

BOLOGNA PROCESS

TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2005-2007

Final: 9 May 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:	Republic of Macedonia
Date:	January 10, 2007
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Main achievements since Bergen

- I.** Describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms, since Bergen.

The Bologna Declaration has a remarkable impact on the development of higher education in the country. Awareness of the Bologna Reform Process is present among academics in Macedonia. The Bologna Process is mostly discussed as a structural reform however the universities in Macedonia are successfully coping with a new spirit of teaching and learning. The main objectives such as academic quality, employability and mobility are the guiding principles as well as the tools like ECTS, a two or three-tier structure, and the Diploma Supplement.

The Ministry of Education and Science is committed to the realization of Bologna goals and at the very last, therefore, is intending to be able to make a positive statement.

Higher education system in the Republic of Macedonia has experienced remarkable changes. The overregulation on legislation appears as a considerable constraint and seems as the legislation is mainly input-oriented. The overregulation in legal terms is reflected in the university’s statutes, bylaws, rules and regulations. In some point, this situation hinders spontaneous university activities and initiatives. However, the universities in Macedonia and the Ministry of Education and Science are taking initiative and along with the external factors and the European organizations and institutions assistance in this matter are expected to proceed on the way to an autonomous academic community.

Developing workable and flexible strategy is considered as an issue important in a way to meet the needs of the different higher education institutions and to develop their vision as key players in building new higher education system and to build country that relies on innovations, and equal opportunities.

To achieve sufficient common practice in degree structures, sufficient good practice in quality assurance, to ensure that a degree or diploma, granted in Macedonia, has meaning in the rest of European countries is the goal worth efforts.

Quality of higher education studies is the utmost aim of the Higher Education

strategy in Macedonia, considered to be based on: the quality of scientific and professional work domestically and internationally comparable; strategic role of quality HE in the economic, social and cultural development of the country along with maintaining national identity; meeting employment requirements and overall improvement of the educational structure of the population within the country.

High standards of teaching, definition of quality criteria and equal accessibility of higher education are however among the most important goals in Macedonia.

Development of governance is viewed as a very important in the process of reorganizing higher education.

Higher education sector in Macedonia makes a serious attempt on integration versus segregation of higher education institutions or faculties.

Serious measures are taken in a way of revising the curricula and programs within the higher education by enhancing the concept of learning outcomes. Student-oriented structures in the academic curricula enhance the concept of lifelong learning so it is also important that the issue of key competences is discussed.

Studies methods are gradually reforming in such a way that people are encouraged to do their best in the various learning settings.

Transformation of the academic degree structure in Macedonia still require changes in the content of the educational programs, moving from the teacher-oriented to a student-oriented study process and making relation between new academic degrees and labor market closer.

Developments in higher education such as private providers, trans-national providers, and qualifications earned through distance learning and joint degrees are issues discussed seriously and already drafted within the new higher education policy, legislation and practice. New types of providers, new types of students are some of new developments that might be looked in the future in the Macedonian academic reality.

Important improvement is going in relation to the management too, so state universities are expected to be managed from a central structure for the sake of enabling strategic and transparent management. This innovation was aimed towards transforming public, state-funded universities into an integral structure, and creating faculties that will become parts of university and lose their status of independent units. This will integrate fragmented university and create a possibility for internal mobility of studies, programs and staff. The Ministry of Education and Science has approved such structure. It is suggested that such structure would be more cost-efficient and the allocation of the budget could be better utilized.

Awareness about higher education as a lifetime experience is respectively becoming one of the vital questions. The issue of lifelong learning was therefore specifically addressed by the Declaration of Ministers of Education and Higher Education on "Lifelong Learning, Adult Education and Employability" - "on the need to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of adult education as a key issue for economic and social regeneration, building on existing international and European documents".

Commitment of Macedonia towards reforming higher education system in compliance with the pledges declared in Bologna Declaration is very strong.

Macedonia has already endorsed concept that fully corresponds to the needs relating to joining the European integration processes.

National organization

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.

Since 2003 when the Republic of Macedonia signed the Bologna Declaration experience shows that integrative approach is the appropriate one and that it can be achieved through unique and strong central educational institutions in: quality promotion and quality assurance, curricula development financing and educational standard implementation. These institutions are: Accreditation Board for Higher Education, Bureau for Development of Education, Higher Education Development and Financing Council (HEDFC), State Education Inspectorate and Professional Research Institutes. This is a model that is currently functioning in Macedonia and will further be improved.

Three Macedonian Universities (Skopje, Bitola and Tetovo) are state funded. According to the tertiary education policy, the Ministry of Education and Science prepares a draft version of the tertiary education budget. The proposal is subject of discussions along with the Ministry of Finance. The final version of the draft national budget is to be submitted to the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia for approval. After the approval of the National Budget, the Ministry of Education and Science administers the distribution of the state budget for tertiary education jointly with the Ministry of Finance. Being legal entities, the universities, the faculties and the scientific institutes receive the funds separately.

HE legal framework in Macedonia sets the rules for allocation of resources that are not enough adequate for an effective university management: resources are mainly distributed directly to the faculties, thus, there is no actual budgeting through the university level; budget is based on number of teachers and students enrolled (ignorant on their success rate) and funding is not completely linked to quality measures, or to output factors or good performance in priority areas. Therefore, the present resource allocation system is staff and materials oriented. For that reason, such inflexibility in the financial system does not encourage good management at the operational level.

Distribution procedures and practices are in the process of changes by the new HE legislation and for the purpose to allowing autonomous strategic development of the universities. On the other side, universities are going more to generate its own incomes by cooperative, applied and research projects.

It is worth mentioning that after a decreasing trend in the previous periods, the budget for financing tertiary education shows a light increasing trend.

It is also worth mentioning that universities in Macedonia strive for more autonomy in decision-making, financing, profile-building, staff etc. However, in return they need to be accountable with regard to the Government, society, and students. Within their structure, the universities are in process of establishing the bodies that will take the responsibility for their accountability at first place.

Important role in the reform processes what finances concern is awarded to the HE Development and Financing Council, (HEDFC). This Council adopted Regulations for measurement and criteria for financing of the HEI taking into account:

- Number of accredited study programs;
- Number of students according to public interest recognized by the state;
- Study programs deemed necessary by the government and the labour market;
- International applicability;
- Length of studies;
- Propulsion to upper years of study.

Upon a proposal prepared by the HEDFC, the Government adopted a Program for Higher Education Development.

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

Please include:

- the number of public/private HEIs: 5 (five).
- are there different types of institutions delivering higher education (i.e. academic/professional, university/non-university etc.): no - higher education institutions are academic and professional.
- 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.

Higher education in Macedonia is still in a state of transition as a result of a European initiative - Bologna process. Macedonian Higher Education Act has been revised to accommodate a degree structure including bachelors and master's degrees, and higher education institutions have organized study programs around a bachelor's or undergraduate phase and a master's graduate phase.

