Report on the Potential for Creating a Nordic-Baltic Space for Higher Education and Training

By a working group appointed by the Nordic Advisory Committee on Higher Education (HØGUT)
Authors

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Report on the Potential for Creating a Nordic-Baltic Space for Higher Education and Training
Möjligheterna att upprätta en gemensam utbildningsmarknad inom högre utbildning i Norden och i Balticum

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Abstract:

The working group was appointed:
1. to identify and report on obstacles, prior requirements and opportunities for working towards the creation of a common education/training space for higher education;
2. to compile a report presenting the group's results and recommendations;
3. to report to the Nordic Advisory Committee on Higher Education (HØGUT) and to submit the (final) report not later than 15 September 1999, so that HØGUT can submit the matter for consideration at the 4th meeting of the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Educational and Research Issues in 1999.
4. to keep HØGUT continuously appraised of the progress made by the group.

The main conclusion of the working group is that there are no formal barriers to the establishment of a common education/training space in higher education for the Nordic and Baltic countries according to the model currently employed in the Nordic countries. The main obstacles to creating a common Nordic/Baltic education and training space are therefore practical. National traditions, as well as differences in economic conditions - both on a national and on an individual level - still constitute obstacles to a free flow of students and academic staff between the countries and will probably do so for the foreseeable future. The working group believes, however, that an education space on a less extensive level could and should be established between the Baltic and Nordic countries and proposes that HØGUT and the Nordic Council of Ministers work towards this goal by promoting action based on already existing contacts and partnerships. The working group recommends improved co-ordination between different existing exchange and partnership programmes and finds it important to support the preparations for EU membership being made in the Baltic States. In its report, the working group has made a number of specific proposals concerning enlarged co-operation between the Nordic and Baltic countries: common curriculum development, EuroFaculty, an extension of Baltech, the arrangement of scientific conferences and extension of Nordic co-operation organisations to include the Baltic states. These recommendations are described in the Summary and recommendations section of this report. The working group also recommends that the following measures be taken in order to facilitate the recognition of degrees, diplomas and study credit points among the Nordic and Baltic countries:

1. All the Nordic and Baltic countries have signed the Lisbon Convention, but not all the countries have ratified it. In those countries, which have not ratified the convention, measures could be taken in order to speed up national procedures.
2. The Lisbon Convention stipulates that qualifications of equal level should be recognised amongst the states that are parties to the Convention (unless substantial differences can be clearly demonstrated). At the same time, the Convention does not state which qualifications can be considered equivalent between any two countries. The working group suggests that, in order to ease recognition procedures among the Nordic and Baltic countries, a recognition manual be created (possibly by the ENIC/NARIC centres). This manual could contain a comparison of education systems and rough recommendations for recognition of the degrees/diplomas of each country in all the other countries concerned. Such a manual might substantially ease recognition work at universities.
3. The Lisbon Convention also covers the recognition of study periods. It is substantially easier to measure the value of periods of studies spent abroad if the student workload has been measured in credit points. The working group therefore recommends action to ensure a faster introduction of the credit point systems (ECTS or national) in all the Nordic and Baltic countries, which do not already have such a system.
4. A recommendation which is not specific to Nordic-Baltic recognition but rather to European co-operation at large, including the Nordic-Baltic dimension, is the promotion of widespread use of the Joint European Diploma Supplement, which was jointly elaborated by the EU, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The Lisbon Convention Committee officially recommended the Diploma Supplement on June 17, 1999 as a tool for implementation of the Convention.

Co-operation in quality assurance of higher education institutions and programmes has proven to be a powerful tool in creating transparency, better understanding and increasing mutual trust concerning the education systems of different countries. There could be considerable advantages in trying to find more common ground between Nordic and Baltic countries in the way institutional assessment is performed. A common publication of assessment results would make sharing experience more effective and increase trust in each other's education systems. The group would therefore like to suggest that the Nordic Council of Ministers takes the initiative in convening a conference focusing on ways of creating some kind of common ground for evaluation and quality assessment in the Nordic/Baltic area.

The working group recommends that each country should publish a booklet with information on national study opportunities -- with special reference to students in the Nordic and Baltic States. It is further recommended that the Baltic States should participate in events such as fairs and information days on educational opportunities in co-operation with the Nordic countries and in the framework of European Union educational programmes. Internet information on different study programmes in the Nordic and Baltic countries needs to be increased and preferably co-ordinated and made available through one web site. The working group therefore recommends that the Nordic Council of Ministers create a "Balt-Nordnet" web site with links to relevant sources. Additionally, information about studies in the Nordic and Baltic States for Nordic students should be created and linked to other relevant web sites in the Nordic countries. Lastly, it is proposed that a special education day be held in all of the Nordic countries at the same time (year 2000 or 2001) in order to create an incentive for Nordic students to study in the Baltic States.

Key words: Higher Education, Co-operation, Internationalisation, the Nordic countries, the Baltic States

Other information
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Mandate of the working group

On 5 December 1997, the Nordic and Baltic ministers of education and research held a meeting in Copenhagen to discuss current and future co-operation in higher education and research. The meeting resulted in a joint declaration, which was further discussed at a meeting of the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Educational and Research Issues on 6 February 1998, which made the decision:

"To urge the Nordic Advisory Committee on Higher Education to pursue the long-term goal of creating a common Nordic-Baltic education/training space, with specific regard to higher education. In taking steps to achieve this goal, the Advisory Committee will appoint a Working Group with Baltic participants. The group will identify and report on the obstacles, prior requirements and opportunities for working in co-operation with the Baltic States, with a view to creating a common education/training space. The Working Group is to submit its report to the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Educational and Research Issues."

Implementing this decision, the Nordic Advisory Committee on Higher Education (HØGUT) appointed a working group. The members of the working group were:

Estonia  Ms Maiki Udam, Head of Division for Higher Education, Ministry Of Education

Latvia  Dr. Jānis Cakste, Director, Department for Higher Education, Science and Research, Ministry of Education and Science

Lithuania  Doc. Dr. Rimantas Vaitkus, Head of Division of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Science

Denmark  Ms Gunvor Barnholt, Chief Adviser, National Education
The following assignments were delegated to the working group:

1. To identify and report on obstacles, prior requirements and opportunities for working towards the creation of a common education/training space.

2. To compile a report presenting the group's results and recommendations.

3. To report to the Nordic Advisory Committee on Higher Education (HØGUT) and to submit the (final) report not later than 15 September 1999, so that HØGUT can submit the matter for consideration at the 4th meeting of the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Educational and Research Issues in 1999.

4. To keep HØGUT continuously appraised of the progress made by the group.

The working group held five meetings. The first meeting was held in Copenhagen on January 19, 1999. During the meeting it was decided that the Finnish Ministry of Education would appoint a secretary, Ms Annika Tigerstedt, to compile the report required by HØGUT. Further it was decided that Dr. Andrejs Rauhvargers, Deputy State Secretary for Education Strategies and International Co-operation, Ministry of Education and Science, Latvia, should attend meetings as a Baltic expert on mutual credit recognition. The Danish delegate to the working group, Ms Gunvor Barnholt, undertook to provide the group with secretarial assistance.

HØGUT, at its meeting on 17-18 February 1999 approved the budget for the working group and the proposals made by the group at its first meeting.

The second meeting of the working group took place in Oslo on March 1, 1999, the third meeting in Riga on April 7, 1999 and the fourth meeting in Stockholm on May 25, 1999. The fifth and final meeting of the working group was held in Helsinki on August 24, 1999.

Having fulfilled the task assigned to it, the working group respectfully presents its report to the Nordic Advisory Committee on Higher Education (HØGUT).

In Helsinki on August 24, 1999.
Ms Maiki Udam          Dr. Jānis Čakste

Doc. Dr. Rimantas Vaitkus          Ms Gunvor Barnholt

Mr Juhani Dammert          Ms Hellen M. Gunnarsdóttir

Ms Gro Beate Vige          Mr Torsten Kälvemark

Dr. Andrejs Rauhvargers

Ms Annika Tigerstedt
secretary
I INTRODUCTION

With the increase in international mobility in general the question of creating a common educational space between countries, or groups of countries, has been given a prominent place in international educational policy-making.

The case of the European Union is well known. In the early days of European co-operation, education was not an area at the focus of interest. Over the years, however, it has become one of the main areas of common interest. Exchange programmes such as Socrates/Erasmus or Leonardo have become success stories. This has led to further developments, which have even put European convergence on structures on the agenda.

With the enlargement of educational co-operation, a number of new countries have gained access to these programmes. In addition to the work previously carried out by the Council of Europe in the field of recognition, a kind of "educational space" has been created, covering a large part of the European continent.

In fact, representatives of 29 European governments who convened in Bologna in June 1999 officially used the concept of a "European higher education area". This conference was the follow-up to a meeting the previous year at the Sorbonne in Paris, where ministers from France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom had pledged to work for the establishment of a more coherent European system of higher education. In the declaration adopted at the end of the Bologna meeting the following statement was made on behalf of the 29 countries:

While affirming our support for the general principles laid down in the Sorbonne declaration, we engage, in co-ordinating our policies, to reach in the short term, and in any case within the first decade of the third millennium, the following objectives, which we consider to be of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide:

- Adoption of a system of readily understandable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens' employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system.

- Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles: undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree, as in many European countries.

- Establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system - as a proper means of promoting widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by the receiving universities concerned.
• Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:

- Access to study and training opportunities and to related services for students
- Recognition and validation of periods that teachers, researchers and administrative staff spend in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.
- Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.
- Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regard to curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

National rules and traditions and differences in economic conditions are, however, still obstacles to a free flow of students and academic staff between countries and will probably remain so for the foreseeable future. Regional schemes have therefore been set up in order to promote co-operation between neighbouring countries. Some of these are combined with agreements concerning free admission or the transferability of grants. Areas with a common language, like the Netherlands and the Flanders region in Belgium, are examples where such a scheme has been established.

When trying to define the concept of "education/training space" one could thus find a number of models. Some of these models are more far-reaching than others. The minimal requirement for an "education space" might be defined as a mutual recognition of credits and degrees. The most far-reaching and ambitious solution at present is perhaps the current Nordic agreement concerning students' right of admission to higher education in any Nordic country.

Nordic co-operation in the field of higher education has long traditions. In the 1970s, agreements concerning recognition of diplomas were concluded between the five Nordic countries. Further conventions on co-operation in the field of higher education date from the early 1990s. In 1996 the countries decided to grant equal admission to higher education to all citizens in the Nordic area. The groundbreaking aspect of this agreement was that it allowed money from the resident country to follow the student admitted to a higher education institution in another Nordic country.

According to Article 7 of this convention, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden pay a yearly sum for every student studying in one of the contracting countries. The payment applies to 75% of the students from each country that are receiving state support for study in another Nordic country. The amount paid to the host country for each student is 22,000 Danish crowns. Exchange students are not included.

During its existence, this scheme seems to have been working quite well. One problem arising at the start was the unexpectedly large number of students from Norway seeking admission to restricted fields (for example medicine and veterinary medicine) in Denmark. This problem has, however, been solved under a mutual agreement setting a limit to the admission of foreign students in the areas concerned.
This specific Nordic scheme has met with considerable interest in other countries. It is obvious that it could in some respect be seen as a model for creating an educational space on a larger scale also.

It seems, however, that a precondition for this is that the participating countries should have a fairly similar economic structure. If the unit costs of higher education varied considerably between two countries, it would probably not be acceptable for the country with lower costs to pay the full fees for students going to the other country.

This is the main reason why the working group believes that the present arrangements for a Nordic education space cannot yet be fully extended to a Baltic-Nordic dimension. However, it is the opinion of the working group that an education space on a less extensive level could and should be established between the Baltic and the Nordic countries. This should take into account existing mechanisms for recognition and the exchange of teachers and students, but also new schemes, which aim at more active promotion of international co-operation in the region.

The aim of the following discussion and proposals is to analyse the opportunities and challenges in establishing such an education space.
II PRESENT SITUATION

1 Structure and Organisation of Higher Education in the Nordic and Baltic Countries

This chapter contains a brief description of the higher education systems in the Nordic and Baltic countries. The systems in the different countries have many similarities, but also some differences, which need to be described in order to determine their possible implications for work towards a common education/training space.

