

BFUG8 4a(ii)

**BOLOGNA PROCESS  
TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2005-2007**

**Draft:** 22 March 2006

**Notes:**

The deadline for submitting National Reports is **Friday 15 December 2006**.

BFUG members are encouraged to consult other stakeholders about the contents of their National Report.

Please complete your National Report in English using this template and return it to the Secretariat by email. Your report should not exceed **20 pages in length**, using Times New Roman font size 12. Where appropriate, please include precise web references to legislation or other documentation. For any topic where there has been no change since 2005, please refer to your National Report for the Bergen conference.

Please attach your country's action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications.

National Reports will be posted on the Bologna website in their original form.

Information from National Reports will form the basis of the Stocktaking Report to be presented to Ministers when they meet in London in May 2007.

This template has three sections:

- A. Background information on your Higher Education system
- B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements
- C. Current issues in Higher Education.

Elements that will inform the scorecard element of stocktaking are clearly indicated in the template.

Information for the stocktaking, including the scorecard element, will also be drawn from the Eurydice survey "Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe". These elements are also indicated in the template. Please use your National Report to supplement, but not repeat, your country's input to the Eurydice survey.

**A. Background information on your Higher Education system  
Details**

|                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Country                     | The Republic of Moldova     |
| Date                        | 18.12.2006                  |
| BFUG member (one name only) | Viorelia Moldovanu-Batrinac |

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|----------------------------|--|
| Position                   | Deputy-minister  |
| Email address              | vick1@mail.md  |
| Contributors to the report | Galina Bulat, Head of the Department of Higher Education; <a href="mailto:superior@edu.md">superior@edu.md</a><br>Ludmila Pavlov, Head of the Department of International Relations <a href="mailto:international@edu.md">international@edu.md</a> |

## Main achievements since Bergen

### 1. Describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms, since Bergen.

Complying with the legislative amendments of 2005, all higher education institutions have implemented 2 cycle system – ((Licentiate equivalent with Bachelor) and Master) – starting with the 2005-2006 academic year new rules are applied to all the students enrolled in this year.

The enrolment in higher education institutions is performed on the basis of The Classification of Fields and Specializations in HE for the first cycle, according to ISCED / EUROSTAT the requirements of the national and European labour markets.

ECTS is introduced on the basis of legislative amendments in all the higher education institutions.

The following documents were drawn up to adjust the national legislation to the international requirements, including those recommended by the Bologna Process:

- The Concept of Modernization of the Education System in the Republic of Moldova, which was approved by the Government and now is being examined by the Parliament;
  - Draft paper of Higher Education Law - a component part of a set of laws on education, elaborated based on Concept of Modernization, which at present is being examined by the Government;
- Other documents drawn up are:
- The Program of Modernization of the educational system in the Republic of Moldova for 2005-2008, approved by a Government decision;
  - A working plan for 2005-2010 approved by the Ministry of Education and Youth to *adjust the higher education system to the European one in compliance with the goals and principles of the Bologna Process*;
  - Framework for cycle 1 Curricula elaboration (Bachelor's studies) approved by the Ministry of Education and Youth;
  - Guide to implement the National Credit System, approved by the Ministry Board.

## National organisation

2. Describe any changes since Bergen in the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their roles.

Please include:

- whether higher education institutions (HEIs) report to /are overseen by different ministries
  - how funds are allocated to HEIs
- areas for which HEIs are autonomous and self governing.

The Ministry of Education and Youth is the central body of public administration of the education system, which develops strategies and promotes the state policy in higher education through Higher Education Departments.

The other five ministries manage the activity of several specialized higher education institutions: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence.

The ministries that supervise higher education institutions determine the main strategy of specialized higher education development. They also finance and monitor the activity of these institutions. The common principles of organization and development of the educational process in the institutions supervised by other ministries are directed by the Ministry of Education and Youth.

Higher education institutions participate directly or through their representatives (Rectors' Conference) in the implementation of reforms, promoted by the Ministry of Education and Youth, in the elaboration of legislative acts, which regulate the organization and functioning of higher education system.

The legislation in force stipulates university autonomy in terms of administration, teaching and research activity, management and financing.

Private higher education institutions are authorised by the Licensing Chamber – a central public authority that issues licences and coordinated with the Ministry of Education.

### 3. Describe any changes since Bergen to the institutional structure

Please include:

- the number of public/private HEIs
- are there different types of institutions delivering higher education (i.e. academic/professional, university/non-university etc.)
- the number/percentage of students admitted in academic session 2006-2007 to each type of institution
- the extent to which different types institutions are covered by the same regulations.