During this transition period, two main streams of higher education in Macedonia exist: university education, provided by the universities and higher professional education, provided by polytechnic institution or universities that provide professional education. University education prepares students for work in an academic setting, such as research. Higher professional education referred to as polytechnics mainly, and will prepare students for particular professions. It tends to be more practically oriented. Universities of professional education will award bachelor's degrees since they will be

completely reformed.

At the **University “St. Cyril and Methody” – Skopje**, the total number of applicants for enrolment in academic year 2006-07 was: 10.724

Total number of enrolled students - **8.725**
Percentage - 81.36 %

The number of students admitted in academic session 2006-2007 to each type of institution at the **University “St. Kliment Ohridski” – Bitola**, was:

1. Faculty of Technical Sciences 530
 2. Faculty of Economics 284
 3. Faculty of Tourism and Catering 510
 4. Faculty of Education 293
 5. Faculty of Biotechnical Sciences 145
 6. ID Studies for Public Administration 116
 7. Higher Medical School 214
 8. Police Academy 176
- Total number:** **2.368**

The number of students admitted in academic session 2006-2007
at the State University of Tetovo:

- **1820** students.

The South-East European University – Tetovo, enrolment (winter 2006):

Full Time Studies			Part Time Studies	
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
No (%)	2369 (44.84%)	2914 (55.16%)	176 (28.30%)	446 (71.70%)
Total:	5283			622

EURM consists of 10 Faculties:

Total number: 3361

- Faculty of Economics: 1427
- Faculty of Informatics: 185
- Faculty of Art & Design: 68
- Faculty of Communication & Mediums: 11
- Faculty of Public administration: 18
- Faculty of Law: 825
- Faculty of Foreign Languages: 217
- Faculty of Diplomacy: 370
- Faculty of Security: 240
- Faculty of Environmental management: hibernated

Since the bylaws thus all tertiary education legal regulations, should be in a compliance with the General Law on Higher Education, the extent of coverage is in a reasonable level. There are some slight discrepancies present within the secondary legislation entered into force by the tertiary education institution but the State Education Inspectorate operating as a part of the Ministry of Education and Science is acting in that cases with the recommendations and advices in order to provide as far as possible similar interpretation, implementation and appliances of the legal regulations concerning the higher education.

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.

The Ministry of Education and Science, as the main actor in the higher education reform at the national level, has established the National Team of Bologna Promoters, where the university members, professors, the Ministries professionals and students are participating. At the institutional level, each university and faculty is supposed to be an individual actor in the Higher Education Reform. By promoting the widest participation in the Bologna Process of all actors in Higher Education in Macedonia we expect widening campaign in relation to giving information to all beneficiaries of the system. The Bologna Follow-Up group has a coordinating, supervisor and monitoring role in the implementation of legislation and conducts all activities focused on reform of the system. On the other side, higher education institutions have already endorsed many ongoing activities focused on creation of a common European Higher Education Space.

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.

In accordance with the legal regulations: The Law on Higher Education, ("the Official Gazette No: 64/2000 and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Higher Education, ("the Official Gazette No: 49/2003), statutes and other secondary legal acts, as

the major participants in the teaching and learning educational process, they take part in all forms of university management through the Students' Union at the Universities and the faculties.

Students are members of the managing bodies of the faculties (the dean's management and the teaching and scientific board), they participate in the bodies of the University (the University Senate and the Rector's Board) and in all commissions.

Students participate in the governance of HEIs through the representatives of the universities "student union - (student service)" in the form of self organization or other ways provided by the Law and statute of the HEI. (Law for HE, Art. 163)

Within the scope of the governance, students especially: adopt the program for various activities organized within the HEI, express their opinion concerning the HEI's statute, other secondary acts and create questions with regard to their rights and duties, participate in the election procedure of the Rectors, Deans (principles, directors) of HEIs and discuss any other matters of their concern.

Students have their representatives regularly attending the sessions at the highest level of HEIs governance both at the Faculty level (sessions of Educational Academic Board), and University level.

They have also members at the commission for self-evaluation and evaluation of the faculties and the university.

In 2001, at the "St Cyril and Methody" university has been established the institution student's attorney and the Book of Rules has been introduced.

The University Act, the structure and organization of the University do not provide some special trade union representatives, meaning especially about the governance of the University.

Examples:

- At the University "St. Cyril and Methody" students are members of the managing bodies of the faculties (the dean's management and the teaching and scientific board), in the bodies of the University (the University Senate and the Rector's Board) and in (all) 13^{een} UKIM commissions.

They are also part of the commission for self-evaluation and evaluation of the faculties and UKIM.

- Students at the Technological-Metallurgy Faculty- Skopje are represented within the bodies in accordance with the Statute of TMF (*Univerzitetski glasnik*, No. 30, 06.11.2002), i.e. five representatives of the students (one representative from each year) are members of the Academic (teaching-scientific) council, and two student representatives are members of the Faculty's management body.
- At the Faculty for Electrical engineering and Information Technologies – Skopje, students are involved in governance of the institution. One student representative is a member of the Dean's Board. Five student representatives (one for each year of studies) are members of the Faculty Educational and Scientific Board. Students are also involved in the self-evaluation body of the Faculty. The faculty does not consider involvement of staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance.
- Students are represented at the State University of Tetovo by the Student Union and it's very active in the governance of HEIs and they participate at all four levels:

- in the governance of national bodies for QA
- in external review of HEIs and/or programs: either in expert teams or at the decision making stage,
- in consultation during the external reviews
- in internal evaluations

The academic staff is represented by their bodies as Councils of Faculties and they participate also at all four levels.

- At the Faculty of Economics in Skopje students are organizing themselves in special organization called the Students' Association, with its own working bodies. The students participate in the work of the managerial bodies of the Faculty they also take part in the drafting of the curriculum and the syllabus, and take the necessary measures and activities for better performance of the education process.

Particular activities within the Students' Association are performed within the International Organization for Student exchange in the area of the economics and management-AIESEC. Activities of AIESEC are oriented to the organization of the professional training of students abroad, organization of seminars covering some particular topics, strengthening the collective awareness for international cooperation and solidarity between young people from different cultures and nations.

Students' Union is publishing its own newspaper called "Cach," and is organizing various sport activities, cultural manifestations, and other activities.

Universities do not include special trade union representatives in the governance of the University.

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

The programs at the Law Faculty provide courses and internship is organized for students attending the classes at the first and second cycle of education, within the State Judiciary institutions and the leading enterprises from the business sector.

At the Faculty of Economy the Project within the program PHARE-ACE encompasses:

- Local Financial Systems and Development of Small and Medium Size Enterprises in Transition Countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe
- Isolation Overcoming, Development Strategy and Policy for Cross border Cooperation in South-Eastern Europe;
- Privatization, Corporate Management and Industrial Policy between Slovenia and Macedonia;

Career center exists at the EURM in order to provide cooperation with the business partners and the state institutions;

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

In the line with the principles of the Bologna Process, the Law on Amending to the Law on Higher Education (2003)¹ created a legal framework for a system of higher education based on three cycles. The initiatives for changes in the structure of the higher education, primarily the duration of the undergraduate and postgraduate studies, have raised a serious debates and reactions within the universities in Macedonia.