Higher Education in the Nordic and Baltic countries in 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Total population of students in HE institutions</th>
<th>Students in HE as % of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>1 462,130</td>
<td>34,601</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>3 704,000</td>
<td>67,068</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>2 454,803</td>
<td>64,948</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5 275,000</td>
<td>178,000</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>5 147,000</td>
<td>225,000</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>267,806</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>4 392,714</td>
<td>180,741</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>8 850,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

HE = Higher Education

1.1 Higher Education in the Baltic States

Estonia

The Estonian higher education system is binary and consists of universities (ülikool) and applied higher education institutions (rakenduskõrgool). These can be State-owned, public or private. The administration of higher education establishments is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

The right to award diplomas or degrees lies with the State institutions of applied higher education and the public universities recognised by the State. Private higher education institutions require a licence issued by the Ministry of Education in order to carry out instruction on a higher education level. Private higher educational institutions or study programmes are recognised after an accreditation procedure. A private higher education institution has the right to award diplomas only after accreditation.

The Estonian system of higher education consists of six public universities and five private universities, where at least one study programme is accredited or temporarily accredited. The system also includes nine State applied higher education institutions and four private applied higher education institutions, where at least one study programme is accredited or temporarily accredited.
In addition to the institutions named above, there are nine non-accredited private applied higher education institutions in Estonia, which hold a teaching licence granted by the Ministry of Education.

The total number of students registered at universities and applied higher education institutions in 1998/99 was 40,625.

In 1998/99 the study fee was fully State-covered for about 65 % of the students, while 35 % covered the tuition fees themselves.

Estonia has a State Research Council, which gives different grants to the universities and research institutions for research projects, post-doctoral studies and scientific equipment.

**Latvia**

The Latvian higher education system consists of academic and vocational institutions of higher education. The Ministry of Education and Science supervises all higher education institutions. However, the highest deciding body in the field of higher education is the Higher Education Council, the members of which are appointed by Parliament. The Rectors’ Council represents the collective viewpoint of the higher education institutions and co-ordinates co-operation among the individual institutions.

At present there are 33 higher education institutions in Latvia. Of these, 20 are public higher education institutions (19 State and one municipal). Of the 20 public institutions, six are universities.

Of the 13 legally operated private institutions, seven run accredited programmes and six have been granted operating licences. Diplomas from private institutions become State-recognised when the appropriate programme has been accredited. The 1995 Act on Higher Education Institutions regulates the relations between public and private higher education institutions and the mechanisms of higher education quality assurance, each higher education programme having to undergo an accreditation procedure once every six years.

The total number of students at all higher education institutions in the academic year 1998/99 was 76,653. Of these, 68,287 studied at State institutions (and 49,898 at the six universities).

In 1998/99 the study fee was fully State-covered for 32,763 students, while 43,890 students covered the tuition fee themselves.

**Lithuania**

Higher education in Lithuania is provided by State-run institutions. In 1998 the higher education system of Lithuania consisted of 15 higher education institutions comprising nine universities, five akademijas (academies) and one institute. All higher education institutions in Lithuania are of the university type.

The akademijas are more specialised higher education institutions than the universities. Bachelor programmes comprise the majority of all study programmes at the akademijas, which do not have much potential for awarding doctor's degrees and academic titles (professor and docent) because of their more narrow specialisation.
According to Lithuanian law, the existing colleges are not higher education institutions. The possibility of establishing higher education institutions with a high degree of vocational training is currently being debated.

Research is conducted both at the universities and at the research institutes. There are 29 research institutes founded by the Government. The research institutes have some degree of autonomy and are not involved in the education of students, except for doctoral students who can be trained at a research institute jointly with some higher education institution. There are several research institutes and departments at higher education institutions that may conduct applied research. The quality of research on a doctoral level is controlled by the State. In addition, expert organisations such as the Science Council and the Rectors' Conference supervise the level of education and research.

The total number of students registered at higher education institutions in Lithuania is 67,068.

1.2 Higher Education in the Nordic Countries

Denmark
In Denmark, the concept "university" is only used for institutions which offer education up to the highest academic level, that is up to doctoral level, and which at the same time fulfil the obligation of carrying out research. The Ministry of Education in Denmark decides on the general structure and the goals and frameworks of higher education. Decisions concerning the content of studies, use of resources and internal organisation are delegated to the institutions. The research carried out at universities comes under the Ministry of Research.

There are altogether five multi-faculty universities and nine specialist universities/higher education institutions in various fields (technology, agriculture and art) and six music academies.

There are more than 100 higher education colleges distributed across the country. Most of these colleges are rather small (400-600 students) and only offer one or a few medium cycle (3-4 year) courses of education within a particular vocational field. Many of the colleges offer study programmes at the same level as or comparable level to the bachelor's, e.g. the engineering colleges, the colleges of education and the regional business schools. It should be noted that, whereas the universities in other countries offer some of the above courses, in the Danish tradition the specialist colleges handle this.

A total of about 178,000 students are currently enrolled in higher education in Denmark and in 1998 the total number of study places for new students within higher education was 52,000. Denmark has a political goal of 50 per cent of a cohort ending up in higher education. On average, 56 per cent of a cohort begin higher education and 42 per cent finish with a degree.

There are normally no tuition fees for students in higher education, but the students pay for all study materials.

Finland
Higher education in Finland is developed as a system with two parallel sectors, the university sector and the new polytechnic sector, which was founded in 1991.
Today Finland has 20 universities: of these, ten are multi-faculty universities, three are universities of technology, three are schools of economics and business administration, and the remaining four are art academies. All institutions in the university sector are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and all of them carry out research and confer doctorates. Currently there are around 147,000 students at Finnish universities.

The polytechnics are multi-disciplinary institutions of vocational higher education. Polytechnic education emphasises close contacts with business, industry and the services, especially at the regional level. The polytechnics undertake some R&D with a distinctly applied and practical emphasis. There are currently 29 polytechnics, most of which are multidisciplinary. A network of permanent institutions will be fully established by the year 2000. Around 78,000 students are currently registered at polytechnics in Finland.

Students enrolled in regular degree programmes pay no tuition fees. The student unions, however, charge a small annual membership fee. Polytechnics do not charge tuition fees either, but a few institutions currently charge a nominal fee for tuition materials. Fees for the international programmes vary, depending on the programme and the status of students.

**Iceland**

In Iceland all institutions of higher education are subject to the authority of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, except for the Hvanneyri Agricultural University College. The term "háskóli" refers both to traditional universities and to higher education institutions, which do not have any research obligations.

There are currently ten institutions of higher education in the country. Seven State and private institutions offer university degrees, while the others, mainly art colleges, offer diplomas.

The University of Iceland is the largest higher education institution, providing places for almost 6,000 students in nine faculties, all with research and teaching obligations. Approximately 1,200 students are enrolled at the University College of Education, while the remaining institutions are smaller, with student numbers ranging from 50-500.

In the 1997-98 academic year around 7,500 students were studying at the higher educational institutions in Iceland. Students enrolled in regular degree programmes pay no tuition fees.

**Norway**

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs is responsible for all public higher education, with the exception of training for the police and the armed forces.

There are 38 state higher education institutions in Norway, including four universities, six university colleges, 26 state colleges and two colleges/academies of arts, crafts and design. In addition, there are 26 private higher education institutions.
with recognised study programmes, 19 of which receive state funding for (part of) their activities.

The universities are multi-faculty and provide education up to the highest academic level, i.e. including the doctoral level. The university colleges also award doctorates, but in restricted areas of study. The state colleges mainly offer programmes lasting for one to four years, often oriented towards specific professions, such as teaching, engineering, nursing etc., but longer courses and graduate programmes of up to six years have also been introduced at some of these institutions.

Higher education in Norway is in fact gradually moving away from a binary system of strict division between the university and the non-university sectors towards a more uniform system without clear dividing lines. Hence, in 1995, a common law was introduced covering all the state higher education institutions. The most important objectives of this Act on Universities and Colleges (No 22) of 12 May 1995 were to establish a common legal basis for the university and the non-university sectors and to give institutions in the non-university sector a greater degree of autonomy. All the institutions under the 1995 law receive state funding for research and development activities.

Private higher education is regulated by a separate Act (No 53) of 11 June 1986 on the recognition of study programmes at and the state funding of, private higher education institutions, a law entirely administered by the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs. The aim of this law was to give the private higher education institutions greater security academically by introducing a system for the recognition of study programmes at such institutions.

In 1997 the total number of students enrolled at higher education institutions funded by the Ministry of Education was 170,527, of whom 14,133 were enrolled at private higher education institutions.

Higher education is provided free of charge at all the State higher education institutions in Norway.

Sweden

In Sweden, use of the term "higher education" is not restricted solely to traditional university studies, but it also constitutes the collective term for education following on from the upper secondary school.

The central government in Sweden establishes the targets and frameworks for education. Decisions concerning content of studies, use of resources and general organisation are delegated to the institutions themselves.

There are more than 60 institutions of higher education in Sweden today. Most of them are run by the State and some by local government, and a few are private. Three categories are commonly used to describe the institutions of higher education: universities, university colleges and specialist institutions.

The universities have permanent research resources and are divided into faculties. This means that they have permanently employed researchers, conduct research training and are empowered to confer doctoral degrees. Sweden has ten universities. In addition to the universities, three private institutions are also entitled to con-

1 The numbers relate to institutions funded by the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.
fer doctoral degrees. The private institutions are also to a large extent funded by the public sector.

The university colleges vary in size and educational profile. Some of them, like the universities, have courses and programmes up to advanced levels and some research activities. The specialisation or profile of each university college has often developed out of their connections with local trade and industry.

The nine colleges of fine arts offer education and in-service training, and pursue research and development in the arts. A number of colleges of health sciences specialise in education for nurses, midwives, laboratory assistants and other paramedical professions.

A total of about 300,000 students are enrolled in undergraduate studies in Sweden. Higher education is an expanding sector and some 60,000 new admission places will have been established during the 1997-2000 period. Higher education is provided free of charge.

1.3 Summary and Reflections

The Nordic and Baltic higher education systems are very similar in many respects, although the countries define higher education in different ways. The universities and other institutions of higher education are, with a few exceptions, State institutions. In all the countries concerned, it is the national parliament that establishes and, ultimately, governs the higher education institutions. Most institutions are under ministries of education, though some vocational schools, e.g. schools of agriculture, may be under other ministries. Thus, permanent university teachers and other personnel normally enjoy civil servant status.

The Nordic and Baltic higher education institutions as a rule have no formal responsibility for the welfare and social life of their students. Student residences, health care, sports facilities etc. are very often owned and run by foundations/student welfare organisations (which in turn are often owned by student unions), or municipal and state authorities. Tuition at Nordic universities is free and students only pay a small fee to their student union/welfare organisation for the services they receive. At Baltic universities, tuition is free to a limited number of students who have received State funding. On an individual level, Baltic students face high living costs when they study in the Nordic countries, a fact that may inhibit them from applying to higher education institutions there.

In the Nordic countries it is common for students to receive financial support for their studies. The amount and conditions for grants may differ from country to country, but it is normally necessary for students to supplement their grants with working income or loans. There is an agreement between the Nordic countries whereby students who are Nordic citizens either receive loans and grants from the "Educational Loan Fund" in their home country or from that of the country in which they are studying. This also contributes to the "Nordic Higher Education Area". Under the agreement, which is financed by the respective national authorities, citizens of one Nordic country studying in another may apply for financial support.

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2 In Norway, however, the 1995 University and Colleges Act (article 44) provides that the HE institutions are responsible for the students’ learning environment and for co-operation to that effect with the student welfare organisations.
from the "Educational Loan Fund" in the host country if they have lived there for at least two years. In the Baltic States, students are not paid grants for their studies.

The current differences in economic conditions between the countries have to be considered when mobility programmes for the Nordic and Baltic countries are developed: the funding of programmes should be sufficient to promote the mobility of students both from the Baltic to Nordic countries and vice versa. A special quota system, including payment to Baltic students studying in the Nordic countries, might be considered in order to encourage greater mobility.