There are 16 public and 15 private higher education institutions in the Republic of Moldova with an overall number of students of 126 thousand, 80% of which are studying in public institutions and 20 % - in private ones.

There are 180 specialties in the higher education institutions.

The higher education system in the Republic of Moldova includes universities, academies and institutes. The system also includes two institutions, which offer post graduate continuous training. These are: The Academy of Public Administration by President's Office of Republic of Moldova and the State Institute for Continuous Training.

The number of students admitted in national institutions of higher education in the academic session 2006-2007 is 25099, inclusively 87,8 % - in universities, 10,4 % - in academies, and 1,8 % - in institutes .

Both public and private higher education institutions function within a common legal framework. Curriculum design, admission, graduation, employment of teaching staff complies with the requirements established by the Ministry of Education and Youth, and are equally applied both for public and private institutions.

Establishment and disbandment procedures as well as financing of public and private institutions are completely different. Public institutions are established and disbanded on Government's initiative. The decision is further promulgated by a presidential decree. Private institutions are founded on the initiative of physical persons and function on the basis of a license, issued by the Licensing Chamber.

Financing of public higher education institutions is provided by both State budget and educational fees. The budgets of private higher education institutions consist of founders' contributions and educational fees.

## Partnership

4. Describe the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country.

Please include:

- the membership and role of any national Bologna group (for example policy committee, promoters' group)
- the membership and role of students, staff trade unions, business and social partners in any national Bologna Group.

In May 2005, the National Council to implement Bologna process goals was initiated under the auspices of the Government, chaired by the vice-prime minister of the Republic of Moldova. The Council consists of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Youth, other ministries, rectors of higher education institutions, and students.

The Council meets quarterly to discuss and advise the policy measures as well to evaluate the results of different activities stipulated in *The working plan for 2005-2010 approved by the Ministry of Education and Youth for the adjustment of the higher education system to the European one and according to the criteria of the Bologna Process*.

New top management positions and divisions were established in higher education institutions to ensure the implementation of Bologna Process provisions.

Representatives of different organizations as well as students' associations play an important role in the activity of these divisions. Young people group together in different non-governmental organizations to promote the objectives of the Bologna Process. So far there were created 8 students senates. Students are informed about the objectives of the Bologna Process and the achievements of the national higher education system at a number of forums, organized at the institutional and national levels.

5. Describe the arrangements for involving students and staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

Please include:

- precise references (preferably with web links) to any legislation (or equivalent) in place to ensure students and staff are represented on HEI governing bodies

- the role of students in the governance of HEIs
- the role of staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

The assurance concerning the participation of students and staff in the governing bodies is stipulated in the Regulation of functioning of HE institutions and the Senate.

Additional information about these activities can be found on the [www.almamater.com](http://www.almamater.com)

Recent changes in legislation and the reforming of the higher education system enhanced students' participation in the management of higher education institutions. There has been reviewed the level of student's involvement in the educational process and improved the mechanisms to regulate and motivate student's participation in the management of the higher education institutions. Students take an active part in the decision making processes by delegating representatives in the Board of Administration of the respective institution. Thus, students' share of participation in the executive structures of the institutions is 15%-25%. They take part in the activity of Senates, faculty councils, and other structures.

8 higher education institutions host student Senates.

The regulations in force stipulate democratic elections of the representatives of higher education institutions teaching staff in administrative and counselling bodies. They have the right to decide on the content of the curricula, forms and methods of teaching, textbooks and teaching aid relevant for the course of study.

Both teaching staff and students of higher education institutions join two major trade unions.

Trade unions actively participate in the examination of draft papers of legislative and normative acts, promote and perform activities to ensure social protection of teaching staff and students (level of salaries, living conditions, medical assurance, etc.).

#### 6. Describe the measures in place to ensure the co-operation of business and social partners within the Bologna Process.

The member-representatives of trade unions participate in the activity of the counselling bodies of the Ministry of Education and Youth. Different non-governmental organizations are invited to participate in settling higher education issues.

The draft National Qualifications Framework was discussed by representatives of different specialized public authorities as well as by business and labour market representatives.

Higher education institutions collaborate with economic agents and representatives of the labour market to design university curriculum and establish the most efficient methods to ensure students' professional development, through internship, development of practical skills, offering bursaries and participation in the state exam commissions for evaluation of learning outcomes.

## **B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements**

### **Degree system**

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle.

7. Describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2006/07.

The cycle system was introduced in the Republic of Moldova in 2005-2006 academic year which consequently enabled the admission to cycle I.

The students admitted to cycle I represent approximately 48% off the overall number of students.

The admission of the first undergraduates to cycle II is due in 2008.

2014 from 17415 graduates, have been admitted to the Master Programmes in 2005, that is about 12%. 21% from the current year graduates have been enrolled in 2006.

( Eurydice )

### Stage of implementation of the third cycle

8. Describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of structured doctoral programmes
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- the elements that are included in doctoral study programmes, e.g. do they include taught courses or independent research only
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies
- are doctoral studies included in your country's qualifications framework and are they linked to learning outcomes
- are interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills integrated in doctoral studies
- are credit points used in measuring workload in doctoral studies.

The regulations in force stipulate that doctoral studies are considered postgraduate studies. They are oriented on the individual research and are organized to develop qualified researches in the field of science, technology, education, culture and other fields.

Furthermore, they are provided within higher education and research institutions accredited by the National Committee for Accreditation. Institutions which organize doctoral studies in the Republic of Moldova are entitled to offer scientific degrees in 193 fields that represent 55% of the overall number of specialities (353), included in The Classification of Scientific Specializations.

Doctoral studies last 3 years full-time, 4 years part-time.

Doctoral studies include general module and individual elements of curricula. General part of curriculum includes thorough research in the field of study and related fields, further scientific and cultural development of the doctoral student, advanced field-related courses, history and methodology of the area of study, foreign languages, and informational technologies.

Individual curriculum for doctoral students includes general training, research methodology and doctoral thesis.

Doctoral students must pass doctoral exams (field of study, research history and

methodology, a foreign language and computer study). Additionally, they must defend three scientific reports on doctoral research.

Upon completion of their studies they must defend their doctoral thesis and subsequently are awarded a doctoral degree. During their research they benefit from a scientific advisor's and scientific counsellor's assistance. The doctoral student must report on his/her individual research activity at the end of each academic year.

The National Committee for Accreditation and Assessment is appointed to oversee doctoral studies.

Doctoral studies and the respective learning outcomes will be included in the National Framework of Qualifications. At present, the credit system is not applied to doctoral studies.

(Scorecard and Eurydice )

Access<sup>1</sup> to the next cycle

9. Describe the arrangements for access between the first and second cycles and second and third cycles.

Please include:

- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the second cycle
- if appropriate, the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to both the second and third cycles
- the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- specify any first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle
- specify any second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle.
- Specify any examples where bridging courses are necessary to transfer between cycles in the same subject area
- any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles.

The old structure (until 2005) did not foresee the percentage of the undergraduates to continue their studies in the Master Programmes, and any limits for access, because the undergraduate programmes included academic and professional elements. Generally the access was defined by the merits. In these Programmes were accepted undergraduates, whose study records were about or more than 8 of 10 marks, and their numbers depend on the financial capacities and human recourses of the university.

Until 2008 holders of a Bachelor and of a Master degree who have complied with the prior regulations for higher education have access to doctoral studies.

The best undergraduates used to be enrolled in the Doctoral Programmes on the

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<sup>1</sup> Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education.

recommendation of the Examination Body and Faculty Committee

The draft of new HE Law stipulates access to cycle II (Master's studies) for 50% from the graduates of cycle I, holders of a Licentiate (Bachelor's) degree. The first enrolment to the II cycle is foreseen for the 2008.

Holders of diplomas in medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine have access to doctoral studies in the respective fields.

Holders of diplomas in applied pedagogy and methodology can have access to doctoral studies only after a two-year work experience.

The implementation of ECTS at all higher education cycles will eliminate any obstacle to cycle II.

(Scorecard and Eurydice )

### Implementation of national qualifications framework

10. Describe the stage of implementation of the national qualifications framework to align with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA<sup>2</sup>.

Please include:

- the stage of development of your national qualifications framework (for example has a working group been established; have national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications been prepared)
- the extent to which your national qualifications framework is in line with the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA
- the role of stakeholders in the development of your national qualifications framework.

At present, Qualifications are awarded in compliance with the Law on the Classification of Fields and Specializations in HE for cycle I. The listing has been made up in accordance with the requirements and recommendations of ISCED/EROSTAT, which ensures the compatibility of the qualifications awarded in the RM with the European ones.

Graduates of cycle I (first promotion in 2008) will be awarded the qualification of Licentiate (Bachelor), Engineer, Architect, depending on the general field of studies.