Before the adoption of the legislative changes, the undergraduate studies at the majority of faculties were 8 semesters (4 years) in total length. At the specific faculties the duration of studies was 10 semesters (5 years, e.g. technical sciences) or 12 semesters (6 years, e.g. medical sciences). At the end of these study programs, students were awarded with the title graduate student in the respective field.

What the degree system concerns, important reforms of the study program and the introduction of two-cycle studies, 5+3 model for academic studies and 3+2+3 for academic and professional studies in Macedonia was conducted within the faculties and primarily by the technical faculties (2004-05). They also have introduced studies with the duration shorter than three years, so called "short cycle" studies within the first study cycle.

The current experience is showing that the 3+2+3 model or three-year duration for the undergraduate studies is not so easy concept for the faculties. Some faculties have still maintained four years duration of their undergraduate study programs, in some cases even five.

In restructuring of the second cycle studies (post-graduate studies), some faculties respect the Bologna Process recommendations for Master's Studies with duration of 1.5 or 2 years (regardless of the 3, or 5 years duration of the undergraduate studies).

At the UKIM situation is the following:

First cycle – enrolled 8.725 students

Second cycle – enrolled 2.100 students

The total number of enrolled students below doctoral level is: **10.825**

- Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information technologies enrolls only students for the first cycle. The total number of students bellow doctoral level enrolled is 1682 (62.3%).

¹ "The Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No: 49/2003.

- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering enrolls only students for the first cycle. The total number of students bellow doctoral level enrolled is 1071 (49.04%).

At the UKLO, the total number of students below doctoral level is: **1.027**

Responding to the labour market needs, the universities have developed special higher vocational study programs with duration of three and less than three years:

- At the University “Ss. Cyril and Method-Skopje, the first students are enrolled in the academic year 2004-05. The graduates will be provided with the certificates for the completed tertiary /vocational/ education.
- Three year tertiary /vocational/ study programs are introduced at the faculties in the University “St. Kliment Ohridski”- Bitola starting from the academic year 2004-05.
- In the academic year 2004-05, Tetovo State University has organized the tertiary vocational studies within the Faculty of Polytechnics.

The Law faculty, “ Justinian Primus” - Skopje has successfully implemented the ECTS since 2005, and at present is running 2 cycle degree system (3+2) in three types of studies: Law, Political Science and Journalism studies.

In the 2006/2007 academic year, the program is followed by the two generations of students, first and second year students (first cycle) in all three types of studies. Within the number of 2289 students, 1713 are students of law, 334 students are at the political sciences and 242 students are at journalism course. Estimated percentage is going around 65% of all students attending the Faculty, and the rest of percentage is remaining for the students that are attending the previous study programs and courses.

Implementation of the ECTS system at TMF started in the academic year 2004-2005. Since then, the total number of students enrolled according to the ECTS system is 344 in the first, second and third year. Since introduction of the ECTS system, attention has been paid to the student loading, as a result of which the percentage of students that have successfully finished their study year and continued their studies at the following years has raised significantly. The second cycle according to ECTS will start at 2008-2009 academic year. Second cycle degree lasts four semesters. Only in one postgraduate study program the workload is measured by credit points. The number of students presently enrolled at postgraduate studies at TMF is 29.

EURM has established the first cycle at the level of 51 % of the total amount of the students. The second cycle has not been established;

(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 3rd cycle students following structured doctoral programs
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies

- the elements that are included in doctoral study programs, 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 third cycle (PhD) in Macedonia programs prepare advanced students for professional career and future academic pursuits. Doctoral program flexibility allows to doctors' to meeting their individual career goals either in employment or in the academic field. The main objective of doctoral studies is to enhance specialization for further research and to offer students a more advanced academic orientation at a highest level.

The present model of doctoral studies in Macedonia is such that individual studies are co-ordinated by the mentors. The procedure of running to the doctor's degree is that of registering, working on and publicly defending the doctoral dissertation. Universities have insight into the reports of the commission for the acceptance of the doctoral thesis through their publication in the University Bulletin.²

Doctoral candidate prepares doctoral dissertation along with mentor (professor). Candidates submit their dissertation to the special Commission. The Commission is composed of five scholars elected by the Educational Academic Board. The Commission's responsibility is to review the doctoral dissertation and to submit report to the EAB who may adopt or to refuse the report. If report is adopted, candidate would be allowed to proceed to the public defense of the dissertation.

The Commission is composed by the scholars from the different research areas and different HEIs. In that way, to the candidates is allowed a wide interdisciplinary research and specialization range.

Doctoral studies are mentor-based, therefore no workload (credit) measures. Doctor's degree is awarded by registering, preparing and defending a doctoral thesis in the particular scientific field. Doctor's degrees are awarded in a wide range of scientific fields. A doctoral study last 3 years. Doctoral studies are linked to learning objectives.

Exapmle:

The doctoral studies at TMF are organized in accordance with the Regulation for the unique basis for organizing postgraduate and doctoral studies at the University St. Cyril and Methody (*Univerzitetetski glasnik br. 7, 25.09.2001*). Pursuant to this, the student can obtain his/her PhD degree with a defense of a PhD thesis. The doctoral studies as the

² “St.Cyril and Methody” University Development Strategy

third cycle of the Bologna process will be organized at TMF by 2010 at the latest.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Access³ 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.

At the UKIM, 100% of study programs are organized for undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Access to the second cycle is dependant on the successful completion of the first cycle of studies. The degree achieved after four or three years is considered as a basic criterion for access to the second cycle. The second cycle leads to master's and/or doctor's degree.

UKIM organizes study programs at postgraduate level for specialists, with duration of two semesters, or one year, and for M.A./M.Sc for rest of study programs. Studies last three or four semesters.

After the successful completion of these studies and the defence of a Specialist or M.A./M.Sc. dissertation the title of Specialist or M.A./M.Sc. in the relevant professional or scientific field is awarded.

Specialist studies are second cycle (postgraduate studies) but they don't give direct access to the third cycle.

M.A/M.Sc is required as a kind of "bridging course" for pursuing doctoral studies. Changes already made in the Law of Higher Education require as a basis for specifying and defining applicative v.s. academic competences in the postgraduate cycle i.e for

³ Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education.

removing obstacles between cycles.

Examples:

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering:

- all first cycle qualifications of the academic studies (programs for 4+1 model) give access to the second cycle;
- all first cycle qualifications of the academic studies (programs for 4+1 model) give access to the third cycle;
- all first cycle qualifications of the academic studies (programs for 4+1 model) give access to both the second and third cycles;
- all second cycle qualifications give access to the third cycle;
- vocation studies (professional study programs, model 3+2) require bridging courses to transfer between cycles in the same subject area.

