 2008)
  - coercion
  - competition
  - (bounded) learning
  - **emulation**: symbolic systemic changes that seek to increase legitimacy & are de-coupled from the reality on the ground
    - “institutionalized myths” (Meyer & Rowan 1977)



# Figure 1: Number of countries that have initiated or adopted NQFs



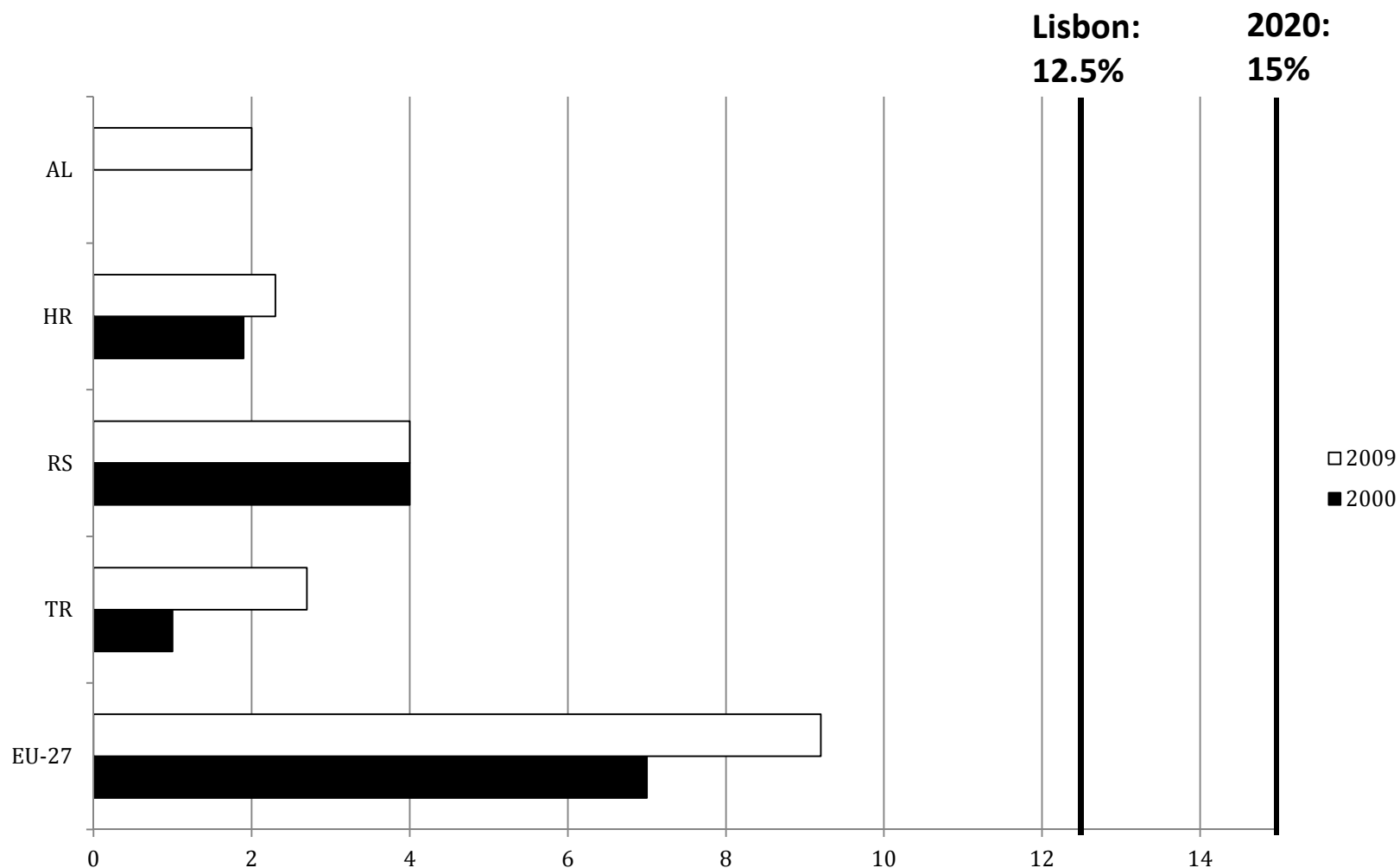
*Source:* Data from the European Training Foundation and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. ENP here only cover the biggest partner countries EGY, **JOR**, MOR, TUN, ARM, AZE, MDA, GEO & UKR)



# Main problems

- With NQFs
  - Little empirical evidence wrt. their effectiveness outside Anglo-Saxon world/Commonwealth
  - Make most sense in countries with very large number of qualifications & providers (see UK)
- With emulation
  - Neglects limited govt. capacities to design & implement NQFs
  - NQFs can remain empty shells