In order to elaborate/improve the National Qualifications Framework, based on learning outcomes, the Ministry of Education and Youth has assigned the institutions in charge for the elaboration of draft papers for NQF for area of education.

The following activities have been organized:

- the comparative analysis of the elaboration of the Qualifications Framework in other countries;
- the methodological frame for the National Qualifications Framework has been elaborated;
- expert groups for professional training have been created;
- the plan for co-operation with stakeholders, NGO-s, ministries in charge, trades unions, etc. have been developed;
- the National Qualifications Framework in the area of informational technologies and jurisprudence have been discussed with the ministries in charge;

<sup>2</sup> A Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

The drafts will be evaluated by representatives of central specialized public authorities and representatives of the labor market, other stakeholders. The completed examination will enable the National Qualifications Framework to be consequently approved by the Government.

For strengthening the process of elaboration of the National Qualifications Framework, an International Conference took place in Chisinau in December, current year.

11. What measures are being taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?

Please include where possible:

- the percentage of first cycle graduates who found employment after graduating in 2005/06
- the percentage of first cycle graduates who continued into the second or third cycles in 2005/06
- the extent to which this is expected to change in 2006/2007.

The first Licentiate of I cycle will be in 2008.

In order to ensure these graduates' employability, the Ministry of Education and Youth in association with other involved parties and factors have attained the following:

- elaboration of the new curricula, more appropriate to the labor market;
- elaboration and approval of Diploma Supplement, based on a common European sample, which provides useful information for employers;
- elaboration of the National Qualifications Framework, which is an additional source of information for employers to learn about the awarded qualifications, employment opportunities, learning outcomes, graduates' competences, etc;
- initiation of activities to set up centers for career professional orientation;
- creation of vacancy databases, etc.

According to the law in force no more than 50% of graduates of the current year will be admitted to the II cycle.

## Quality assurance

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA<sup>3</sup>

12. To what extent is your national system of QA already aligned with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA?

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of the national quality assurance system in line

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.enqa.net/files/BergenReport210205.pdf>

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| <p>with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any action that has been taken to ensure the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</li> <li>• any action planned to ensure the national quality assurance system is in line with the standards and guidelines for QA in the EHEA.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Activities for the quality assurance are organized on the institutional level as well as on the national level.</p> <p>On the institutional level the following activities has been undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internal structures for quality assurance have been created and action plans have been elaborated;</li> <li>- textbooks for quality assurance have been edited with the support of the TEMPUS Programme.</li> </ul> <p>The accreditation is performed according to the Law with regard to evaluation and accreditation from 1997 and its further modifications and completions.</p> <p>On the national level, in 1999, the process of accreditation started. Beginning with 2002 a Department of Accreditation started its activity in the Ministry of Education.</p> <p>Provisions related to the quality assurance in education have been included in the draft of laws on education. There has been drawn up the methodology of quality assurance in education, the institutional system of internal quality management and external quality assessment and accreditation of educational institutions and programs.</p> <p>It is to be mentioned that an educational institution will be accredited only in case it has implemented the system of internal quality management.</p> <p>New procedures and instruments have been elaborated for evaluation of the quality assurance in order to implement European Quality assurance standards and guidelines.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: right;">(Scorecard and Eurydice)</p> <p>Stage of development of external quality assurance system</p> <p>13. Describe the quality assurance system operating in your country.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system</li> <li>• the scope of your external quality assurance system: does it operate at a national level; does it cover all higher education<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ internal assessment</li> <li>○ external review</li> <li>○ publication of results</li> <li>○ peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  |

<sup>4</sup> higher education: all types of courses of study or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to a country's higher education system.

On the national level, in 1999, the process of accreditation started. Department Accreditation is a component part of the Ministry of Education.

The activity of this Department is guided by the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the Law on Education, the Law regarding to evaluation and accreditation of educational institutions (1997), Law regarding the approval of regulations for evaluation and accreditation of educational institutions (1999).

In order to improve the Law regarding the evaluation and accreditation, the methodology, the criteria, the standards, and the indicators for academic evaluation have been elaborated. The criteria, standards and indicators of the accreditation are established by the Ministry of Education and Youth in the consultative process with the main stakeholders.

Internal assessment is performed by the institution by an analytical report, elaborated on the basis of criteria, established by the Ministry of Education and Youth.

External review, for an accreditation purpose, is realized by an external commission approved by the Ministry of Education. The structure of the external commission includes: researchers, academic staff, main stakeholders - representatives of the ministries, employers, students, representatives of the trade unions, labor union and foreign experts.