Faculty of Electrical engineering and Information technologies

- all first cycle qualifications of the academic studies (programs for 4+1 model) give access to the second cycle
- all first cycle qualifications of the academic studies (programs for 4+1 model) give access to the third cycle
- all first cycle qualifications of the academic studies (programs for 4+1 model) give access to both the second and third cycles
- all second cycle qualifications give access to the third cycle vocational studies (professional study programs, model 3+2) require bridging courses to transfer between cycles in the same subject area

TMF:

- 100% of the first cycle qualifications can proceed to the second cycle qualifications (permitted that the student has achieved the entry requirements, e.g. GPA and other);
- four-year undergraduate studies allow students to enroll in the third cycle (after completing second cycle);
- at the TMF all first cycle qualifications give access to the different second cycle programs
- specialization program, as a part of the second cycle program, does not allow students access to the third cycle program.
- transfer from the three-year professional to the four-year academic study program (first cycle) and transfer from the specialization to the Master degree program (second cycle).

(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 EHEA⁴.

⁴ A Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

Please include:

- the stage of development of your national qualifications framework (for example: has your national QF been included in legislation or agreed between all relevant stakeholders; has a working group been established; have national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications been prepared; has a timetable for implementation been agreed?)
- 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.

In 2001 the Government of the Republic of Macedonia has been established the qualifications obtained with vocational and professional education and training by establishing national classification of vocations and professions. The document has a great importance in the systematization of the professional qualifications and vocations. With this decree was established the national classification of the professions and vocations with standardized titles and codes with the groups based on ISCO/88 (international standardized classification of professions). Additionally below are noted the names of qualifications obtained after completing the higher education considering both cycles the undergraduate/postgraduate studies.

It is worth mentioning “the National Classifications of Professions/Vocations has been done one year later, in 2002 which incorporate some changes occurred within the structure of the labor force and new conditions in the market economy. Besides, there was a serious attempt for harmonizing with the international norms and standards and providing comparable dates with the EU countries.

However, the issue of qualifications framework is becoming increasingly important as one of the major challenges of the Bologna Process. Creation of a qualification framework where the specific profile of qualifications should be transparently described and where the subject specific competences and the whole context of learning should be clearly described is challenge. The main intention of the Macedonian (National) Qualifications Framework is simplifying international comparison and recognition but also making a major contribution to the high level of quality assurance.

The European Training Foundation representatives and the Experts from Ireland, having completed the National Conferences in June and September 2005, have been proposed to the Ministry of Education and Science three year development. All development levels are going to be in line with the requirements of the Copenhagen Process in VET and the Bologna Process in Higher Education.

Group from the VET Centre joined by two representatives from Higher Education (MoES, Tempus) is going to complete the draft document on the National Framework of Qualifications. This document will comprise 8 levels of qualifications as suggested during the ETF seminars;

The Framework document will include Secondary, Secondary Vocational and Higher Education qualifications;

This group works with the Consultative Committee which represents the stakeholders in education in Macedonia: Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour and

Social Policy, Bureau for Development of Education, State Statistical Office, Chamber of Commerce of Macedonia, Trade Unions, Craft Chamber of Commerce, Private Employers, Private Education, Principals of Schools and students and parents (some their representatives might be additionally added by the Ministry of Education & Science).

During the 2006 consultations and seminars were held and the draft national guidelines is issued, with a visible attempt in defining qualification, specifying the broad learning outcomes, showing the distinguishing features for each qualification, describing the range of pathways to and from the qualification and the arrangements for assessment and issuing the qualification.

The National Qualification Framework and its guidelines will be an essential part of the Macedonian Quality Assurance processes.

However, we assume we have now two distant qualification frameworks for higher education in Europe: EQF and EHEA overarching qualifications. We are expecting the Macedonian qualifications framework to relate to OQF-EHEA and EQF by 2010 and 2009. This is a serious question for every national authority, and every higher education body or institution - for the simple reason of the different structures and the question on what structure to establish the NQF.

Macedonian qualifications framework is expected to reflect the qualifications within the higher education system and to include the descriptors: generic and profile descriptors.

It will include more clear links to the 1997 Lisbon Convention on the Recognition and the Directives on the recognition of professional qualifications, and provide consistency with transparency mechanisms, including Diploma Supplement.

Within the EQF concept Macedonia finds the 8-level reference structure as an appropriate where the levels 5-8 that in general capture the higher education. The initiative includes qualification descriptors, first for the Bachelor and the Master, later also for the Doctor. These are kind of reference points, meant to discern what competences are supposed to be attained at the end of the first, or second, or third cycle (the Dublin descriptors).

The aspects that the Macedonian qualifications framework should have in mind are the following:

- should ensure compatibility with the overarching framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area;
- Involve all relevant stakeholders;
- Identify a clear nationally agreed set of purposes;
- Ensure that NQF link academic standards, quality assurance system and has understanding within the country about the place and level of qualifications;
- Ensure the proper description about access to further qualification and the relation to the three cycles.
- Ensure relation of qualifications with the transparency instrument, Diploma Supplement and ECTS;
- Make use of learning outcomes and learning in various settings: formal, non-

<p>formal and informal.</p> <p>11. What measures are being taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?</p> <p>Please include where possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Efforts in Macedonia are particularly oriented to a main objective of the Bologna Process – urging universities to better prepare students to enter job market and consequently to recognize their programs.</p> <p>Most of graduates found employment and work by using their skills and knowledge gained throughout the university studies, but some of them do not work within the field of their studies. The percentage of graduates work out of the country, so the brain-drain problem is present. In the moment, Macedonian job market is hardly to predict and required competences are very diverse. Higher Education sector is however oriented to resolve the important question: what do students need to learn, to handle professional challenges in the European dimension. Higher education institutions will assist students to recognize and articulate the employability skills developed within curriculum and in other activities at all three cycles – linked to the Dublin Descriptors and national qualifications framework.</p>

Quality assurance:

<p>(Scorecard and Eurydice)</p> <p>National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA⁵</p> <p>12. To what extent is your national system of QA already in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA?</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the stage of implementation of the national quality assurance system in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA • any action that has been taken to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA • any deadlines set for taking action to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA • any action planned to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the standards and guidelines for QA in the EHEA.
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⁵ <http://www.enqa.net/files/BergenReport210205.pdf>

The Republic of Macedonia is committed in aligning the quality assurance process according to the recommendations from the Bergen Communiqué (2005):

- definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved in the process;
- evaluation of programs and institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students in all stages of the quality assurance process and publication of results;
- system of accreditation, certification or similar/comparable procedures;
- international participation, co-operation and participation in regional and wider networks for quality assurance.