The higher education institutions in the Nordic and Baltic countries are governed by acts of parliament which lay down the general outlines and goals for the institutions' activities, and by government statutes, which in some cases regulate university activities in detail. The tendency everywhere, however, is towards a higher degree of local autonomy. The national parliaments and governments decide the allocation of higher education funding - through budget allocations - for example according to the number of teaching posts, students and study programmes, and on the basis of results achieved. The underlying principles for these decisions vary from country to country. The common tendency is inclined towards budgeting by results (number of degrees, etc.). The parliament or government concerned confirms long-range plans and forecasts. The higher education institutions in all the countries are autonomous and the institutions are to a large extent able to make independent decisions concerning for example, student admission, course requirements and international co-operation.

All the Nordic and Baltic countries have State research councils that provide the universities/other HE institutions with grants for some or all of the following items: research projects, research professorships, postgraduate and post-doctoral studies, and expensive scientific equipment.

Annual parliamentary appropriations make up the major part of higher education funding in all the countries. A growing proportion of total university resources comes from other sources. Research councils, public or private foundations and grants from European Union research programmes finance a substantial part of university research. Funding from industry, governmental and municipal agencies (i.e. contract research and contract teaching) are becoming more important. Private donations and special historical rights provide other sources of income. The most important funding still comes in the form of parliamentary grants, which finance the universities' core activities.

2 Degree Systems

This chapter will briefly describe the degree systems in the individual countries in order to determine any significant differences between them.

The Ministry of Education in both the Nordic and the Baltic States issues a list of recognised institutions and programmes in the country in question.

The chart on the following page presents a simplified version of the degree systems in the Nordic and Baltic countries.
Education systems in the Nordic and Baltic States (simplified)
2.1 Degree Systems in the Baltic States

Estonia
In Estonia the capacity of studies is measured in credits (ainepunkt). One credit corresponds to forty hours (one study week) of studies completed by a student. The nominal study year consists of 40 credits.

Undergraduate level
"Diploma" studies in Estonia constitute non-academic, applied higher education, which comprises one stage. The study period is from three to four years. "Diploma" studies are specialised higher education during which the students acquire practical knowledge and skills. The acquirement of practical vocational and working skills, including training, must comprise in total not less than 10 credits (15 ECTS credits). The graduates are awarded a diploma after completing their studies.

"Bakalaureus" level studies are the first stage of academic study, during which the student increases the level of his general education and develops theoretical knowledge and skills for the selected area of employment and further study. "Bakalaureus"-level studies are conducted at universities and the length of study is from three to four years. The education consists of research and vocational or creative work and also includes a final thesis. After completing the studies graduates receive a diploma certifying the acquired "bakalaureusekraad".

Graduate level - magistrikraad
"Magister" level studies are the second stage of academic study. The study goals include the acquisition of deeper theoretical and specialist knowledge and development of the students' proficiency in research, vocational or other creative work. The admission requirement for studies leading to a magistrikraad is a bakalaureusekraad or an equivalent academic education. The study period is from one to two years. At the end of their studies, all students have to complete and defend a thesis, which may be of a theoretical or a vocational nature. Graduates receive a diploma certifying the acquired "magistrikraad".

Basic medical study
Basic medical studies are practically oriented. The study period is six years and the level corresponds to studies at the "magister" level. Graduates receive a diploma certifying the acquired Medical Doctor's degree (arsti aste).

Doctoral level - doktorikraad
"Doktor" studies are the third stage of academic study, consisting of comprehensive research, vocational or other creative work and interrelated studies. The admission requirement for "doktor" studies is a magistrikraad or an equivalent level of academic education. The nominal study period is four years. After completing their studies graduates receive a diploma certifying the acquired doktorikraad.

Latvia
Most higher education institutions in Latvia offer both academic higher education programmes leading to academic degrees and vocational higher education programmes leading to vocational qualifications. The study workload is measured in credit points and one credit point is defined as the workload of one full-time study week. One academic year corresponds to 40 credit points.

Undergraduate and graduate level
Academic higher education programmes usually comprise a thesis at the end of each stage and lead to the Bakalaurs (Bachelor's) and Magistrs (Master's) degrees. Bakalaurs programmes are offered in different fields and usually comprise 4 years of study (160 credit points), but at some institutions they may take only three years (120 credit points).

A Magistrs degree is awarded after the second stage of academic education and requires a total 5-7 years of university studies. Bakalaurs and Magistrs degrees are not awarded in medicine and dentistry (6 and 5 years of studies respectively). The degrees in medicine and dentistry are considered equal to a Magistrs, however.

Vocational higher education.
Vocational higher education is based upon a Bakalaurs degree (university-type vocational education). A large proportion of vocational higher education programmes are either organised as 1-2 years of study after the Bakalaurs degree, or as programmes of vocational studies incorporating the standard for a Bakalaurs degree (at least 70 standardised credit points in each academic field). In the latter case, no Bakalaurs degree is awarded, but the holder of the vocational qualification is entitled to continue to study in a Magistrs programme.

Applied vocational higher education programmes (non-university higher education) mainly aim at the acquisition of vocational skills. In some cases, the applied vocational higher education programmes may be organised in two stages. The first stage (college education) lasts two years and leads to a college diploma. The second stage may then be 2-3 years and leads to a diploma in higher vocational education.

Doctoral level
Holders of a Magistrs degree (or the equivalent) may be admitted to doctoral studies. Studies towards the degree of Doktors (Ph.D.) usually last three or four years. Doctoral programmes are available at 12 higher education institutions (including all six universities). At present a higher doctorate degree, Habilitets doktors, exists in Latvia, but this is being abolished. According to amendments to the Act on Scientific Activities, the Habilitets doktors degree may not be awarded after December 31, 1999.

Lithuania
Undergraduate level - Bachelor or vocational studies
A study programme at undergraduate level in Lithuania comprises 160 credit points and lasts between four and five years. Two thirds of the subjects have to be studied at the same higher education institution. There are three blocks of subjects: comprehensive humanitarian and social studies, at least 30% of all credits; fundamentals of the branch of studies, at least 30% of all credits; and specialised subjects, at least 30% of all credits. Graduates at this level are awarded a bakalauras (Bachelor's degree) or aukštojo mokslo baigimas (a diploma of vocational qualification and the certificate of graduation from a higher education institution).

Graduate level - Master's studies and specialised vocational studies
Upon completion of a basic study programme, graduates may pursue specialised vocational studies or studies leading to a Master's degree. These studies last between one and a half and two years (and comprise 60-80 credits). Master's gradu-
ates have to defend a thesis or a diploma project (20 credit points). In some cases students may be admitted directly to the Master's studies. In this case, the studies take 6 years.

Lithuania also has uniform study programmes consisting of both basic and Master's studies (for example, medical study programmes taking 5-6 years).

In addition the degree system in Lithuania comprises vocational post-graduate study programmes (duration 1-2 years). These programmes are very popular and are becoming even more so in the field of engineering.

**Doctoral level**

A doctorate is usually awarded after the candidate has already obtained a Master's degree, a vocational qualification or an equivalent certificate. The education lasts a maximum of four years, one and a half to two years of which are spent completing doctoral courses. The doctoral courses comprise up to five subjects and final examinations, each subject comprising at least 45 hours. Upon completion of the doctoral courses, a doctoral thesis must be prepared and defended publicly to qualify the candidate for the doctorate. Doctoral studies may be jointly organised by higher education and research institutions. The highest academic degree in Lithuania is the *habilituotas daktaras* (doctor habilitatus). This degree is awarded to holders of a doctorate who have published significant results in relevant Lithuanian or international journals, as well as a monograph or a habilitation thesis.

### 2.2 Degree Systems in the Nordic Countries

**Denmark**

So far, Denmark does not have a national credit point system, though some universities have adopted their own institutional credit systems. An increasing number of institutions use the ECTS system for all or parts of their study programmes.

**Undergraduate level**

In Denmark a university course of study consists of a 3-year Bachelor's degree course. The degree studies offered by the universities of Aalborg and Roskilde last four years and begin with a basic course lasting one or two years, which forms a broad and interdisciplinary introduction to the more specialised courses. The study programmes at these two universities are characterised by a problem- and project-oriented approach. In most cases, a degree course is a self-contained structure, and the students choose their degree subjects when they begin their studies.

**Graduate level**

Programmes for the Candidatus (Master's) degree in general require five years of full-time studies, or a Bachelor's degree followed by a two-year course leading to a Candidatus degree (Master's degree). This degree includes a thesis, which requires half a year of work. In a few disciplines (e.g. engineering, dentistry and veterinary medicine) no Bachelor's degree is awarded, but only a Candidatus (Master's) degree after 5-6 years of study. The integration of teaching and research is a fundamental principle at all universities, in order to ensure high standards on all courses.
Some institutions provide opportunities for students to obtain a Master's degree or a Diploma. The admission requirements for these studies may be a Bachelor's or a Candidatus degree and a certain number of years of vocational experience.

**Doctoral level**
The Ph.D. degrees require three years of supervised postgraduate studies. Ph.D. students have to carry out an independent research project and write a thesis on that basis. Furthermore, they must participate in research courses, engage in teaching and co-operate with research groups at home and abroad. Only mature researchers may obtain a Danish doctoral degree (Dr. phil., Dr.scient. etc.), after several years of individual original research.

**Finland**
In Finland, study progress is measured through a study credit system. One credit is awarded for approximately 40 hours of work.

**Undergraduate level**
The kandidaatti/kandidat (Bachelor's degree) is a university degree which requires at least three years of study. It consists of basic and intermediate studies in a major subject, including a Bachelor's thesis, studies in one or more minor subjects and language studies. The minimum requirement for a kandidaatti/kandidat degree is 120 study credits.

Degree programmes at a polytechnic concentrate on a given area of vocational expertise. Programmes may be further divided into lines of specialisation. Several polytechnics also offer interdisciplinary degree programmes. The extent of most degree programmes is either 140 or 160 credits, which corresponds to three and a half and four years of full-time study respectively; an extension of one year is allowed.

**Graduate level**
The maisteri/magister degree (Master's degree) requires at least five years of full-time study (or two years after a Bachelor's degree) and includes advanced studies and a Master's thesis. In most cases, the maisteri/magister degree comprises 160 study credits.

**Doctoral level**
Students may start working to become a tohtori/doktor (doctorate) as soon as they have obtained their maisteri/magister degree, or they may take the intermediate lisensiaatti/licentiat degree (Licentiate's degree) first. Research and the preparation of a substantial thesis are essential requirements for both degrees. The doctoral thesis is published and must be defended in a public disputation.

**Iceland**
In Iceland, degree programmes take from three to six years and at most institutions studies are divided into study credits (námseiningar), 30 credits constituting one academic year of full-time study (one credit equals approximately one week (50 hours) of full-time study), 15 credits constituting one semester.

**Undergraduate level**
Undergraduate-level degree programmes take from three to six years. At most institutions, studies are divided into study credits (einingar), with 30 credits corresponding to one academic year of full-time study. A degree is normally taken in
one major subject. In some disciplines one or more minor subjects may also be chosen. Bachelor's degrees are awarded in various areas of study - B.A./B.Sc./B.Ed. A special three-year programme is offered in Icelandic for foreign students. This programme leads to the degree of Baccalaureates Philologiae Islandicae, the B.Ph.Isl. degree.

Graduate level
Programmes leading to candidate's degrees have a prescribed length of 4-6 years, the shortest (4 years) being the Cand.o econ. degree in business administration or engineering and the longest (6 years) the Cand.med. et chir. degree in medicine and the Cand. onont. degree in dentistry. Other degrees, including the Cand. juris., Cand. teol. and Cand. pharm., all requiring five years of study. Magister (Master's) degrees - M.A./M.Sc./M.Paed - are obtained after 2-3 years of study following the completion of a B.A. or B.Sc.

Doctoral level
There are two types of doctoral degrees awarded at the University of Iceland. The Dr. phil. is a special doctoral programme which lasts three to four years and includes studies in Icelandic literature, language and history. The other type of doctoral degree is not based on a taught or planned programme. As a general rule, this doctoral degree is only awarded to those who have completed a candidate's degree, a master's degree or the equivalent, and it is awarded on the basis of a dissertation that has been submitted to one of the university faculties and publicly defended.