The length of the external evaluation is 30 days. The frequency of accreditation is 5 years. The process of accreditation is foreseen only for the HE institutions, which have already graduates. The Ministry of Education and Youth decides upon the accreditation of the HE institution on the basis of the proposals of the External Commission. There is an accreditation of the HE institutions as well as the accreditation of the study programmes.

The accreditation results are placed in “Monitorul Oficial” of the Republic of Moldova and introduced on the Web-page of the Ministry of Education and Youth.

On the basis of the recommendations provided by the specialized committees, the action plan has been elaborated for the improvement of the activity of the institutions.

Fulfillment and observance of accreditation requirements are monitored by the staff members of the Department.

Now there are 24 HE institutions have been accredited from 31 existing (16 state HE institutions and 15 private ones). 2 HE institutions have passed the reaccreditation.

121 of study programmes have been accredited from 180 ones.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

#### Level of student participation

14. Describe the level of student participation in your national quality assurance system.

Please include:

- whether students are included in the following aspects of quality assurance:
  - the governance of national agencies for QA
  - as full members or observers in external review teams
  - as part of the decision making process for external reviews
  - in the consultation process during external reviews (eg

- arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students)
- in internal evaluations.

The students are not involved in the governance of the national agencies for QA. Students of the HE institutions participate in internal evaluation by filing in special questionnaires which reflect their opinion concerning the quality of education in the respective institution.

Senior students from HE institutions can participate in the external evaluation, being full members of specialized commissions. In this context they take part in the decision making process for external reviews.

The problem of quality assurance in higher education was discussed at the students' national conference in December, this year.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

#### Level of international participation

15. Describe the level of international participation in your national quality assurance system.

Please include:

- whether there is international participation in the following aspects of quality assurance
  - the governance of national agencies for quality assurance
  - the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies
  - teams for external review
  - membership of ENQA
  - membership of any other international network.

For strengthening the capacity of evaluation and accreditation the Ministry of Education and Youth collaborates with international agencies for education quality assurance (EAQAN, INQAAHE, ENQA, CEE Network, etc.)

The Accreditation Department is a full member of EAQAN agency for the quality assurance of education.

Foreign experts are invited for external evaluation for such fields as: art, medicine, engineering, etc.

At present, there is a tight cooperation with international and national agencies for quality assurance with a view to involving foreign experts in external evaluation procedures of some higher education institutions of the Republic of Moldova (The Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, The State Agricultural University of Moldova, The State Medical and Pharmacy University "N. Testemițeanu".)

The State Medical and Pharmacy University "N. Testemițeanu" has been awarded the accreditation by the SIDMEF ( the International Conference of the Deans of the Medical Faculties from the French Aria) in 2005. In the process of accreditation of the State Medical and Pharmacy University, experts from Canada, Belgium, France, Tunis and Romania have participated.

## Recognition of degrees and study periods

(Scorecard and Eurydice )

Stage of implementation of diploma supplement

16. Describe the stage of implementation of the diploma supplement in your country.

Please include:

- the percentage of students graduating in 2007 who will receive a Diploma Supplement
- which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:
  - issued in a widely spoken European language
  - free of charge
  - automatically
  - correspond to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format.

The Diploma Supplement is awarded as an addendum to the Diploma. According to the Decision of the Ministry of Education nr. 143 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2002, the institutions of higher education of the Republic of Moldova started to issue the Diploma Supplement to their graduates. Until 2005 it was issued on the request of the graduates.

Beginning with June, 2005, the Diploma Supplement is issued to every graduate automatically and free of charge.

The Diploma Supplement was designed in compliance with the recommendations of the UNESCO /CEPES, Council of Europe.

The Diploma Supplement is considered to be an important tool for promoting transparency of higher education qualifications (diploma de licenta, diploma de studii superioare, certificate, titluri etc.).

The bilingual Diploma Supplement provides an explicit content of the level of qualifications awarded by the higher education institutions in an accessible way and at an international level.

The Ministry of Education has elaborated a Guide of completion of each 6 main parts of the Supplement and common soft for its fulfilling.

The Diploma Supplement has been elaborated for the Master graduates as well. It is issued compulsory and free of charge.

(Scorecard)

National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementing documents<sup>5</sup> of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

<sup>5</sup> Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001); Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004); Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001)

Please include:

- whether your country has ratified the convention (including depositing ratification instrument at either CoE or UNESCO)
- whether national legislation has been reviewed against the main principles of the convention
- which of the following principles are included in national legislation
  - applicants' right to fair assessment
  - recognition if no substantial differences can be proven
  - demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted
  - provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions
- whether you have a fully operational ENIC
- any action being taken to ratify or fully implement the convention.