In that way, measures have been already taken:

- in defining the responsibility and jurisdiction of the universities, the national bodies for evaluation and accreditation and the State Educational Inspectorate;
- in participation of students in the national body and in the university bodies addressing quality assurance and control;
- in participation of representatives from the business sector and the social partners in the national body for quality assurance;
- in strengthening the international component in quality assurance at national level;
- in implementation of the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area suggested by the ENQA;
- in the acceptance of a model of expert revision of the agencies for quality assurance at national level, respecting jointly agreed directions and criteria.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of development of external quality assurance system

13. Describe the quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system
- the scope of your external quality assurance system: does it operate at a national level; does it cover all higher education⁶
- which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:
 - internal assessment
 - external review
 - publication of results

⁶ 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.

- whether procedures have been established for the peer review of the national agency (ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

External evaluations are performed by:

- the Board for accreditation of High education (Law for high education, art.24);
- the Agency for evaluation (Law for high education, art.28);
- the University self-evaluation commission (Law for high education, art.31);

And the Faculty evaluation commission . . . (Law for high education, art.32).

The quality assurance and assessment of higher education institutions is conducted by an evaluation system. The evaluation embraces two phases: self evaluation undertaken by the higher education institutions and an external evaluation performed by the Evaluation Agency of the Republic of Macedonia.

The self evaluation aims to increase the ability and the mobility of the HEI for continuous quality and efficiency improvement, through out:

- forming an opinion regarding the quality of the HEI, and particularly for the quality of the HE process;
- forming an opinion on the correlation of teaching and research activities of HEI;
- forming an opinion on the relations of the HEI and the domain university;
- monitoring the general activities of the HEI;
- monitoring the structure, the quality and the progress of the academic staff.

The self evaluation presents basic phase of the process of further external evaluation, within the frames of the university, the faculty the Agency. It is performed on the basis of quality analyses of relevant quantitative data.

The external evaluation procedure is implemented on the basis of previously implemented procedures by HEI and its respective self evaluation reports. The self evaluation Commission submits the report to the Evaluation Agency within the period of 30 days after the signing of the self evaluation report.

The Evaluation Agency initiates the external evaluation procedure in the period of 30 days after the receipt of the self evaluation report of the HI.

The Agency performs external evaluation every five years and suggests the Accreditation Board to continue or withdraw the accreditation of the HEI on the grounds of condition and activities assessment of the HEI.

The Expert Commission for external evaluation prior to the visit of the HEI has a meeting in order to define the main mission, to define the framework questions and study and analyze the self evaluation report. The working visit of the Expert Commission lasts not longer than two and a half days.

The Report includes an overview of the procedure, and the activities performed by the HEI; conclusion from the meeting with the managerial team of the HEI, conclusion from the meetings with the self evaluation Commission that drafted the self evaluation report, conclusion from the meetings with the students, academic staff and administrative staff. Also conclusion from the inspection of the premises and funding.

In the conclusion of the report an explicit and objective definition of the strengths and weaknesses, without emphasizing the strength or hiding the weaknesses.

The conclusion is embracing special recommendations that suggest appropriate weaknesses.

The external evaluation report is submitted to HEI for their comments on it, prior to finalizing the report and submitting it to the Agency.

An appropriate Commission of the Agency is analyzing the report and if deemed necessary request additional information from the Expert Commission regarding the submitted report. After discussion on the report the Agency members vote its adoption.

At the end the external evaluation report by the Agency is submitted to the Government, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Board of Accreditation.

(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.

At the end of each semester students are given an anonymous evaluation form, to grade the performance of their education system, relevant subjects in that semester, their professors and their assistants. They can also express their personal opinions, statements and give positive or negative remarks.

During the process of self evaluation at a faculty level the student is equal member of the Self valuation Commission.

The students are included mainly in the students review that are carried out at the faculty level and also at the university level giving their opinion on several aspects of the teaching quality, evaluation of teachers, the way of student assessment ect.

The implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA in the Republic of Macedonia

The quality assurance in the Republic of Macedonia is realized on the bases of the system and procedures of the QA process set up by the Evaluation Agency i.e. self-evaluation and external evaluation of universities, faculties and other higher education institutions, but we must emphasize that it is on the institutional level and not on a study program level.

Also according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA we do not have organized the assessment of our Evaluation Agency by foreign agencies after 5 years of its establishment in order to be registered in European Register of Evaluation Agencies.

In 2005 the University “St Kliment Ohridski” from Bitola has organized an anonymous student review on a university level; and additionally worked out a TEEPMUS project for Establishment of QA Unit at University level.

The South East European University in Tetovo has organized the anonymous student review too.

We do hope that 2010 will be the year when we'll harmonize our legislation with the EHEA.

We plan to organize the assessment of our Evaluation Agency by foreign agencies in order to be in line and to fully meet the standards and guidelines for QA in EHEA.

(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, either as members or observers
 - membership of ENQA
 - membership of any other international network.

The Evaluation Agency as well as the Accreditation Board of the Republic of Macedonia are members of the Network of Central and East European Quality Assurance Agencies (SEE Network) since its establishment in 2001 and is actively participating in all its activities.

The international participation in the quality assurance is present in the process of external evaluation of the Universities, faculties and other Higher Education Institution, at least one member of the experts' team is from foreign country, mainly from the neighboring countries due to the benefits of the similar languages.

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 “St.Cyril and Methody” University has adopted the Diploma Supplement on June 11, 2002 by the Rector’s Board and distributed to all its members – 23 faculties and 10 institutes and its implementation is expected. The document’s form, content and issuance is in accordance with the University acts (Statute and Book of Rules)⁷, and is in accordance with the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format. The first students will receive the Diploma Supplement in the academic year 2008-2009.

There are no specific provisions for the Diploma Supplement in the existing Law on Higher Education. With the upcoming legislative changes the Diploma Supplement is expected to become a part of the University documents.

Faculty of Electrical engineering and Information technologies: around 10 students (or 3% of all) graduating in 2007 will receive the Diploma Supplement.

The Diploma Supplement at TMF is introduced with the introduction of the ECTS system, i.e. the academic year 2004-2005.

SEEU is issuing the Diploma Supplement in English language (besides Albanian and Macedonian), free of charge and automatically.

EURM do not have yet graduated students so than with the Diploma Supplement. The Faculty of Informatics is participating in TEMPUS project for the Diploma Supplement;

(Scorecard)

National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention:

17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents⁸ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Please include:

⁷ “Univerzitetski Glasnik” No. 27, 16.06.2002

⁸ 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)

- whether your country has ratified the convention (including depositing ratification instrument at either CoE or UNESCO)
- whether all appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents
- which of the following principles are applied in practice
 - 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 programs and institutions
- whether you have a fully operational ENIC
- any action being taken to ratify or fully implement the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents.

