



Bologna Conference

Fostering student mobility: next steps?

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Involving stakeholders for an improved mobility inside the EHEA

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Attractiveness of the HEIs in the EHEA

An Introduction to WG 3

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1.0 Mobility and “Attractiveness”

- É *Attractiveness* as a metaphor, a “soft” term.
- É *Judgment of attractiveness*: depending on culture and society or a matter of individual subjective preference.
- É Attractiveness of something (somebody) as a measure of how ‘good’ something (somebody) is.
- É *E.g.*, physical attractiveness, sexual attractiveness, attractive sights, attractive books, etc.
- É *Consequences* of attractiveness (or lack of attractiveness).
- É *Attractiveness* of the higher education institutions (HEIs): as an appeal for domestic and foreign students. *Mobility!*
- É Attractiveness of the HEIs in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA):
 - *What does it mean?* → *How the idea has evolved?*

2.0 “Attractiveness” and the Bologna Process

Sorbonne Declaration, 1998: “The international recognition and **attractive potential of our systems** are directly related to their external and internal readabilities. A system, in which two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate, should be recognized for international comparison and equivalence, seems to emerge.” [par. 5]

Bologna Declaration, 1999: “We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European systems of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the **European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction** equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions.” [par. 8]

2.1 Prague Communiqué

[Establishment of a system of credits] Ministers emphasized that for greater flexibility in learning and qualification processes the adoption of common cornerstones of qualifications, supported by a credit system such as the ECTS or one that is ECTS-compatible, providing both transferability and accumulation functions, is necessary. Together with mutually recognized quality assurance systems such arrangements will facilitate students' access to the European labour market and **enhance the compatibility, attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education**. The generalized use of such a credit system and of the Diploma Supplement will foster progress in this direction.

2.2 Berlin Communiqué

[Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area] Ministers agree that the **attractiveness and openness of the European HE should be reinforced**. They confirm their readiness to further develop scholarship programmes for students from third countries.

Ministers declare that **transnational exchanges** in HE should be governed on the basis of **academic quality and academic values** [1]. They encourage the **co-operation with regions** in other parts of the world by **opening Bologna seminars** and conferences to representatives of these regions.

[Additional Actions] Ministers will make the necessary effort to make **European HEIs an even more attractive and efficient partner**. Therefore Ministers ask HEIs to increase the role and **relevance of research** to technological, social and cultural evolution and to the needs of society.

2.3 Bergen Communiqué

[The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world]. The EHEA must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. [1]

We see the EHEA as a partner of HE systems in other regions of the world, stimulating **balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation** between HEIs. We underline the importance of **intercultural understanding and respect**. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by **sharing our experiences of reform processes** with neighbouring regions. We stress the **need for dialogue** on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify **partner regions** and intensify the **exchange of ideas and experiences** with those regions. We ask the BFUG to elaborate and agree on **a strategy for the external dimension**.

2.4 London Communiqué (A)

1.3 [Introduction]. Developments over the last two years have brought us a significant step closer to the realisation of the (EHEA). Building on our rich and diverse European cultural heritage, we are developing an EHEA based on institutional autonomy, academic freedom, equal opportunities and democratic principles that will facilitate mobility, increase employability and **strengthen Europe's attractiveness and competitiveness**. [1]

2.5 [Recognition]. Easily readable and comparable degrees and accessible information on educational systems and qualifications frameworks are prerequisites for **citizens' mobility** and ensuring the continuing **attractiveness and competitiveness** of the EHEA.

2.5 London Communiqué (B)

2.20 [The EHEA in a global context]. We adopt the strategy "The European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting" and will take forward work in the core policy areas: improving information on, and promoting the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA; strengthening cooperation based on partnership; intensifying policy dialogue; and improving recognition. This work ought to be seen in relation to the OECD/UNESCO *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*.

3.0 Attractiveness as a complex strategic issue

“Promoting European HE to enhance its world-wide attractiveness and competitiveness” as one (the 2nd) of core policy areas of the “Bologna Looking Out” Strategy (2007):

“To increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA, providing information on the Bologna Process will not in itself be sufficient. Europe must also make **concerted efforts to increase its international attractiveness to students, teachers and researchers across the world.**” [1]

“The goal of a EHEA in which students, staff and holders of qualifications are able to move freely **cannot be reached through measures of HE policy alone.** This important goal equally depends on facilitating the granting of visas and on facilitating social security coverage, as well as on the granting of work permits for staff.” [1]

3.1 Elements for possible future actions

Action	Description	Possible mode of delivery	Existing Initiatives / work in progress
Designation of national HE promotion organisations	Coordinating efforts for the world-wide promotion of the country's HE system and institutions	National ministries designate an appropriate organisation	Some Bologna countries already have such structures
Joint study programmes	Programmes developed jointly by HEIs in EHEA and non-EHEA countries	EU programmes National programmes and funding agencies HEIs' initiatives	EU programmes National programmes and funding agencies HEIs' initiatives
Mobility programmes between EHEA and non-EHEA countries	í achieving the most balanced exchanges possible í pooling of EU programmes and national funding mechanisms	EU programmes National programmes and funding agencies HEIs' initiatives	EU programmes National programmes and funding agencies HEIs' initiatives
Enhancing readability of national QA documents	Translating the relevant texts into widely spoken languages	National ministries and organisations	Several language versions of the relevant documents are available on the <i>Europa</i> web site

3.2 Attractiveness and key strategic issues

Attractiveness of the EHEA depends on its distinctiveness from higher education provision in other regions which is mainly characterised by:

- transparent quality, accessibility, recognition,
- mobility enhanced by
 - structural (transparency, compatibility, recognition, etc.)
 - and social means (support and scholarship schemes, visa regulations, etc.),
- non-exclusiveness, cultural diversity (but without the obstacles of a linguistic Babylon),
- its position in a relationship between competition and cooperation in higher education European and world wide.

4.0 Questions to be discussed

- É Are competitiveness, attractiveness, openness and diversity compatible?
- É What attractiveness mean from the **students' perspective**?
- É What attractiveness mean from the **other stakeholders' perspectives**?
- É What are the **comparative advantages of the EHEA**?
- É How can we assess the **EHEA in comparison with** higher education in **other regions**?
- É How can **mobility strategies** developed at European, national and institutional level contribute to the **attractiveness of HEIs in the EHEA**?
- É How can **joint programmes** be further developed and respond to **attractiveness challenges**?
- É Etc.