According to the Law of Education in force, the Ministry of Education and Youth is responsible for the recognition and equivalence of qualifications.

With a view to adjusting the policy and procedure of recognition and equivalence of qualifications to the European standards, the Republic of Moldova signed the Lisbon Convention on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1997, ratified it in September 1999 and it came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1999.

The procedure of recognition and equivalence of studies and qualifications is regulated by the internal legislation, elaborated according to the recommendations of the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

The procedure of recognition of Diplomas and qualifications is facilitated by the authorization of bilateral Agreements regarding the mutual recognition of study documents, scientific degrees and didactic titles with such countries as Russian Federation, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and a multilateral Agreement with the CIS (Community of Independent States) countries.

If there are no agreements in this domain, the procedure is performed according to the legislative and normative acts, the international Conventions and the information provided by the ministries of education from other countries and from the ENIC-NARIC network.

In order to improve the national recognition system a separate structural division named – **Service for Recognition and Equivalence of Academic Certificates** was created within the Ministry of Education and Youth of the Republic of Moldova.

Most of them are related to the authenticity of the studies and qualifications awarded to our citizens or foreigners in the institutions of the Republic of Moldova, who leave abroad for academic or professional purposes.

The problem of recognition of qualifications can be presented under 2 aspects: recognition of studies and qualifications awarded to our citizens abroad and recognition of studies and qualifications of the foreign students/citizens.

80% of the activities dealing with recognition are related to the academic recognition.

The Service delivers information about the academic and professional value of Diplomas, information about the grading system and about the educational institutions of the Republic of Moldova.

In case of recognition and equivalence of study documents awarded by institutions of higher education from other countries either for academical or professional purpose, the Service acts

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| <p>according to the Regulation regarding the recognition of study documents, elaborated in 2004.<br/>(Scorecard and Eurydice)</p> <p>Stage of implementation of ECTS</p> <p>18. Describe the credit and accumulation system operating in your country.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the stage of implementation of ECTS in 2007</li> <li>• the percentage of first and second cycle programmes using ECTS in 2007</li> <li>• how any other credit or accumulation system in use relates to ECTS: is it compatible with ECTS; what is the ratio between national and ECTS credits.</li> </ul>                      |
| <p>In compliance with certain legislative adjustments, ECTS has been implemented in all the higher education institutions in the country, in all the fields of study, beginning with 2005-2006. This system is applied in the first and second year of study, Cycle I. Prior to 2005 it was piloted in 4 HE institutions. ECTS realizes primarily the function of accumulation. The National Credit System is implemented according to the Guide, elaborated by the Ministry of Education and Youth.</p> <p>Beginning with 2008, ECTS will be applied to cycle II. Other systems are not applied.</p>  |
| <p>19. Has your country produced a national plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.</p>   |
| <p>At present there are few requests from foreign citizens to recognize academic and professional qualifications awarded abroad. The procedure of recognition is guided by the Regulations approved by the Ministry of Education and Youth in 2004.</p> <p>With this purpose, specialized Committees for each field of academic and vocational development were set up within HE institutions. The above mentioned committees, in compliance with Lisbon Convention, examine the recognition requests. The final decision is adopted by the Ministry of Education and Youth on the basis of well-grounded conclusions of the specialized committees.</p> |

## Lifelong Learning

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| <p>Recognition of prior learning<br/>(Scorecard)</p> <p>20. Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the stage of development of any procedures or national guidelines to recognise prior learning</li> <li>• a description of any procedures or national guidelines for assessing prior learning as a basis for entry to HE</li> <li>• a description of any procedures or guidelines for allocating credits</li> </ul> |
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as a basis of exemption from some programme requirements.

There are no provisions in the current normative acts in the Republic of Moldova that ensure the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. However, educational institutions are entitled to recognize non-formal and informal learning by establishing special examination procedures for competence and skill recognition according to the quality framework in force.

21. Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education.

Please include:

- any flexibility in entry requirements
- any flexible delivery methods
- any modular structures of programmes

A Framework Curricula for higher education and the Guide for implementation of the ECTS provide guidelines and opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education. The flexibility of the educational process is ensured by:

- the suggested training programs which enable students to be enrolled simultaneously in two related fields of study;
- the opportunity to choose a specialized field of study;
- introducing optional disciplines in the curricula;
- the opportunity for students to make a choice between a large range of subjects which meet the students' needs for the enlargement of their background and skills in the complimentary fields.