Norway
Norwegian degree programmes vary in length between two and seven years' duration. A credit system is used to indicate the scope of a course of study or a programme: one year of full-time study equals 20 credit units ("vekttall").

The number of degrees awarded by universities and other institutions of higher education vary from one institution to another. The titles of degrees, the examinations concerned, and the normal duration of studies are regulated by royal decree.

The main structure of degrees and the duration of study periods are as follows:

Undergraduate level
Vocationally oriented study programmes of two to four years' duration at the state colleges lead to specific college degrees "høgskolekandidat" (college graduate), or "høgskoleingeniør" (college engineer).

The general first, or lower degree - candidata/candidatus magisterii (commonly referred to as Cand.mag.) - is normally obtained after three and a half (natural sciences) or four years of full-time study. The degree consists of two or more subjects or study programmes, which are studied consecutively. Some combinations of studies may take more than four years. The Cand.mag. degree is awarded by all the universities, all the state colleges and several other higher education institutions, both private and public.

Graduate level
The second, or higher, degree in general consists of one and a half (natural sciences) to two additional years of study. The most common degrees are called
Cand.philol. (humanities), Cand.scient. (natural sciences), Cand.polit. (social sciences) and Cand.san. (paramedical/health education). Some subjects lead to an alternative higher degree, Mag.art., requiring a more comprehensive thesis.

In addition, some university faculties and the university colleges offer vocational degree programmes requiring four and a half to six years of study. The programmes cover areas such as agricultural sciences, psychology, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, law, engineering and theology.

A number of universities and university colleges have also introduced degree programmes, mostly for Master's degrees, modelled on the English education system and designed to further internationalisation. In these programmes, the language of teaching and examination is English.

**Doctoral level**
The doctoral programmes as a rule consist of three years of study after completion of the higher degree or one of the above-mentioned vocational degrees (the exception is Dr.oecon, which requires two years of study). In the humanities, the doctor's degree is called Dr.artium, in the natural sciences Dr.scient. and in the social sciences Dr.polit. There is also a traditional general doctor's degree, Dr.philos. Doctorates are awarded on the basis of high-level research, leading to the successful defence of a substantial thesis.

**Sweden**
In Sweden, a study credit system is used to indicate the scope of a course or a programme. One week of full-time studies corresponds to one credit.

**Undergraduate level**
Diplomas (högskoleexamen) may be issued after studies comprising at least 80 credits.

The kandidatexamen (Bachelor of Arts/Science/Social Science degrees) require studies comprising at least 120 credits. In the main subject, in-depth studies comprising 60 credits are required, including an independent thesis worth a minimum of 10 credits.

**Graduate level**
The magisterexamen (Master of Arts/Science/Social Science degrees) is awarded after studies of at least 160 credits. In the main subject, in-depth studies comprising 80 credits are required, along with one or two independent theses comprising at least 20 credits, or 10 credits each.

The yrkesexamen (professional degrees) may comprise studies ranging from 40 to 220 credits, and some lead to professions requiring registration or special authorisation. Professional degrees may, for example, be awarded in the fields of law, social work, art, medicine, odontology, engineering, education, agriculture and forestry, and veterinary medicine (52 fields altogether).

**Doctoral level**
The doktorsexamen (research training for a doctoral degree) comprises 160 credits and requires a minimum of four years of full-time study. In certain subject areas, a licentiatexamen (Licentiate degree) may be obtained after two years of research training. These studies consist of courses and a dissertation.
2.3 Summary

Although there are some differences between the degree systems in the various countries, the overall structure and length of studies is fairly similar. Differences in degree systems do not rule out the creation of a common education/training space, since the creation of a Nordic education space has also proved to be possible regardless of differences in the degree systems. The main conclusion of the working group is therefore that, according to the rules set by the 15th Convention for Admission and the Lisbon Convention, there are no formal barriers to the establishment of a common education/training space for the Nordic and Baltic countries according to the model currently employed in the Nordic countries. The common trend in society today is towards a more integrated education space, as the Bologna declaration also states.

3 Recognition of Degrees

Recognition is defined as a formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the value of a foreign educational qualification with a view to access to educational and/or employment activities.

3.1 Academic Recognition of Degrees

Academic recognition of qualifications or studies refers to accreditation of studies or qualifications taken abroad as part of a qualification to be taken in the country in question, or in order to obtain the right to pursue postgraduate studies on the basis of a foreign qualification.

Academic recognition is always a matter for the institution to which the holder of the qualification applies for a study place.

If a person who has taken a qualification abroad applies to a higher education institution in a Nordic or Baltic country, the higher education institution in question decides the extent to which the studies abroad compensate for the studies required in the degree programme.

The recognition of foreign degrees for academic purposes is based upon the principles of the Lisbon Convention (in the case of recognition of secondary education certificates for admission to university studies, also upon European Convention No 15), i.e. foreign credentials at an equal level are recognised unless substantial differences in the duration, content or purpose of the studies can be demonstrated. All the Nordic and Baltic countries have signed the Lisbon Convention, but it has not yet been ratified in Iceland, Finland, Sweden and Denmark. The Nordic and Baltic countries (except Latvia) have also signed the UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees Concerning Higher Education in the European Region, 1979 and the European Convention on the Equivalence of Diplomas Leading to Admission to Universities, ETS 15, 1953.

A common Nordic education space

There is quite a long tradition of co-operation between the Nordic countries. In the 1970s, agreements concerning recognition of diplomas were concluded between the five Nordic countries. Further conventions on co-operation in the field of higher
education date from the early 1990s. In 1996, the countries decided to grant equal access to higher education to all citizens in the Nordic area.

A common Baltic education space
The Baltic States have agreed upon the formation of a common Baltic education space. The first agreement to serve the goal of establishing a common education space was when the Baltic protocol on recognition of qualifications in higher education was signed on June 16, 1999 in Vilnius. This protocol will later be signed as an intergovernmental agreement. The agreement will mean concrete implementation by the Baltic States of the Lisbon Convention on recognition. While the Convention states that the parties recognise each other's qualifications at an equal level, but does not specify which qualifications awarded in the different countries are of "equal level", the Baltic agreement clearly states which rights a certain qualification issued in one of the Baltic States confers for the continuation of studies in another Baltic State.

ENIC/NARIC networks
The European Community Network of National Academic Recognition Centres (NARIC) was established in 1984 to disseminate information necessary for the academic recognition of qualifications. The network consists of national centres nominated by the participating countries, which provide institutions and individuals with information on their systems of higher education. Each participating country has a NARIC office. Information on qualifications is disseminated through NARIC, but no decisions on the academic recognition of qualifications are taken. There is a parallel co-operation network between the Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES, also covering the countries outside the European Union, and entitled the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC). The NARIC and ENIC networks engage in co-operation. All the Nordic and Baltic States are part of the ENIC/NARIC networks.

Foreign students wishing to continue their studies in a Nordic or Baltic country on the basis of a foreign academic certificate, diploma or degree must apply to the higher education institution in question direct or to the ENIC/NARIC office in the country concerned for admission and for recognition of their studies.

ECTS - A Common Language of Academic Recognition
ECTS, the European Credit Transfer System, was developed by the Commission of the European Communities as part of the Erasmus programme to provide common procedures for guaranteeing academic recognition of studies abroad. The system provides a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements, and of transferring them from one institution to another. This is achieved through the use of a common ECTS credit unit and a common ECTS grading scale. ECTS also improves access to information on foreign curricula. ECTS makes use of two important documents: an information package, which provides general information on the host institution, as well as detailed descriptions of the degree programmes and courses available, and the transcript of records, which shows the learning achievements of the student prior to and after the period of study abroad. The transcript records every course taken by the student, and includes the number of ECTS credits completed, as well as the grade awarded according to the local grading scale and, when available, the ECTS grading scale. These documents are used by the institutional and departmental co-ordinators appointed by each institution to deal with the administrative and academic aspects of ECTS. When credit points in the Nordic countries are compared, the ECTS system does not generally need to be used, since there are manuals on comparisons of credit points, but if difficulty arises, the ECTS system may be used even then.
3.2 Professional Recognition

Except for the regulated professions, persons with foreign credentials may in principle obtain jobs in the Nordic and Baltic countries on equal terms with citizens with national credentials of the country in question. In practice, insufficient language skills might prove an obstacle, however.

A general system for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications in the European Union and the EFTA/EEA countries has been implemented through directives 89/48 EEC and 92/51 EEC. A third general systems directive, Directive 1999/42/EEC, was introduced on 7 June 1999 for the EU Member States, and is in the process of being extended to the EFTA/EEA States. It should be noted that these directives only concern the recognition of regulated professions, and that it is the individual country that decides which professions are regulated within its own territory. The number and nature of regulated professions therefore differ from country to country. All three directives contain clauses stating that a Member State may not, on the grounds of inadequate qualifications, refuse to permit a citizen of another Member State to take up or pursue a profession the citizen is qualified for in his/her home country, without first examining the citizen's qualifications. If these correspond to national requirements, the Member State cannot refuse that person the right to pursue the activity in question. In cases where the comparison shows a "substantial difference", the person has to be given the opportunity to demonstrate that s/he has acquired any lacking knowledge and skills, either through an adaptation period or an aptitude test. The purpose of these directives is to assist persons who wish to practise a regulated profession in another EU/EEA State.

Of the general systems directives, it is the first, Council Directive 89/48 of 21 December 1988, which is of most interest in this context, as it regulates professions that require higher education taking at least 3 years. In addition, the sectoral directives are highly relevant in this context, as they apply to the professions of medical doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, dentists, veterinary doctors, architects and solicitors (lawyers).

The Nordic countries have signed an agreement whereby a higher education qualification for which the required period of higher education is at least three years, obtained by a citizen of the Nordic countries in one of the Nordic countries confers competence for an official post in all Nordic countries. The main features of this agreement can also be found in the legislation. Agreements exist among the Nordic countries concerning the fields of teaching and health care, on the basis of which a citizen of the Nordic country can obtain comparable competence through his/her education in another Nordic country. The main features of these agreements are also included in the legislation.

3.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

The common trend in society today is towards a more integrated space of higher education, as can also be read in the Bologna declaration. The Lisbon Convention is currently becoming the main legal instrument for academic recognition in Europe. Therefore, it does not seem feasible to recommend an elaboration and signing of a recognition agreement specifically for the Nordic and Baltic countries. However, several measures can and should be taken in order to facilitate recognition among the Nordic and Baltic countries.
1. All the Nordic and Baltic countries have signed the Lisbon Convention, but only the Baltic States and Norway have ratified it. In those countries which have not ratified the convention, measures could be taken to speed up the national procedures.

2. The Lisbon Convention stipulates that qualifications of equal level should be recognised among the states party to the Convention (unless substantial differences can be clearly demonstrated). At the same time, the Convention does not state which qualifications can be considered equivalent between any two countries. The working group suggests that, in order to ease recognition procedures among the Nordic and Baltic countries, a recognition manual be created (possibly by the ENIC/NARIC centres). This manual could provide a comparison of the educational systems and rough recommendations on recognition of the degrees/diplomas of each country in all the other countries. Such a manual might ease recognition work at universities.

3. The Lisbon Convention also covers the recognition of study periods. It is substantially easier to measure the value of periods of studies spent abroad, if the student workload has been measured in credit points. The working group therefore recommends work to encourage faster introduction of the credit point systems (ECTS or national) in all the Nordic and Baltic countries.

4. A recommendation which is not specific to Nordic-Baltic recognition but rather to European co-operation at large, including Nordic-Baltic co-operation, is the promotion of widespread use of the Joint European Diploma Supplement, which has been jointly elaborated by the EU, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The Lisbon Convention Committee officially recommended the Diploma Supplement on June 17, 1999 as a tool for implementation of the Convention.

4 Higher Education Access and Admission Requirements for Foreign Students

In this report, "access" is defined as general conditions which have to be fulfilled in order for a student to be eligible for higher education, whereas "admission" is defined as the specific subjects required, or conditions to be fulfilled, in order to be admitted to specific higher education courses.