Within the Ministry of Education and Science is operating the Information Centre dealing with the recognition issues and promoting better understanding of existing recognition and transparency tools and use of qualification frameworks. Informative Centre is involved in a new task of providing information on the overarching framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area within the Macedonian tertiary education sector. It is going to be involved also in explaining foreign qualifications to employers, based on the accreditation results to the learning objectives. The Ministry of Education and Science throughout the Centre on Higher Education Information and Mobility /ENIC/, as the main source for providing information on recognition and mobility, is powerful promoter of the introduction and implementation of the European dimension in Higher Education in Macedonia and extremely valuable supporter of European co-operation and integration processes in Higher Education. The recognition of qualifications in the Republic of Macedonia is based on the general provisions of the Lisbon recognition Convention. In that way, in Macedonia qualifications from other countries are recognized as similar to the corresponding qualifications in Macedonian system unless there are substantial differences. Macedonian Ministry of Education and Science provide information on the institution and programs belonging to higher education system, or more precisely the appointed information centre offer advices on the recognition of foreign qualifications and encourage higher education institutions to issue the Diploma Supplement to the students in order to facilitate recognition. The Information Centre co-operate through the European Network of Information Centers, the ENIC Network.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of ECTS:

18. Describe the credit and accumulation system operating in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- the percentage of first and second cycle programs using ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- how any other credit or accumulation system in use relates to ECTS: is it

compatible with ECTS; what the ratio between national is and ECTS credits.

The efforts of Macedonian universities for development and introduction of credit systems comparable with the ECTS have been supported by majority of the recently completed or on-going Tempus projects.

According to the introductions of the most of the HE institutions regulations, the ECTS system is based on three basic elements: information (on study programs and student achievement), mutual agreement (between the partner institutions and the student) and the use of ECTS credits (to indicate student workload). These three core elements are made operational through the use of three key documents: the information package, the application form/learning agreement and the transcript of records. Besides, the ECTS is also made operational by students, teachers and institutions who would want to make study abroad an integral part of the educational experience. These are issues of quality which are going to be determined by the higher education institutions when establishing a satisfactory basis for co-operational agreements: bilateral/multilateral.

The full range of course units of the department/faculty using ECTS will be principle beneficial to the mobile students, including the doctorate course units. Students are expected to follow regular course units abroad. ECTS credits ensure that the program will be reasonable in terms of workload for the period of study abroad. For example, student whose choice of course units is 120 ECTS credits for an academic year would be supposed to work double than an average local student at the receiving institution. Student whose program totals is 30 ECTS credits for a whole academic year would undertake fewer work than the average local student and would in effect pursuing kind of part-time studies.

The transcript of records is found as a particularly useful in this context as it provides a history of the students' academic achievements, which helps the institutions to make the right decision.

Example:

The Faculty of Economics in Skopje, since the very beginning of the ECTS application, implements intensive training of its employees on the basic principles of the Bologna Declaration and the ECTS. Hence, several activities were implemented, as follows:

1) The Committee for preparation of the ECTS label application documents for 2006 reviewed three international methodologies for calculation of credits within the ECTS:

- Imposition Method
- Compositional Method
- Method of credit allocation according to Learning Outcomes and Competences

The Faculty's Council has been adopted a Decision for implementation of the Method of Credit Allocation according to Learning Outcomes or Competences. The Faculty uses this methodology to calculate the number of credits of all the courses taught on the undergraduate studies at the Faculty.

The Republic of Macedonia will continue with restructuring curricula and introduction of the credit transfer system. In line with the on-going efforts for ECTS to become a transfer and accumulation system, the Republic of Macedonia will work on widening the application of ECTS in the country.

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering

- the ECTS is fully implemented in the first cycle programs in academic year 2004/2005
- 49.04% of first cycle programs use ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- in academic year 2006/2007 we do not enroll students for the second cycle programs using ECTS

we do not use any other credit or accumulation system

Faculty of Electrical engineering and Information technologies

- the ECTS is fully implemented in the first cycle programs in academic year 2006/2007
 - 62.3% of first cycle programs use ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
 - in academic year 2006/2007 we do not enroll students for the second cycle programs using ECTS
 - we do not use any other credit or accumulation system
-
- the number/percentage of students admitted in academic session 2006-2007 to each type of institution: As of the academic year 2006-2007, 324 students are enrolled at TMF according to ECTS in the first, second and third year of study at the four-year academic study programs. 464 students are in the fourth year (eight and ninth semester) of their studies according to the old study program before the adoption of ECTS. 20 students are enrolled on the three-year professional study program.

At TMF, the ECST was implemented in the academic year 2004-2005, and it is in the middle phase of the full implementation of the first cycle. All study programs from the first cycle are in accordance to the Bologna requirements and have introduced the ECTS. In the second cycle, which lasts four semesters, only one study program measures the student loading according to ECTS. The national credit system is fully compatible with the ECTS.

At UKLO all HEI have already introduced the ECTS .

The ECTS implementation at the University provides comparability between study and subject programs, greater possibilities for choice, increased mobility of the students of the University between the universities in the country and abroad as well, more active approach of students to the educational process, increased transparency of studies particularly on plan of valuing the students' achievements and work of the teaching staff, permanent follow-up of the students' achievements etc.

According to ECTS, the total number of credits that a student should win during one semester regardless of number of subjects (modules) or teaching classes is 30. The number of credits allocated for each subject does not mean a reflection of the

significance of that subject in the profile shaping or a reflection of the engagement of teaching staff, but it is a reflection of volume of the student's engagement expressed in classes during the semester.

The ECTS introduction at the University as well as at each higher education institution must be followed up by publishing an informative package in which all studying conditions as well as possibilities offered to students shall be explained.

100% in the first cycle. UKIM has implemented the ECTS in all study programmes at all 23 faculties in the academic year 2006/07 in the first cycle (exceptions: Faculty of Architecture that is running the process of innovation of their study programmes in accordance with the ECTS and Faculty of Medicine where the ECTS is implemented only in the first year of studies), and almost in all study programmes in the second cycle.

Students that are at the first and the second year studying under ECTS, but EURM has not yet have the national credits;

19. Has your country produced a **national plan** to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications⁹? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.

(Attachment)

Lifelong Learning

(Scorecard)

Recognition of **prior learning**:

20. Describe the measures in place to recognize prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning.

Please include:

- the stage of development of any procedures or national guidelines to recognize prior learning
- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for assessing prior learning as a basis for access to HE
- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for allocating credits as a basis of exemption from some program requirements.

During the 2007-08, along with the debate on the National Qualification Framework and the improvement of the application of the ECTS, development of guidelines to support the implementation of recognition of prior learning within the provisions higher

⁹ ENIC/NARIC has produced guidelines for National Action Plans for Recognition.

education provision will be commenced. Prior learning has not been previously covered in Macedonia by the regulations and concerning the higher education in particular. This will however include prior learning achieved through life and work experiences as well as prior learning gained in less formal context in work-based learning and continuing professional development. Developing effective mechanisms for recognizing prior learning is however an important element of the successful implementation of the National Qualification Framework.

The questions imposed concerning the recognition of prior learning are around establishing of methods and principles of assessing the prior informal learning and including it to credit-based way of assessment as well as providing learning providers of prior learning with the information about the necessity of measuring the process of prior learning all that as a part of the lifelong learning process.