Optional courses and free-choice courses constitute the major part of the private study. Thus, to obtain an academic qualification any student can establish his own individual educational path that includes compulsory, optional and free-choice courses.

While designing the curricula for the first cycle (Bachelor), a modular structure of programs was developed. The average number of modules/courses constitutes 5-7 per term with an average number of 4-5 credits for each course.

## **Joint degrees**

Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

22. Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.

Please include:

- whether joint<sup>6</sup> degrees are encouraged or at least permitted in national legislation
- whether joint degrees are permitted in all three cycles
- the percentage of students following joint degrees
- any action being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes.

Although the national legislation doesn't provide currently a legal framework for joint degrees, the higher education institutions, in compliance with cooperation agreements and projects, are authorized to develop some joint programs and degrees. These joint programs are especially implemented on the second cycle (Master). The legal framework for joint degrees is stipulated in the new draft of the Law on Higher Education.

The most durable joint degree projects are realized by the Moldova State University, Master Programme (The Law of wine and vine grapes) in co-operation with a HE institution from Bordo, France, and Navara, Spain as well as by the Moldova Academy of Economic Studies in co-operation with the Grenoble University, France (Master Programme International Business).

### C. Current issues in Higher Education

#### Higher education and research

23. Describe the relationship between higher education and research in your country - what percentage of research is carried out in HEIs; are any steps being taken to improve the synergy between HE and other research sectors.

Research is carried out in 44 institutions:

- 32 institutions in the field of science and innovation (78%)
- 12 institutions of higher education (27%)

66% of all research programs are completed in higher education institutions.

In recent years, such research domains as medicine, economy, pedagogics, law have particularly stood out.

24. What percentage of doctoral candidates take up research careers; are any measures being taken to increase the number of doctoral candidates taking up research careers?

The research domains and the finance are established in the Agreement signed between the Government and the Academy of Science.

With a view to encouraging access to doctoral studies and enhancing the number of doctoral

<sup>6</sup> a joint degree is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, and where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.

candidates, some measures have been undertaken:

- Doctoral students' scholarships have been increased;
- The Government of the Republic of Moldova awards annually 20 scholarships for Excellence;
- A State Prize for Youth in the field of Science and Technology is awarded every 2 years.
- Mobility programs involving research internships in overseas universities are encouraged and supported.

The total number of doctoral students are : 395 in 2005 and 322 in 2006.

Postdoctoral researchers are : 37 in 2005 and 17 in 2006.

76% from the total number of doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers are from HE institutions.

### **The social dimension**

25. Describe any measures being taken in your country to widen access to quality higher education.

Please include:

- any financial or other measures to widen access in higher education amongst socially disadvantaged groups
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to widen access to higher education, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the widening access measures already in place.

With a view to supporting socially disadvantaged groups of candidates, special shares of education admission of socially disadvantaged candidates are allotted on an annual basis:

- Orphan children and children without parental care;
- Physically disabled children;
- Children of physically disabled parents, etc.

Social scholarships and other kinds of financial support are offered to the socially disadvantaged groups of students by the Government, other ministries and businessmen.

Certain facilities and support are provided to these categories of children by the Government in case of their studying abroad.

26. Describe any measures to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background.

Please include:

- any guidance or counselling services and any other measures to improve retention
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to improve retention, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the retention measures already in place.

The categories of students mentioned in point 25 benefit from:

- Free of charge hostel accommodation;
- Social scholarship;
- Monthly travelling expenses;
- Daily food expenses.

Students enrolled on a contract basis that have an unstable financial and family situation, benefit from full or partial tuition exemption at their request and submitted confirming documents. These facilities are granted based on the decision of the institutions to use their own financial resources.

## Mobility

27. Describe any measures being taken in your country to increase student mobility.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward mobility
- any measures to increase outward mobility.

Taking into consideration the fact that academic mobility is an important objective of the Bologna Declaration and a key element in establishing a common European Higher Education Area, the Ministry of Education and Youth makes considerable efforts to support and promote mobility.

At present, the citizens of the Republic of Moldova can benefit from the following academic mobility opportunities:

- Scholarships granted within bilateral Agreements;
- Scholarship opportunities offered by the Ministry of External Affairs and European Integration;
- Inter-university mobility,
- Educational programs offered by the Embassies of some countries, accredited in the Republic of Moldova;
- Individual applications for scholarships in foreign higher education institutions.

The bilateral agreements and other offers submitted to the Ministry of Education and Youth enable more than 300 citizens of the Republic of Moldova to leave annually abroad. Inter-university mobility involves approximately 500 students and academic staff.