## Figure 2: Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training

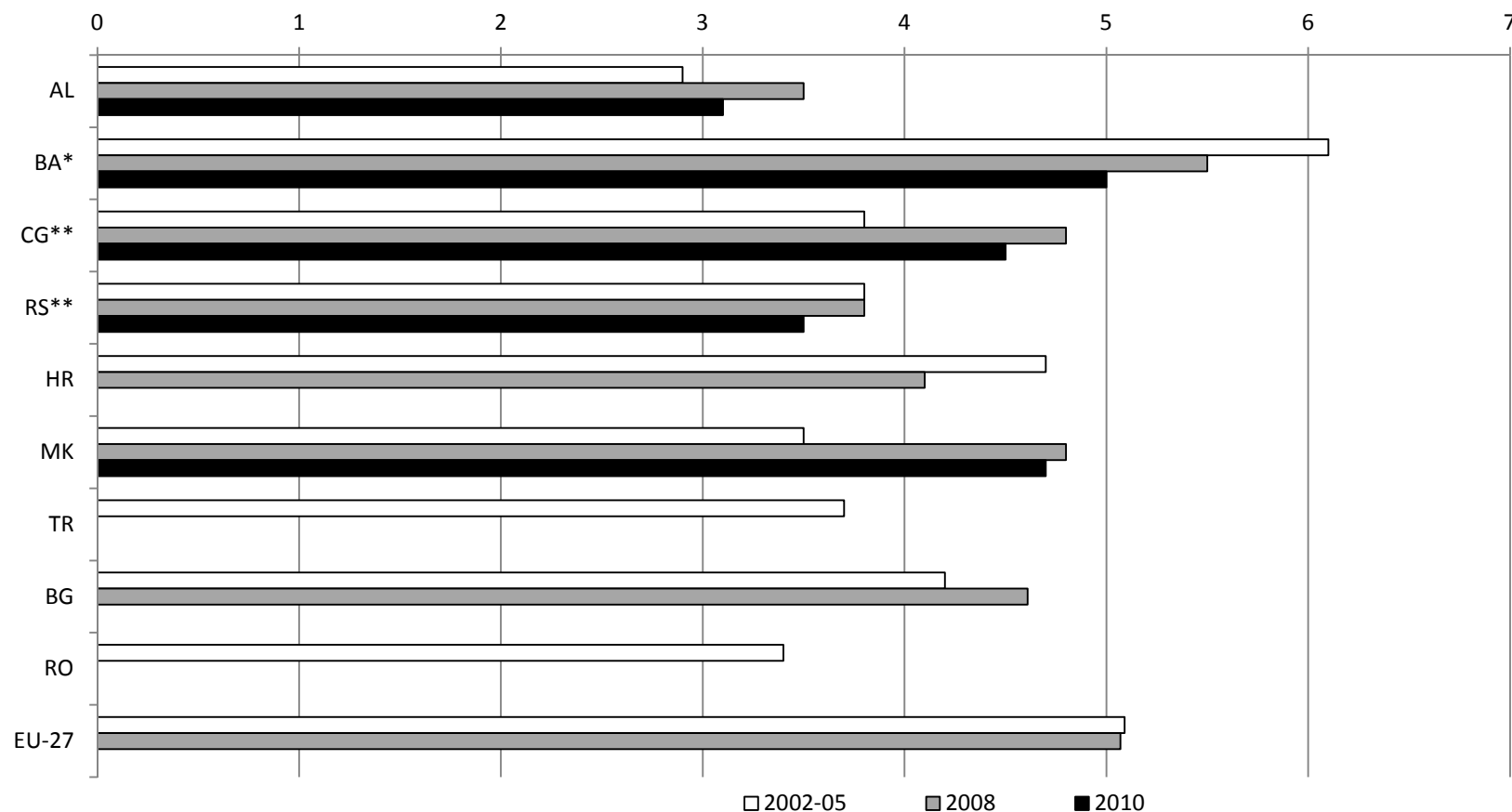


*Source: Eurostat. Unfortunately, no data is available for the other Southeast European states.*