"Foreign students" are students who are residents of another country and are studying for a full degree in the country in question, "guest students" or "visiting students" are residents of another country staying in a particular country to study for a limited amount of time, while "exchange students" are residents of another country studying temporarily in the country in question, while taking part in an exchange programme at a higher education institution.

"Undergraduate students" are studying for an undergraduate degree, while "postgraduate students" are studying for a postgraduate degree according to the classification in chapter 2 of this report.

4.1 Access to Higher Education in the Baltic and Nordic Countries

General access requirements in both the Baltic and the Nordic countries are an upper secondary examination or similar qualifications. However, universities are
free to specify which elective subjects must be taken at the secondary school level in order to qualify for admission to a chosen programme.

4.2 Admission to Higher Education in the Baltic and Nordic Countries

In the Baltic and Nordic higher education systems admission to many fields of study is competitive, since demand exceeds the number of places available. In most countries each higher education institution determines which specific entrance requirements are to apply to a particular course or programme, i.e. good results in subjects of particular importance for future studies. Many Nordic and Baltic higher education institutions specify which of the elective subjects that have to be chosen by the applicant at secondary school level in order to become qualified for admission to a particular study programme. Specific skills or abilities may also be required (for admission to programmes in e.g. music, art or sports). Many higher education institutions also arrange specific admission exams for applicants.

In the Baltic States, the number of state-financed places, i.e. the number of places, which are free of charge to students, is determined on a yearly basis. Students are admitted to these places according to their results. The criteria for admission may vary between study programmes – some do not require any entrance exams, while a number of study programmes only accept exams which are organised by the state (exams with a centralised administration) or the higher education institution. Each higher education institution is at liberty to prepare its own criteria for admission, which are announced in the admission rules.

Foreign students

In principle, students coming from countries which are parties to European Convention No 15 on recognition of secondary education diplomas for admission to university studies fulfil the general admission requirements if no substantial differences can be demonstrated (Lisbon Convention). Foreign students normally apply directly to the university at which they want to study and they must normally be eligible for admission to higher education in their home country.

Most programmes are provided in the language of the Nordic or Baltic country in question so that knowledge of this language is often required of foreign students. Some programmes, however, are provided in English, and for admission to these an English language test is often required. In some cases, both knowledge of the national language in question and the English language are required.

Students wishing to apply for graduate level studies in another country are normally required to have an undergraduate degree in their home country. Higher education institutions may have entrance examinations or other additional requirements.

Students wishing to pursue studies at the doctoral level in another country are usually required to have a graduate level degree. Higher education institutions may also have entrance examinations or other additional requirements.

Exchange students

Exchange students can come to the Nordic and Baltic countries through European Union programmes, such as Socrates/Erasmus and Leonardo da Vinci. Students

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3 In Norway, it is decided nationally, on the basis of recommendations from the HE institutions.
from the USA may participate in the ISEP exchange programmes, while students from Nordic countries can take advantage of the Nordplus scheme when applying to other Nordic countries. The higher education institutions often have bilateral agreements with colleges and universities abroad, which also cover exchange programmes. In special cases, students may be accepted from outside the above-mentioned schemes.

Guest students or visiting students
Guest students or visiting students may be enrolled on an individual basis. Guest students are normally not required to have passed a language test before being admitted, but the university may recommend it.

All students who wish to pursue studies in another Nordic or Baltic country are strongly advised to contact the relevant higher education institutions direct to request detailed information on admission procedures.

5 The Internationalisation of Higher Education

International co-operation in higher education represents a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages, in other words well before internationalisation became the catchword in education during the nineteen eighties. Personal contacts between researchers and contacts between research groups have traditionally formed an integral part of academic life in the Nordic and Baltic countries. This takes the form of old forms of bilateral co-operation and of co-operation in new international and European multilateral fora.

However, since the eighties, an emphasis on international co-operation has led to a significant expansion in the range of educational exchanges, largely as a result of a change in national policies and funding. A more systematic approach to international co-operation has increased bilateral student and staff exchanges at university level, and the universities have also joined extensive international networks of co-operation that have multiplied the number of options available to students in international education. Co-operation in higher education has in fact grown so rapidly in recent years that it has proven impossible to obtain exact numerical data on it.

A growing number of students complete part or all of their education abroad, and more and more foreign students are coming to the Nordic and Baltic countries - both as regular students and as visiting students on international exchange programmes like Nordplus, Socrates/Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Tempus.

The higher education institutions make efforts to welcome and integrate foreign students. Intensive courses in the language and culture of the host country are offered. In order to make short-term studies more accessible to visiting students without a knowledge of the language concerned, an increasing number of courses at various levels are offered in English by universities and professional schools.

Some universities and vocational higher education institutions have also introduced degree programmes (given in the English language) modelled on the British education system. It should be noted that some of these courses are available to students on an exchange basis only, while others are open to visiting students in
The courses taught in English often require previous university studies in the field concerned, as well as a very good command of English.

5.1 Organisations for Co-operation within Higher Education

**The Association of Nordic University Rectors’ Conferences**
The Rectors’ Conferences in the Nordic countries reflect a long tradition of co-operation. Since 1995, this co-operation has been formalised through Det Nordiske Universitetsamarbeidet, NUS (Association of Nordic University Rectors’ Conferences). NUS organises and encourages the joint efforts of the national organisations, facilitates and encourages institutional co-operation between universities in the Nordic countries, organises rectors’ conferences every second year for the Nordic universities, acts as a spokesperson for the Nordic universities in relation to the Nordic Council of Ministers, and promotes co-ordination of national activities in relation to European organisations.

**The Nordic Association of University Administrators**
The objective of the Nordic Association of University Administrators (NUAS) is to further the professional competence of university administrators, to disseminate knowledge on good administrative practice, to enhance contacts and to establish networks between the Nordic universities at all administrative levels. At present 56 Nordic universities are members of the association. NUAS co-operates with the Nordic Council of Ministers and other organisations and authorities in order to promote the Nordic educational community.

**The Baltic Higher Education Co-ordination Committee**
The Baltic Higher Education Co-ordination Committee (BHCC) was established in 1994 by a decision of the ministers of education of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The BHECC has co-ordinated the activities of the Baltic States in the field of academic recognition and established quality assessment systems (including joint development of regulations and standards, common training of experts and information sharing on the progress of quality assessment in the countries). It has worked as the counterpart to the Council of Europe Legislative Reform Programme in organising joint Baltic information/training events. In 1999 the BHECC worked out the Baltic agreement on recognition of qualifications within the Baltic Education Space. The committee originally consisted of three participants from each country, representing the corresponding quality assessment centre, ENIC and the Rectors’ Conference. Since 1998 membership has been expanded to five participants from each country. The presidency of the committee rotates – it has been held by Estonia in the academic year 1998/99 and will be held by Latvia in 1999/2000 and Lithuania in 2000/2001.

5.2 Mobility Programmes and Bilateral Agreements between the Nordic and Baltic countries

5.2.1 Nordic Programmes

**Nordplus - The Nordic Mobility Programme for Teachers and Students in Higher Education**
Nordplus was designed by the Nordic Council of Ministers for teachers and students at Nordic universities and other establishments of higher education. Its goal is to strengthen the Nordic educational community. Nordplus is built on a network
of co-operating educational units in the Nordic region, and it is within these networks that Nordplus activities take place. Nordplus student grants are awarded for full-time studies at an undergraduate and graduate level and count in full towards the corresponding national education programmes.

**NorFA - Nordic Academy for Advanced Study: Advanced study without frontiers**
The Nordic Academy for Advanced Study (NorFA), established by the Nordic Council of Ministers, is an institution "without walls" which is intended to serve advanced students and research workers in the Nordic countries. NorFA wishes to contribute to a strengthening of the common base for Nordic participation in European and other international research collaboration. NorFA's work concerns advanced study at postgraduate level (above the Master's degree).

**The Nordic-Baltic Scholarship Scheme for the Baltic Area and Northwest Russia**
The Nordic-Baltic Scholarship Scheme, adopted by the Nordic Council of Ministers, is designed to promote opportunities for students and scientists from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Northwest Russia. The aim of the scheme is to develop long-term collaboration projects in higher education between academic departments or voluntary organisations in the Nordic countries and neighbouring states. This collaboration is designed to promote development throughout the region, the strengthening of democratic processes within the area, and the reinforcement and consolidation of collaboration between the neighbouring states themselves.

### 5.2.2 Bilateral Scholarships in the Baltic/Nordic Countries

**Scholarship funding in the Baltic States**
Estonia provides a limited number of scholarships for foreign students. These scholarships are based on bilateral agreements between the Government of Estonia and other countries. Since 1993 Estonia has financed exchange students for up to 44 months yearly for studies in the Nordic countries (Denmark). Lithuania has a fund for foreign studies, financed from the State budget. Each year about LTL 3.5-4 mill. is allocated for foreign studies. This fund is also used to support programmes and agreements signed between different countries. Of the Nordic countries only Denmark has an agreement with Lithuania. Each year Lithuania finances exchange programmes for up to 40 persons a month.

**Scholarship funding in the Nordic countries**
Under bilateral cultural agreements, the Nordic countries grant funding to students, researchers and experts from numerous countries throughout the world. The Nordic countries offer a limited number of scholarships to foreign citizens for advanced studies or research in a particular Nordic country. In the following only bilateral agreements between the Nordic and Baltic countries are described.

**Denmark**
Denmark has signed agreements with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on the exchange of students, teachers and researchers. The agreements cover 44 months of study yearly for each country. There are also bilateral agreements on project co-operation, especially in the field of Higher Commercial Vocational Education, In-Service Training of Teachers and Headmasters and finally on preparation for EU accession. The last programme includes possibilities for 5
students from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to study one semester of International Economics in Denmark with special emphasis on EU.

Iceland
Iceland provides a limited number of scholarships for foreign students each year. The Ministry of Education awards around 26 scholarships to foreign students in higher education institutions. These scholarships are based on bilateral agreements between the government of Iceland and the country concerned. Bilateral agreements exist with all the Nordic countries. There are no such bilateral agreements with Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania; however, the Icelandic government offers one scholarship every year for each of the Baltic States. These scholarships are for a one-year programme in Icelandic at the University of Iceland. The co-operation started in 1991 and so far around 21 students from the Baltic States have attended courses in Icelandic. Additionally, the Icelandic government allocates a small grant to the University in Vilnius to buy Icelandic books.

Norway
The Central and Eastern European Co-operation Programme
This is mainly a bilateral programme, the overriding goals of which are promotion of democracy and sustainable economic development. Priority is given to co-operation with the Baltic States and Northwestern Russia. The programme covers a wide spectrum of co-operation activities. Higher education and research occupy an important place in the programme, as there is a separate scheme for co-operation within these fields for the period 1997-2001. The scheme is open to higher education institutions, research institutes and organisations, and is targeted towards long-term institutional co-operation.

"The Quota Programme"
As from the academic year 1994/95, financial support from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund has been made available on specific conditions to citizens of certain Central and Eastern European and developing countries for studies in Norway. The aim of the scheme is to help students from these countries to obtain qualifications, which can be of use to their home country. The principle is that the loans are waived for students who receive support under this scheme and return to their home country on completing their studies in order to settle there permanently. In the case of students who choose to stay on in Norway or settle in a third country after graduation, the loans have to be repaid. The name "Quota Programme" refers to the fixed ceiling concerning the number of students eligible for support under the scheme (total 900 per academic year up to 1998/99 - 600 from developing countries and 300 from Central and Eastern Europe; total 1,100 from 1999/2000). To be eligible for support under the scheme, students must be at least 18 years old, and must have been admitted to a Norwegian higher education institution. The universities and colleges administer the admission of students themselves, and the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs allocates places to students under the quota programme, following special application from the higher education institutions. So far, the Baltic States have been reasonably well represented in the programme in terms of number of students, compared with the size of their populations.