The implementation of ECTS enabled the promotion of student academic mobility, both inside and outside. The Guide to implement the National Academic Credit System, approved by the Board of the Ministry of Education and Youth in February 2006, does not only stipulate the procedures of implementing academic credits, but also serves as a methodological framework to the promotion of the interinstitutional agreements.

Information on initiation of different outward mobility programmes is made public and provided by the Ministry of Education and Youth and higher education institutions. Students benefit from teaching aids and prompt counselling to achieve mobility.

28. Are portable loans and grants available in your country? If not, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants and loans.

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| <p>Currently, Moldovan legislation doesn't stipulate any measures concerning the portability of grants and loans. Therefore, financial resources are to be allocated by the Government from the consolidated budget for studies abroad in 23 fields of qualifications. The above mentioned resources will be allocated starting with 2007. Moreover, higher education institutions will finance some scholarships from their own financial resources.</p>  |
| <p><b>29. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to student mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.</b></p>   |
| <p>With a view to increasing the number of young people going abroad, there is a number of collaboration agreements under negotiation with approximately 20 member-countries of the European Union. These agreements stipulate obligatory scholarship exchange students between the respective countries.</p> <p>In order to remove obstacles to student mobility the following measures have been provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elaboration of bilingual Diploma Supplement;</li> <li>• Assistance for the recognition of study documents issued in the Republic of Moldova;</li> <li>• Delivering information about the possibilities to study abroad;</li> <li>• Assistance in visa arrangements,</li> <li>• Adjustment of pre-university and university curricula to the European trends;</li> <li>• ECTS implementation;</li> <li>• Full information on academic mobility programs and participation requirements - mass-media, web-page, academic environment;</li> <li>• Full information on the system of education in the Republic of Moldova, the academic value of the study documents.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>30. Describe any measures being taken in your country to increase staff mobility.</b></p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any measures to increase inward mobility</li> <li>• any measures to increase outward mobility.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Staff mobility is provided in compliance with the international agreements that the Republic of Moldova has signed, in addition to the community programs (Tempus, Erasmus Mundus) and other university collaboration agreements. At present, staff mobility is ensured by the international treaties and agreements with Bulgaria, Italy, Turkey, Ukraine, and Russian Federation, which enable 120 teaching staff to benefit annually from research and in – service trainings.</p> <p>A great number of academic staff realizes mobility in the framework of the TEMPUS Programme.</p>   |
| <p><b>31. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to staff mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.</b></p>   |
| <p>With the view to increasing academic mobility, the following activities are being developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in order to achieve this objective, financial resources are provided for mid-term expenses;</li> <li>- an increasing number of international educational cooperation agreements are being signed;</li> <li>- seminars and conferences are being organized in order to advise on the mobility program and project opportunities.</li> </ul>  |

The major obstacles for teaching staff mobility are:

- lack of financial resources;
- language barriers;
- visa formalities.

### **The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world**

32. Describe any measures being taken in your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA.

European dimension is primarily promoted thanks to the cooperation and direct contacts established between the national higher education institutions and their foreign counterparts.

In the view of promotion the attractiveness of the EHEA., the following steps have been taken:

- An action plan for the dissemination of the objectives of the Bologna Process has been elaborated;
- Various scientific activities, symposiums, joint research and other activities are being organized;
- Implementing of the Diploma Supplement;

Organisation of Europe-related courses (European Construction, Community Law, Philosophy of European Unification, Political Structures in the European States, European Economic Integration, European Business Environment, the European University, the Public Function in Europe, Relationships and Cultural Influences in Central and Eastern Europe, European Civilization, Modern and Contemporary History of Europe, etc).

### **Future challenges**

33. Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for your country.

1. Continuous modernization of higher education in the Republic of Moldova.
2. Approval of Higher Education Law.
3. Implementation of efficient quality management systems in higher education institutions.
4. Regulatory norms for organization of Master studies.
5. Defining of the Doctoral studies statute.
6. Elaboration of the National Qualification Framework.
7. Promotion of real university autonomy in accordance with the public responsibility of higher education institutions.
8. Diversification of financial recourses for higher education to meet the requirements of the system reform.
9. Encouraging student involvement in the process of governing higher education institutions.
10. More efficient cooperation with the main stakeholders.

Completed National Reports should be sent to the Bologna Secretariat by email no later than **Friday 15 December 2006**.

Please remember to attach a copy of your national action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications.

Bologna Secretariat  
March 2006