# Main problems in SEE

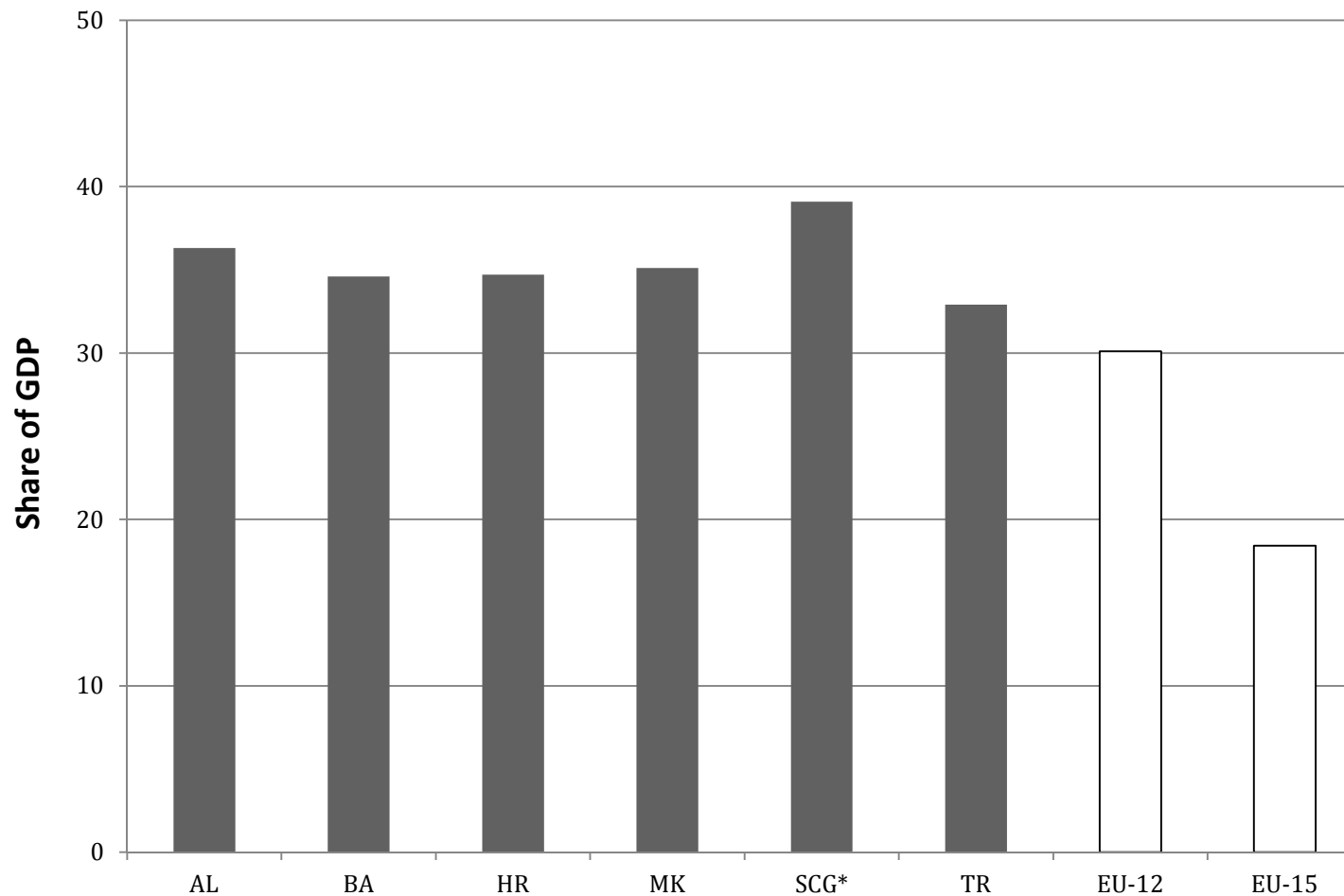
- Chakroun (2010) & ETF identified 4 main issues in SEE, mainly concerning VET
  - (1) Weak policy analysis capacities to identify needs and to monitor and evaluate implementation
  - (2) Linkages between stakeholders and social partners not institutionalised
  - (3) Insufficient public investment in the education sector
  - (4) Large informal labour markets with workers who mostly lack formal qualifications which in turn undermines formal VET schemes

# Figure 3: Public expenditure on education (% of GDP)



*Source: Eurostat & IMF Government Finance Statistics. \*: Data for Bosnia-Herzegovina instead of average 2002-05 only for 2004; \*\*: Data 2002-2005 only for state union Serbia-Montenegro.*

# Figure 4: Estimate of the shadow economy in Europe (average 1999-2007)



*Source: Data from Schneider et al. (2010) & Schneider (2012); \*: Figures for Serbia and Montenegro (SCG) are only available for 2002/2003.*

# Policy conclusions

- Emulation as driver of policy change despite “absence of a sufficient track record for assessing their advantages and problems” (Weyland 2005)
- Most SEE govts. exhibit disproportionately large degree of political and financial attention to highly complex reforms with uncertain outcomes
- Result: Diversion from more fundamental issues (school facilities, teacher salaries, teacher education, VET quality, corruption etc.)

# Tailor-made policies on smaller scale

- Create small innovation and production systems at regional & local levels that are conducive to the establishment of functioning VET schemes
- Incentivise MNCs to provide VET
- Scale-up where this is reasonable & feasible