Within the draft version of the HE Act, the prior learning is addressed as a process that is undertaken by adults and is mainly understood as returning to learning. The process of recognizing the prior learning encompasses precise description of experience gained. The final desirable consequence of the recognition of prior learning would be the possibility to access to a certain study program within the tertiary education. The Nation Qualification Framework will help in this context to the learner in finding the appropriate field of study and further the appropriate position within the labor market. It is evident that the learning skills are in the core of the issue, making in the same time the difference between the formal and non-formal learning fewer.

Joint degrees:

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Establishment and recognition of joint degrees:

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

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of any legislation to establish joint programs
- whether joint¹⁰ degrees are allowed and encouraged in legislation
- whether joint degrees are allowed and encouraged in all three cycles
- an indication of the percentage of HEIs that have established joint programs and are awarding nationally recognized degrees jointly with HEIs of other countries
- any action being taken to encourage or allow joint programs.

The current Law on HE (Official Journals No. 113/2005; 49/2003; 64/2000) envisaged establishing joint studies with other universities within the all three cycles, giving a very general framework for organizing international studies. The issue of joint degree, as a double and multiple degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, is not

¹⁰ 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.

mentioned in the articles of the current Law on HE.

The Ministry of Education and Science is working on the new draft- Law on Higher Education where more precise introduction of joint degrees is provided as well as the recognition of joint degrees. The Law is expected to be in force before the end of 2007. The National Strategy for Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia 2005 – 2015, provide the responsibility for the Ministry of Education and Science to develop secondary legislation for study programs that will lead to the joint degree certificate.

In the Development Strategy “St. Cyril and Methody” University enhance its work on the development of integrated study programs and common degrees at first, second and third level, by joining the academic resources and cultural traditions. In such a way, UKIM is encouraging the creation of mutually degree study programs. This cooperation should be intensified and be more efficient at the postgraduate level. Such experience for the first cycle has the Faculty of Economy: Study programme for E-business; for the second – master cycle, the following faculties: Faculty of Philology, Faculty of Economy, Faculty of Agricultural Studies and Food, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies, Faculty of Civil Engineering.

University is generally focused on intensifying participation in the CARDS-TEMPUS and UNESCO programs, the Regional Central-East European initiative, cooperation with neighboring and Mediterranean countries.

Long-term bilateral cooperation with foreign universities is realized in areas that directly reflect the priorities and the interests of the partners. Bilateral, regional and multilateral forms of academic exchange and the direct cooperation of educational institutions are interconnected and mutually dependent. Bilateral cooperation includes 70 cooperative university agreements comprising faculty and student's mobility and exchanges, joint research projects, joint degrees, workshops and seminars.

The University participate at the joint research projects for restructuring of the existing and development of new curricula, reform of the higher education structure, management of institutions within higher education, quality assurance/assessment, development of specific knowledge and skills required for accomplishment of economic and social reforms, emphasizing the linkage with the industry. The University cooperates extensively with universities and research institutes around the world, fully utilizing over 70 bilateral cooperative agreements. The University actively participates in the EU education and research programs: CARDS-TEMPUS, FP6, FP7, IRC.

Under the Tempus program two projects, addressing the issue of joint degree are funded. The joint M.Sc. Curriculum in Software engineering as a regional studies, organized by the University "Ss Cyril and Methody" in Skopje, University of Novi Sad, University of Belgrade and University of Nis. The studies are accredited by the Accreditation Board on 14th December 2006. The first generation of postgraduates will receive their diplomas in June 2008.

The development of interdisciplinary studies on environment and resources engineering is funded. Three years undergraduate curriculum offers a Joint Degree title in the Environmental and Resources Engineering, which will be jointly issued by the University "Ss Cyril and Methody" in Skopje and University of Florence. The first generation of students will enter the studies in the 2008/2009 academic year.

What EURM concerns, Faculty of Economy already has dual degrees with Swiss School

of Management-Rome, Italy;
EURM has also established bilateral agreements for all type of educational transfers:
Business and Management University-Geneva, Switzerland, Swiss school of
management-Roma, Italy, faculty of Entrepreneurship, “Brothers’ Karic” University,
Republic of Serbia, MTM College, Sofia, Bulgaria, European college of economics and
management, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

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.

Scientific Institutional Infrastructure in Macedonia:

Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts

- Members
- Departments
- Research Centers

Universities

- Faculties
- Public Scientific Institutes
- Colleges

Independent research groups

Ministry of Education and Science

Department of Science and Technology

Unit for planning of science

Unit for projects

Unit for legal aspects of science and technology

Unit for technological development and technical culture

Unit for International Scientific Cooperation

FP6 and FP7 (2007)

COST

NATO

IAEA / JICA

Bilateral cooperation

Legal framework for Science and Technology::

1. Law for Scientific and Research Activity

Internal documents for:

- Supporting of young scientists

- Financing of scientific projects
- Supporting of publishing
- 2. Law for Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts
- 3. Law on Encouraging and Supporting the Technological Development

Scientific work, research and development of creative work are defining as a main orientation of the tertiary education in Macedonia. Some disciplines within the higher education system have closer synergy between research and teaching, or an idea of education through science. This is mainly the case with the natural sciences, such as biotechnology, physics, chemistry or engineering, and civil engineering in particular, where the laboratory work is taken as a kind of research work. It is to be expected that the idea of education by means of inquiry and research would spread to the other fields of education. Organization of these two activities within the same institution is a question, taking account differences that exist between teaching and research institutions, and especially at the undergraduate level. The scientific research institutes in Macedonia are in a close cooperation and collaboration with the HE institutions. The first cycle students are considerably limited in their engagements with the faculties, while second and third cycle students are allowed to attend specialist and research education, within the institutes and are able to introduce themselves into research activities and evolve as researchers.

Improving the quality of research environment and providing adequate infrastructure for research is necessary in Macedonia, paying more attention to research funds too. What the public funding concerns it is a permanent obstacle for research but demands on higher education is growing gradually so that for the research.

Contribution of researches and research institutions to the society is important issue, considering that societal purpose is a very crucial one. Having amount of researches within the higher education is important also but the quality and the relevance of their work even more.

During the past years, research in Macedonia has been mostly pursued individually and there was no clear visibility into the results or application of the research work.

System of scientific and research activity in Macedonia comprises the faculty research, training and improvement of the staff for scientific and research work and scientific and research infrastructure. This activity is regulated by the Law on Scientific and Research activity and by the Law on Higher Education. According to these laws, faculties and research institutes have academic freedom in effectuating the fundamental, developing, and applied research.

What the UKIM faculties and scientific institutes concerns, they have autonomy in the domain of their research work being not dependant completely from the budgetary funding system. Funding of the scientific and research activities of the independent research institutes is realized by financing their basic activity and projects from the Ministry of Education and Science while financing the scientific and research activity within the faculties is generated mainly from the projects. (Article 3, Paragraph 4 of the Law on Scientific and Research Activity).

Research in Macedonia has an international orientation. Many of research projects are running under the European higher education development programs and are financed by the foreign institutions and foundations.