Students from the Baltic States receiving financial support from the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund through the "Quota Programme" by country of origin and academic year

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Sweden
The Swedish Institute promotes the internationalisation of Swedish higher education and research by awarding a large number of individual scholarships for long-term or brief study visits to and research stays in Sweden and elsewhere. All countries and all disciplines are, in principle, included in the SI's scholarship programmes. The primary target group for the long-term scholarships are students at advanced or research-student level. The SI's short-term grants are made mainly to enable Swedish researchers and specialists to undertake research in or make study visits to other countries. Grants may also be made for active conference participation abroad. Swedish university departments can obtain funds from the SI for projects co-operation with university departments in Central and Eastern Europe and in Germany.

Guest scholarships for studies or research in Sweden
These scholarships are applied for in international competition and are open to foreign students/researchers who wish to come to Sweden as guest students. The scholarships are only intended for students at advanced university level and for researchers for studies/research work in Sweden at any university or university college. The main purpose of the scholarships is to support foreign students/researchers who wish to enter a programme of further education or do research after completing undergraduate studies or studies at a similar level, who wish to complete studies/research already begun, or who wish to follow certain special courses.

The scholarships cannot be granted for a complete course of study leading to a PhD degree. The scholarships are granted for studies within all subjects, but only where Sweden can offer special scientific or academic advantages not available in other countries. Citizens from any part of the world, except from the Nordic countries, i.e. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, can apply. There are no national quotas. The maximum scholarship period is three academic years but the scholarships are usually granted for one academic year (nine months) at the time. They can also be awarded for shorter study periods.

Visby programme
The Visby Programme is intended first and foremost for well-qualified academic research staff and students from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Northwest Russia. Other categories, which may also be eligible for a scholarship, are students within further education and education at the Master's level, and academic staff.

Scholarships for the Baltic Sea Area are mainly for students, but are also granted to teachers at universities and institutes of adult education. They are intended for long or short periods of study or for visits to Sweden.

Baltech
The University Consortium in Science and Technology, called Baltech, was initiated in 1997 by the rectors of the following seven universities: Tallinn Technical University, Riga Technical University, Kaunas University of Technology, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm Linköping University and Lund University. The Consortium was set up with the aim of providing a solid base for wider partnership and closer co-operation between
these universities in natural sciences, technology and industrial management. In the long-term perspective, the goal is to create a virtual "Baltic Sea University of Science and Technology" based on a number of universities around the Baltic Sea, as a strategic resource for long-term development of education and research to meet the region's needs. Priority areas will include business administration and management, energy-related problems, environmental engineering, information technology and materials science and technology. Other important fields to be covered are the development of distance learning, industrial liaison and university management. Baltech aims to stimulate student exchange, using the existing international Master's programmes at the partner universities.

5.2.3 Participation in European Union Co-operation and Programmes

Denmark, as a long-standing Member State, has participated in EC/EU co-operation in education and training since the 1980s, whereas the other Nordic countries became involved in such co-operation from 1991-92 (Comett II) and 1992-93 (Erasmus). All the Nordic countries have participated in Socrates (education) and Leonardo da Vinci (vocational training) from the beginning in 1995, and will continue to do so in the next phase of the programmes. With effect from 1999, EU education and training programmes will also be open to the Baltic States (in addition to other Central European states, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey). As a result, a wide range of new opportunities for Nordic-Baltic co-operation has become available. In higher education under the Socrates programme, these include the joint development and implementation of curricula, modules and intensive courses, as well as the "consolidation, extension and further development of the European credit transfer system (ECTS), which is designed to facilitate academic recognition". In addition, they include co-operation on projects for institutions "active in the initial or in-service training of staff directly involved in school education"; language projects and projects on open and distance learning, and on information and communication technologies. In the Leonardo programme, pilot projects and language projects are of great interest in this respect.

For the most popular parts of the programmes, however - (Erasmus) student and teacher exchanges under Socrates, and placements and exchanges under Leonardo da Vinci - Nordic-Baltic participation is somewhat hampered by the fact that the Commission does not fund bilateral activities between EFTA-countries of the EEA (Norway and Iceland) and the Baltic States. Bilateral co-operation between these countries therefore requires extra funding, whereas there are no restrictions on co-operation with and between the Nordic EU Member States.

Since the Baltic States are able to join the Socrates/Erasmus mobility programme for the first time in 1999/2000, there are as yet no reliable figures available concerning student mobility between Nordic and Baltic countries under this programme. However, it is expected that the programme will considerably increase student mobility between the Nordic and Baltic countries in coming years and it offers an opportunity for developing student mobility between the countries which should not be overlooked.

*EuroFaculty*

The EuroFaculty was established on the initiative of Hans Dietrich Genscher and Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, then foreign ministers of Germany and Denmark, by the newly formed Council of Baltic Sea States, CBSS, in 1993. Its mission is to assist in reforming higher education in law, economics, public administration/political science at leading universities in the Baltic States; Tartu University, Vilnius University
and the University of Latvia. Funding for the work of the EuroFaculty is provided on a voluntary basis by the Finnish, Danish, German, Norwegian and Swedish governments and by the European Commission.

Universities in the donor countries co-operate with Baltic universities and support the EuroFaculty by providing teaching staff, library resources and computing expertise, receiving Baltic staff and students on mobility visits, and providing many other collegiate services. The directorate of EuroFaculty, located in Riga, operates Centres at each of the above mentioned universities.

To implement its mission, the EuroFaculty (EF) project is pursuing four long-term goals, which should be reached by 2005 at Tartu University, the University of Latvia and Vilnius University:

1) to bring the curricula in each of its mandated disciplines up to Master's degree level into line with the internationally accepted standards of the supporting universities;
2) to adapt the culture of teaching and learning to internationally accepted modes to ensure that the host universities have the means to operate the new curricula;
3) to retrain existing staff and train and develop new staff at the Baltic universities to enable the transformed culture of teaching and learning to become self-sustaining; and
4) to develop libraries and computer networks to support teaching and research at international standards at each of the host universities.

5.3 Instruction Provided in Foreign Languages (English)

The Baltic higher education institutions provide some instruction in the English language. In Estonia the University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Educational Sciences, Tallinn Technical University, Concordia International University Estonia and Estonian Business School arrange certain courses/programmes in English.

In Latvia Riga Technical University, the University of Latvia and the Latvian Academy of Medicine provide courses in English.

In Lithuania Kaunas University of Technology, Kaunas Medical University, Klaipeda University, Siauliai University, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Vilnius University and Vytautas Magnus University currently provide some programmes or courses in English.

All the Nordic countries provide numerous courses in the English language, including full Master's degree programmes. More information on these courses can be obtained through national booklets prepared yearly by the national education authorities in the Nordic countries, or directly from the higher education institutions.

5.4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The working group recommends improved information provision on different existing exchange and partnership programmes. At the moment, resources are divided between several different programmes and projects, on the national, European
and Nordic level. Funding for projects is available through numerous different channels and in addition, there are multiple actors involved in different projects: there is therefore a risk of overlapping, but also an opportunity for achieving a synergy effect. Information on available funding and existing projects needs to be gathered together and presented in a comprehensive way. Each country is recommended to publish a booklet with information on the study opportunities it offers with special reference to students in the Nordic and Baltic countries. It is further recommended that the Baltic States should participate in events such as fairs and information days on educational opportunities in co-operation with the Nordic countries and in the framework of European Union educational programmes. This could be the responsibility of international offices or offices for foreign study in all the countries concerned. Internet information on different study programmes in the Nordic and Baltic countries should be expanded, preferably in a co-ordinated form available through one web site. At the moment Internet information on study opportunities in the different countries is spread over numerous different web sites, which makes it hard for individual students to find the information they need. The working group therefore recommends that the Nordic Council of Ministers create a "Balt-Nordnet" web site, which will also contain links to relevant sources. Information about studies in the Baltic States for Nordic students should also be formulated and connected to other relevant web sites in the Nordic countries.

Although framework programmes are important, it is also vital for different higher education institutions within the Baltic and Nordic countries to form bilateral agreements between themselves. For example, technical universities in a specific field could establish a network of co-operation, utilising Nordic, European or national programmes. The Baltech project is an interesting form of co-operation between technical universities in Denmark, Sweden and the Baltic States. The working group recommends an extension of this co-operation scheme to the other Nordic countries. Extension of this co-operation model to other fields of study should also be considered. A special quota system, according to the model applied in Norway, and including payment to Baltic students studying in the Nordic countries, might also be considered in order to stimulate mobility.

There are several Nordic co-operation organisations within higher education. The working group recommends that the Baltic States should be represented in these organisations. This also includes extending the Nordplus programme (Nordic Mobility Programme for Teachers and Students in Higher Education) to the Baltic States. Inclusion of the Baltic States in this programme would require an increase in the funding allocated to the programme.

The working group further recommends that the Baltic States be included in Det Nordiske Universitetssamarbeidet, NUS. It is the belief of the working group that the Baltic States would benefit from taking part in this co-operation.

The objective of the Nordic Association of University Administrators (NUAS) is to further the professional competence of university administrators, to disseminate knowledge on good administrative practice, to enhance contacts and to establish networks between the Nordic universities at all administrative levels. The working group recommends that Baltic university administrators be included in this association.

The Nordic Grant Scheme for Co-operation with the Baltic States and Northwest Russia gives grants for network building between academic departments and voluntary organisations in the Nordic countries and the Baltic States. The working group recommends that the results from the programme should be evalu-
ated and that the participation of different countries and institutions should be charted in order to reveal trends and developments in this form of co-operation.

The working group considers it important to support the preparations made in the Baltic States for EU membership. This includes measures making it possible for the Baltic States to take part in EU co-operation projects in higher education. The EU Tempus and Phare programmes have already funded several projects in the Baltic States. In addition, the Leonardo programme constitutes a tool for Nordic-Baltic university/enterprise co-operation, which might be utilised more extensively. In the future, attention must be paid to co-ordinating the different programmes and funding tools. More attention must also be paid to information about the different programmes. Multiple impact could be achieved by co-ordinating national projects with, for example, EU projects or Nordic projects.

The working group would like to underline the importance of enhancing the basic knowledge and skills needed in co-operation. Language proficiency and knowledge about the cultures and economies of the other Nordic/Baltic states need to be promoted in all the countries. In order to achieve this, the exchange of students and academic staff should be promoted within the Socrates programmes for the region and the creation of interdisciplinary study programmes and modules at higher education institutions should be intensified.

III SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE WORKING GROUP

In this chapter all the main conclusions and recommendations by the working group are repeated and further elaborated. This chapter also contains some recommendations not mentioned before in this report.

The main task of the working group was to identify and report on prior requirements and opportunities for and obstacles to working towards the creation of a common higher education/training space. In trying to define the concept of "education/training space" one could find a number of models. Some of these models are more far-reaching than others, and the minimal requirement for an "education space" might be defined as a mutual recognition of credits and degrees to secure a free flow of students and academic staff and to attract qualified teachers. The most far-reaching and ambitious solution at present is perhaps the current Nordic system, or "space", which comprises a set of agreements on admission, on recognition of academic qualifications and on the portability and transferability between the Nordic countries of financial support for students. In addition, there are agreements on the recognition of qualifications for medical and paramedical professions and on the recognition of professional qualifications for regulated professions requiring more than three years of higher education. While not directly applicable in our context, these agreements could contribute to the good functioning of the "Nordic space for higher education" in more practical terms.

The main conclusion of the working group is that, according to the rules laid down by the 15th Convention for Admission and the Lisbon Convention there are no formal barriers to the establishment of a common higher education/training space for the Nordic and Baltic countries on the model currently employed in the Nordic countries. The common trend in society today is towards a more integrated educa-
tion space, as stated in the Bologna Declaration. The main obstacles to creating a common Nordic/Baltic education and training space are therefore practical. National traditions and differences in economic conditions - on both a national and an individual level - still constitute obstacles to a free flow of students between the countries and will probably do so for the foreseeable future. It seems that a precondition for a common education space on the Nordic model is that the participating countries have a fairly similar economic structure. If the unit costs of higher education vary considerably between countries it would probably not be acceptable for those with lower costs to pay the full fees for their students going to other countries. On an individual level, Baltic students face high living costs when studying in the Nordic countries, a fact that may inhibit them from applying to higher education institutions there. These reasons constitute the main hindrance to present plans for a full extension of the Nordic education space into a Baltic-Nordic dimension. The working group believes, however, that an education space on a less extensive level could and should be established between the Baltic and Nordic countries and proposes that HØGUT and the Nordic Council of Ministers work towards this goal. The current differences in economic conditions between the countries have to be considered when exchange programmes for the Nordic and Baltic countries are developed: if the mobility of students from the Baltic States to Nordic countries and vice versa is to be promoted the funding of programmes must be sufficient. A special quota system on the model applied in Norway, and including financing of Baltic students studying in the Nordic countries, might also be considered in order to stimulate mobility.

In the opinion of the working group, the best way to promote co-operation in higher education is to base new action on existing contacts and partnerships. Networks based on old contacts can respond flexibly to new challenges. There are several forms of co-operation, which could be promoted through existing networks; for example joint student conferences in the Nordic/Baltic region. The working group also recommends promotion of the organisation of scientific conferences for university teachers and students in the Nordic-Baltic countries. These conferences could be organised through existing co-operation networks. The aim should not be to establish heavy new co-ordinating bodies or other bureaucratic structures. The national authorities should promote contacts and co-operation, but they should be based on direct links between higher education institutions in the different countries. Educational and research authorities and universities should consider how the network between the higher education institutions could be further strengthened, for instance by assigning it a role in the further development of university-industry relations, in promoting recognition of degrees and studies and in planning joint study modules in English. A network like this could also contribute to the planning of EU programmes and other development initiatives in the region. In each country, study courses in different subjects in English are also needed in order to intensify student exchange. Courses in the national language also need to be promoted in each country, as they are needed in the training of teachers.

The working group recommends an improved information on different existing exchange and partnership programmes. At the moment the resources are divided between several different programmes and projects, both on the national, the European and the Nordic level. Funding for projects is available through numerous different channels and in addition, there are multiple actors involved in different projects: therefore, there is a risk for overlapping activity, but also an opportunity for achieving a synergy effect. The co-operation field may seem quite complicated and difficult to penetrate and this may cause an ineffective co-operation between the countries. Information on available funding and existing projects needs to be gathered and presented in a comprehensive way.
The working group finds it important to support the preparations made in the Baltic States in view of EU membership. This includes measures, through which it becomes possible for the Baltic States to take part in EU co-operation projects in higher education. The EU Tempus and Phare programmes have already funded several projects in the Baltic States. In addition, the Leonardo programme constitutes a tool for Nordic-Baltic university-enterprise co-operation, which might be utilised more extensively. In the future, attention must be paid to co-ordinate the different programmes and funding tools. In the future more attention must be paid to information about the different programmes. Multiplier effects may be reached by a co-ordination of national projects with for example EU projects or Nordic projects.

Educational and research authorities and universities should consider how the network between the higher education institutions could be further strengthened, for instance by assigning it a role in the further development of university/industry relations, in promoting recognition of degrees and studies and in planning joint study modules in English. A network like this could also contribute to the planning of EU programmes and other development initiatives in the region.

The working group would like to underline the importance of enhancing basic knowledge and skills needed in co-operation. Knowledge in the languages, cultures and economies of the other Nordic/Baltic states needs to be promoted in all the countries. In order to achieve this, the exchange of students and teachers within the Socrates programmes for the region needs to be promoted and the creation of interdisciplinary study programmes and modules at higher education institutions needs to intensified. In each country, study courses in different subjects in English are also needed in order to intensify student exchange. National language courses need to be promoted in each country, as these courses are needed in the preparation of teachers in the national language

**Common curriculum development**

Support for common curriculum development within the Socrates programme is something for which all the Nordic and Baltic countries are eligible. The working group recommends that common curriculum development at the institutional level should be encouraged between higher education institutions in the Nordic and Baltic countries. It would be easier to start with common programmes at postgraduate level, where different supervisors can be used. At the undergraduate level, institutions could develop common distance education programmes in language learning, engineering etc. The role of the government is to support the initiative financially; official recognition of these programmes is also important.

**EuroFaculty**

EuroFaculty is an on-going co-operation programme between the university of Tartu in Estonia, the university of Latvia in Latvia and the Vilnius university in Lithuania together with universities in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden. Its mandate is to assist the participating universities in the tranformation of the culture of teaching and learning in economics, law and public administration/political science. A further objective is to strengthen the research environment at the involved universities, partly also in order to shift the focus of the education from class-room based lectures to research based studies. The restructuring of the teaching and learning of public administration, law and economics is vital to ensure the provision of human resources with skills relevant to the accession process, and in particular the efficient implementation of the Aquis Communitaire. An important part of EuroFaculty’s activities is to facilitate
exchange of students and staff between the Baltic host universities and those of the institutes in the partner countries.

**Baltech**
The Baltech project is an interesting form of co-operation between technical universities in Denmark, Sweden and the Baltic States. The working group recommends an extension of this co-operation scheme to the other Nordic countries. An extension of this co-operation model to cover other fields of study should also be considered.

**Scientific conferences**
The working group recommends promotion of the organisation of scientific conferences for academic staff and students from the Nordic and Baltic countries. These conferences could be organised through existing co-operation networks.

**Nordic co-operation organisations - Nordplus, NUS and NUAS**
There are several Nordic co-operation organisations within higher education. The working group recommends that the Baltic States should be represented in these organisations. This includes extending the Nordplus-programme (Nordic Mobility Programme for Teachers and Students in Higher Education) to the Baltic States. Inclusion of the Baltic States in this programme would require the funding awarded to the programme to be expanded.

The working group further recommends that the Baltic States be included in Det Nordiske Universitetssamarbeidet, NUS (Association of Nordic University Rectors' Conferences). NUS organises and stimulates common efforts of the national organisations, facilitates and stimulates institutional co-operation between universities in the Nordic countries, organises rector's conferences every second year for the Nordic universities, acts as a spokesperson for the Nordic universities in relation to the Nordic Council of Ministers, and promotes co-ordination of national activities in relation to European organisations. It is the belief of the working group that the Baltic States would benefit from taking part in this co-operation.

The objective of the Nordic Association of University Administrators (NUAS) is to further the professional competence of university administrators, to disseminate knowledge on good administrative practice, to enhance contacts and to establish networks between the Nordic universities at all administrative levels. At present 56 Nordic universities are members of the association. NUAS co-operates with the Nordic Council of Ministers and other organisations and authorities in order to promote the Nordic educational community. The working group recommends that Baltic university administrators be included in this association.

**Recognition of degrees**
The Lisbon Convention is currently becoming the main legal instrument for academic recognition in Europe. Therefore, it does not seem feasible to recommend the formulation and signing of an recognition agreement specifically for the Nordic and the Baltic countries. However, several measures can, and should, be taken to facilitate recognition among the Nordic and Baltic countries.

1. All the Nordic and the Baltic countries have signed the Lisbon Convention,
but not all the countries have ratified it. In those countries which have not ratified the convention, measures could be taken to speed up national procedures.

2. The Lisbon Convention stipulates that qualifications at an equal level should be recognised among the states party to the Convention (unless substantial differences can be clearly demonstrated). At the same time, the Convention does not state which qualifications can be considered equivalent between any two countries. The working group suggests that, in order to further the recognition procedures among the Nordic and Baltic States, a recognition manual be created (possibly by the ENIC/NARIC centres). This manual could contain a comparison of the educational systems and rough recommendations on recognition of the degrees/diplomas of each country in all the other countries involved. Such a manual might ease the recognition work being done by the universities.

3. The Lisbon Convention also covers the recognition of study periods. It is substantially easier to measure the value of periods of studies spent abroad, if the student workload has been measured in credit points. The working group therefore recommends the promotion of faster introduction of the credit point systems (ECTS or national) in all the Nordic and Baltic countries.

4. A recommendation which is not specific to Nordic-Baltic recognition but rather to European co-operation at large, including Nordic-Baltic co-operation, is promotion of widespread use of the Joint European Diploma Supplement, which was jointly formulated by the EU, the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The Lisbon Convention Committee officially recommended the Diploma Supplement on June 17 1999 as a tool for implementation of the Convention.

Co-operation in Quality Assessment

Quality assessment co-operation between higher education institutions and higher education programmes has proven to be a powerful tool in creating transparency and better understanding and in increasing mutual trust in the education systems of other countries.

Over the past few years, mechanisms for the regular evaluation and enhancement of institutional quality have been created in both the Nordic and Baltic countries. Special agencies for promoting and controlling quality have been set up in some of the countries, and the development of evaluation procedures has been given high priority in the reform process going on in other countries.

There could be considerable advantages in trying to find more common ground between Nordic and Baltic States in the way institutional assessment is performed. Use of each other's experts in review teams assessing study programmes and higher education institutions not only adds to the credibility of the assessment; even more important is that it furthers the goal of better understanding of each other's information and feedback systems. Joint publication of assessment results would make experience-sharing more effective and increase trust in each other's education systems.

A common theoretical and practical base would also facilitate mutual co-operation in regular assessments of quality. It could also be an important factor in relations between the Nordic/Baltic area and other countries related to the exchange of students and teachers.

The group would therefore like to suggest that the Nordic Council of Ministers takes the initiative of convening a conference focusing on ways of creating some
kind of common ground for evaluation and quality assessment in the Nordic/Baltic area.

**Information on study opportunities**
Lack of information on studies and opportunities in the Baltic States is recognised as an obstacle to greater mobility of students or teachers from the Nordic countries to educational institutions in the Baltic States. Additionally, information on study opportunities in the Nordic countries could be targeted more at Baltic students and teachers.

It is important for a student who wants to study abroad to be able to obtain information about the higher education sector easily - for example, information on educational programmes, courses offered and on practical questions such as admission requirements, financing, housing etc. Information of this kind is a prerequisite for mobility between these countries. However, it is also important for this information to be available to the target population, i.e. students in the Nordic countries or the Baltic States respectively. - It is recommended that each country publish a booklet with information on study opportunities in that particular country, with special reference to students in the Nordic and Baltic countries. It is further recommended that the Baltic States should participate in events such as fairs and information days on educational opportunities in co-operation with the Nordic countries and in the framework of European Union educational programmes. This could be the responsibility of International offices or offices for foreign study in all the countries concerned.

**Preparation of Web Site**
Internet information on different study programmes in the Nordic and the Baltic States needs to be promoted, preferably Internet information should be co-ordinated and available through one web site. At the moment Internet information on study opportunities in the different countries is spread out on numerous different web sites, which makes it hard for individual students to find the information they need. The working group therefore recommends that the Nordic Council of Ministers create a "Balt-Nordnet" a web site, which also contains links to relevant sources. Additionally, information about studies in the Baltic States for Nordic students should be established and connected to other relevant web-sites in the Nordic countries.

**Educational day in the Nordic countries**
Mobility of students between the Baltic and Nordic countries is unbalanced, as more students go to the Nordic countries from the Baltic States than vice versa. It is proposed that a special educational day be held in all the Nordic countries at the same time (2000 or 2001) in order to create incentive for Nordic students to study in the Baltic States.

**Non-academic and informal events**
Other non-academic and informal events might also be arranged in order to further co-operation between the countries. The Baltic States traditionally organise song festivals and sports events jointly. These events could be extended to include participants from the Nordic countries.
Appendix 1

International Agreements between the Nordic and the Baltic countries in the Field of Higher Education

Agreements between the Baltic States
An agreement between the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the creation of a common education space on higher education within the Baltic States is currently being prepared. In addition to this the Baltic States have individual agreements with the Nordic countries.

Agreements between the Nordic countries
The Nordic countries have several agreements within the educational field:
I Nordic agreement on access to higher education of 3 September 1996
II Nordic agreement on mutual recognition of qualifications from higher education of 12 June 1975
III Nordic agreement of 24 October 1990 on a Nordic employment market for persons with a professional (vocational) qualification requiring at least 3 years of higher education
IV Agreement on a common Nordic employment market for certain professions within the health and veterinary sectors, signed 14 June 1993 and valid as from 1 January 1994

Agreements between the Baltic and the Nordic countries

Estonia
- Agreement on co-operation between the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Estonia and the Danish Ministry of Education Concerning Education and Research (1994); exchange of students and academic staff

- Protocol of negotiation between the commission of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Estonia, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Estonia and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Finland concerning exchange of teaching staff (renewal every three years)

Latvia
- Agreement between the governments of Latvia and Finland on co-operation in culture, education and science, 10.09.96
- Agreement between the ministries of Education of Denmark and Latvia on co-operation in the field of exchange of students and academic staff
- Agreement between the Stockholm School of Economics and the Government of Latvia on establishing of Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, 30.06.93
- Agreement between the Governments of Latvia and Sweden on the establishment of Graduate school of law in Riga.

Lithuania
Lithuanian students and researchers can apply for a scholarship going for studies abroad on their own initiative, according to agreements between universities or within the framework of bilateral agreements on co-operation in the field of higher education and science between governments or relevant ministries.

Lithuania has the following bilateral agreements with the Nordic countries:
- Agreement on co-operation between the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science and the Danish Ministry of Education concerning Education and Research; exchange of students and academic staff
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Government of the Republic of Finland on co-operation in the fields of culture, education and science

Foreign students and researchers nominated by their own authorities can apply for a scholarship in the framework of bilateral intergovernmental agreements on co-operation in the field of higher education and science following the quota and terms provided for in the agreements. In case no such agreement exists, a foreigner can seek financial aid from the government of Lithuania for Lithuanian studies only.
Appendix 2.

Responsible Bodies for the Administration of International Programmes based on Bilateral Agreements in the Nordic and Baltic Countries

**Estonia**
Estonian Ministry of Education
Tonismägi 9/11
15192 Tallinn
Estonia
Tel +372 6 281 333
Fax +372 6 311 213
E-mail hm@hm.ee
www.ee/HM

**Latvia**
Ministry of Education and Science,
Valnu iela 2, LV-1050 Riga, Latvia,
Phone +371-7-222415
Fax +371-7-213992
http://www.iclub.lv/izm/
e-mail to the person in charge of international co-operation, Mr Andrejs Rauhvargers: andrejs@apa.lv

**Denmark**
The Secretariat of the Danish Rectors' Conference
Vester Voldgade 121 A, 4. sal
DK-1552 Københavvn V
Tel. +45 33 92 54 09
Fax +45 33 92 50 75
E-mail: vh@rhs.dk

**Iceland**
The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
Sölvhólsgata 4
IS-150 Reykjavik
Iceland
tel. +354 560 9500
Fax +354 562 3068
E-mail: postur@mrn.stjr.is

**Norway**
Norges forskningsråd/The Research Council of Norway
Postboks 2700 St. Hanshaugen
N-0131 Oslo
Tel. +47 22 03 70 00
Fax +47 22 03 70 01
E-mail: bibliotek@forskningsradet.no
X400: S=bibliotek; P=forskningsradet; A=telemax; C=no;
Internet: http://www.forskningsradet.no

Senter for internasjonalt universitetssamarbeid/
References

Literature

Key topics in education, Volume I, Financial support for students in higher education in Europe, Trends and debates. European Commission DG XXII, Eurydice

Links
http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/Files/dossier.htm

Baltic States

Addresses:
Baltic Higher Education Co-ordination Committee. Contact person: Andrejs Rauhvargers, Latvian Ministry of Education and Science, valnu iela 2, LV-1050 Riga, Latvia, phone +371-7-229735, fax +371-7-221006, e-mail andrejs@apa.lv or enic@izm.gov.lv.

Estonia

Literature:
Higher education system and qualifications in Estonia, Eesti ENIC/NARIC, 1999

Links:
http://www.euedu.ee/socrates

Addresses:
The Ministry of Education
Tõnismägi 9/11
15192 Tallinn
Estonia
Phone: +372 6 281 333
Fax: +372 6 311 213
E-mail: hm@hm.ee

The Socrates Estonian National Agency
Kohtu 6
Tallinn EE0100
Estonia
Phone: +372 6 962 413
Fax: +372 6 962 426
E-mail: arch@euedu.ee

Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre
Academic Recognition Information Centre
Kohtu 6
Tallinn 10130
Estonia
Phone: +372 6 962 415
Fax: +372 6 962 426
E-mail: gunnar@euedu.ee

Estonian Research and Development Council
Kohtu 6
Tallinn 10130
Estonia
Phone: +372 6 311 072

Higher Education Quality Assurance Council
Ehitajate tee 5
Tallinn 19086
Estonia
Phone: +372 6 202 114
Fax: +372 6 202 101

Higher Education Quality Assessment Centre
Kohtu 6
Tallinn 10130
Estonia
Phone: +372 6 962 425
Fax: +372 6 962 427

The Socrates Estonian National Agency
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Estonia
Phone: +372 6 962 413
Fax: +372 6 962 426
E-mail: arch@euedu.ee

Latvia

Literature:
Higher Education in Latvia. Academic Information Centre - Latvian ENIC/NARIC,
Riga 1998/99

Links:
Ministry of Education and Science
http://www.iclub.lv/izm/

Academic information centre:
http://www.aic.lv

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
http://www.mfa.gov.lv/eframe.htm

Addresses:
Ministry of Education and Science,
Valnu iela 2, LV-1050 Riga, Latvia,
Phone +371-7-222415
Fax +371-7-213992
http://www.iclub.lv/izm/
E-mail to the person in charge of international co-operation, Mr Andrejs Rauhvargers: andrejs@apa.lv

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Brivibas bulv 36, LV-1395, Riga, Latvia
Telephone: +371-7-016210
Fax: (+371) 7828121
http://www.mfa.gov.lv/eframe.htm

Academic Information centre (Latvian ENIC/NARIC),
Valnu iela 2, LV-1050 Riga, Latvia
Phone +371-7-225155
Fax +371-7-221006
E-mail: ieva@apa.lv or enic@izm.gov.lv

Lithuania

**Literature:**
State Higher Education and Research Institutions in Lithuania, Short guide.
Lithuanian Information Institute, Vilnius 1998

**Links:**

**Addresses:**

Nordic countries

**Literature:**

Fakta och tips om att studera i Norden. Nordiska ministerrådet 1996.

Higher Education and Research in the Nordic countries. Nordic Council of Ministers 1998


**Links:**
Higher Education in the Nordic countries
http://www.abo.fi/norden/

**Addresses to Nordic Institutions and Organisations:**
Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers
Store Strandstræde 18
DK-1255 København K
tel. +45 33 96 02 00
Fax +45 33 96 02 02
http://www.norden.org
Denmark

**Literature:**

Dan-Eurashe


Studying in Denmark, Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997

The Education system. Education in Denmark, Ministry of Education 1998

Quality Assessment of Higher Education in Denmark. Chairmanship of the National Advisory Boards on Higher Education 1992

Why Denmark - The Pleasure of your Stay. Danske Studerendes Faellesråd m.fl, 1992

**Links:**

Ministry of Education
http://www.uvm.dk
Ministry of Research and Information Technology  
http://www.fsk.dk

The Secretariat of the Danish Rectors' Conference  
http://www.rks.dk

**Addresses:**

Ministry of Education  
Frederiksholms Kanal 21-25  
DK-1220 København K  
Tel. +45 3392 5000  
Fax +45 3392 5547  
E-mail: uvm@uvm.dk

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Asiatisk Plads 2  
DK-1448 København K  
Tel. +45 33 92 00 00  
Fax +45 32 54 05 33  
E-mail: um@um.dk

Danish Evaluation Institute  
Østbanegade 55  
DK-2100 København Ø  
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Fax +45 35 55 10 11  
E-mail: eval@eval.dk

Rektorskollegiets Sekretariat  
The Secretariat of the Danish Rectors' Conference  
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Fax +45 33 92 50 75  
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Fax +45 86 61 49 09  
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Forskerakademiet  
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Fax +45 86 14 48 71  
E-mail: academy@danphd.dk

*The Faroe Islands*

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Greenland

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tel. +299 32 45 66
Fax +299 32 47 11
E-mail: university@greennet.gl

Finland

**Literature:**
An overview of Higher Education in Finland. A brochure on the opportunities offered by Finnish universities and polytechnics. CIMO 1997


Educational and Vocational Guidance in Finland. The Ministries of Labour and Education, National Board of Education and CIMO 1998

Higher Education in Finland. An introduction. CIMO 1997

Higher Education Policy in Finland. The Ministry of Education 1998

Living in Finland. A practical guide for international students and trainees. CIMO 1997.


Open University in Finland. Ministry of Education 1997

Polytechnics in Finland. CIMO 1997.

Recognition of qualifications taken outside Finland. National Board of Education 1998

Research in Finland. Ministry of Education 1999

Scholarships for international post-graduate students and young researchers in Finland. CIMO 1998

Study in Finland. International Programmes in Finnish Higher Education. Annual guide to international programmes at Finnish universities and polytechnics. CIMO

Suomea, Finska, Finnish. An annual guide to studies in Finnish language and culture both in Finland and at universities abroad. CIMO

Universities 1998. Ministry of Education
Links:
http://virtual.finland.fi

Information Resource map of Finland
http://www.funet.fi/resources/maps

Statistics Finland
http://www.stat.fi/sf/home.html

Education in Finland
http://www.edu.fi

Ministry of Education
http://www.minedu.fi

CIMO
http://www.cimo.fi

Information for International Students
http://www.syl.helsinki.fi

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FIN-00531 Helsinki
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http://www.cimo.fi
E-mail: cimoinfo@cimo.fi

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Fax +358 9 135 9335
http://www.minedu.fi

Academy of Finland
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FIN-00501 Helsinki
Finland
Tel. +358 9 774 881
Fax +358 9 7748 8299
http://www.aka.fi

Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council
P.O. Box 20
FIN-00501 Helsinki
Tel. +358 9 7748 8411
Fax +358 9 7748 8414
http://www.minedu.fi/asiant/kka.htm
Iceland

**Literature:**

University of Iceland. Information brochure.


University of Iceland. Information booklet for exchange students at the University of Iceland.

**Links:**
The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture  
http://www.mrn.stjr.is

Office of International Education, University of Iceland  
http://www.rhi.hi.is/HI/Stofn/ASK/

**Addresses:**
The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture  
Sölvhólsgata 4  
IS-150 Reykjavik  
Iceland  
Tel. +354 560 9500  
Fax +354 562 3068  
E-mail: postur@mrn.stjr.is

The Office of International Education  
University of Iceland  
Neshagi 16  
IS-107 Reykjavik  
Iceland  
Tel. +354 5254311  
Fax +354 5255850  
E-mail: ask.@rhi.hi.is

Norway

**Literature:**
Education in Norway. Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet 1997
Fact sheets on Norway. Available in several languages from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, fax. +47 22 24 27 81


Higher Education in Norway - the University System. The Norwegian Council of Universities 1997


Statistikk om Høgre utdanning 1998: økonomi, studenter, ansatte. Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste


Links:
Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs
http://odin.dep.no/kuf/publ/publ.html

Network Norway Council - including National Academic Information Centre (NAIC, Norwegian ENIC/NARIC)
http://www.nnr.no

Center for International University Co-operation
http://www.siu.no

The Research Council of Norway
http://www.forskningsradet.no

Norwegian Social Science Data Services
http://www.nsd.uib.no/dbhvev/

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N-0033 Oslo
Tel. +47 22 93 25 00
Fax +47 22 93 25 01

Centre for International University Co-operation
Sweden

**Literature:**

Internationella trender på högskoleområdet. Omvärldsanalys för högskolan, arbetsrapport nr 2, Högskoleverket 1999


Additional fact sheets on Sweden, brochures about higher education and information about scholarships are available from the Swedish Institute in printed and electronic form (see Addresses)

**Links:**
Links to higher education institutions
http://www.sunet.se/sweden/education_universities.html

ASKen - database in Swedish with information about all the courses, programmes and institutions of higher education
http://asken.hsv.se

**Addresses:**
Svenska institutet
The Swedish Institute
P.O. Box 7434
SE-103 91 Stockholm
Tel. +46 8 789 2000
Fax +46 8 207 248
http://www.si.se

Högskoleverket
National Agency for Higher Education
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http://www.hsv.se