Research in Macedonia is mainly undertaken at the HEIs. There is cooperation between the researchers from the higher education and from the business area (research centers from corporations, etc).

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 number of doctoral candidates is changeable category however it has an increasing trend. In general, almost all doctoral candidates have research activities before defending the doctoral dissertation but the extent varies depending of their scientific commitment.

The results of the research carried out by doctoral candidates are assessed and publicized by means of: reviews, the publication of scientific works, scholar critiques, the assessment of professional experts and their application in practice.

In the domain of applied research Macedonian universities do not have complete insight into this activity, within the faculties and scientific institutes. Apart from the information they receive for the specific purposes from the faculties' annual reports for their research work, universities have not raised any particular initiative in a way of more complex research projects linked to the economy and the public sector.

Universities in Macedonia have academic freedom for conveying applied research, preparation, adoption, and realization of the programs for applied work within the framework of the funds for applied activities (Article 11 and 12, Law on Higher Education). Faculties are responsible for development of applied research activities, development of the new technologies and their application in the spheres of production and service activities in the relevant fields (Article 8, Law on Higher Education).

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.

Equality of access to higher education institutions in Macedonia means that everybody who fulfils the conditions for admission stipulated by HE Law has a right to study in one or more study programs. Entrance examinations are a part of admission procedures in the majority of higher education institutions, especially for certain actual subjects.

- The Ministry of Education and Science grants student scholarships for talented students with a grade point average of 8.5 and student credits for students with a grade point average of 7.5;
- The state finances a quota of students in all state universities, and the

- faculties admits a number of students (double of the state quota) provided the students cover their participation fees. For students admitted in the state quota, the state covers part of their participation;
- The state grants quotas for ethnic minorities in HEIs under beneficial conditions for students that express ethnic affiliation;
 - There are a number of new private HEIs and a new University, that increase the availability of HE access to students.

In general, different scholarships are available to Macedonian students, including that granted upon the achieved results. The social assistance includes the possibilities of using dormitories/restaurants, transportation, with reduced prices, than libraries, labs and computers in the faculties free of charge.

The faculties have the rights to relieve students of participation fees and it would be necessary in the future improving the opportunities for students' part-time job engagements.

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

Please include:

- any guidance or counseling 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.

Every year, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia provides the distinguished undergraduate students with the scholarships for pursuing their further graduate studies at the well-ranked universities within Europe.

The Ministry of Education and Science, within the loan scheme provides the successful students with credits and scholarships.

According to the Strategy¹¹ student support from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia for the year 2004-05 was the following: scholarships: 3,543; loans: 4,312; and scholarships as per bilateral agreements: 212. The situation is almost the same until the very recent period.

Several Banks are contemporarily providing students with the possibilities of receiving credits counting considerably lower interest rates and especially for the academic purposes.

Progress has been made in integrating ethnic groups and people from disadvantages backgrounds into university system and it is to be expected that tertiary education in Macedonia is already a mass rather than an elite system.

¹¹ The National Strategy for Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia, 2005-2015

Mobility:

27. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to student mobility and promote the full use of mobility programs.

Please include:

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

The Republic of Macedonia is still not eligible to take active part in Erasmus and Socrates Programs. The most significant support to the higher education reform and to higher education capacity building and support to the socio-economic transformations in the country provide the European Community Program Tempus. This Program supports intensive cooperation among higher education institutions in the Republic of Macedonia, the EU Member States, the candidate countries and the CARDS countries.

The third phase of the Program, known as Tempus III (2000-2006) is financed from the CARDS assistance program.

Within the Tempus Framework Mobility Program the following projects were realized:

- 68 Joint European Projects
- 5 Structural and Complementary Measures, and
- 10 Compact Measure Projects.

The total number of 298 Individual Mobility Grants is realized for visits to EU Member States, CEE countries, for students and academic staff and individual who visit the Macedonian higher education institutions.

The most important cooperation has been developed within the framework of Joint European Project. The projects are compatible with the priorities jointly agreed with the European Commission and the partner countries. The following types of Joint European Projects are financed:

- Curriculum Development
- University Management
- Training Courses for Institution Building
- Networking Projects.

Examples:

Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering Faculty are encouraging their students for mobility by using the possibilities from the programs like: CEEPUS, DAAD, etc.

Students from TMF and Civil Engineering Faculty - Skopje may participate in the student exchange programs organized by IAESTE for practical work, and to participate in the international research projects as young researchers (for students from second cycle only).

Country's involvement in the programs that support mobility (e.g. Tempus, CEEPUS, Stability Pact actions) is the main driver of student mobility in Macedonia. Tempus covers mobility of representatives of students associations with the individual mobility scheme, as well as student mobility at undergraduate and postgraduate level in Joint European Projects, especially in the curriculum development projects. Limited numbers of study programs are offered in English or other languages. Positive examples in this context are: the SEE University in Tetovo (use of Albanian, Macedonian and English

language); postgraduate studies in Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology, postgraduate studies in Software Engineering as well as undergraduate and postgraduate studies in E-business.

There are some obstacles to student mobility:

- Visa issues;
- Financial obstacles (student loans and grants are very low to cover costs of studying even at the home institution are not portable and students have limited access to European mobility programs);
- Difficulties with the recognition at the home/host HE institution;
- Language barriers;
- Limited capacities of the university administration to support foreign students.

In November 2006, the Republic of Macedonia is beginning the negotiation process with the EU Member States, for simplification of the procedure for obtaining visa, for several target groups, including students, teaching staff and scientists.

Investments will be made to improve student accommodation capacities, living conditions and extra curricular life.

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.

Macedonia call for an expansion of mobility programs for both students and staff. There are still many obstacles to mobility. These range from problems in gaining entry to and permission to reside in the foreign country, to unsolved problems in the recognition, to questions of financial support, problems of languages, and uncertain professional prospects.

Macedonia puts effort to the possibilities for removing the obstacles to mobility as an important aspect of societal and economic growth. Macedonian academic community especially encourages young researchers to participate in all available mobility programs. However, it is also important to think within the country about ways to improve mobility at the European, but national and institutional levels, and to propose effective means of promoting mobility in general.

It is worth mentioning that:

- National scheme for grants and loans covers only home students. Support to external mobility is not covered with the scheme.
- Special policy was developed to stimulate mobility of Macedonians from the neighboring countries to pursue studies in Macedonia.
- Grants and loans for other students from abroad have not been foreseen.
- Grants are portable only for postgraduate and doctoral studies under the condition that the national higher education institutions do not provide such kind of studies.

29. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to staff mobility and promote the full use of mobility programs.

Please include:

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

Staff mobility in Macedonia is considered within several ongoing TEMPUS JEP projects, NATO, DAAD, CEEPUS, etc. Universities are continuously working for providing the possibilities for staff mobility by using any other mobility programs. The academic staff unions themselves can do a lot to promote and support the mobility of their members.

Individual Mobility (Tempus) Grants support mobility of academics, teaching assistants, administrators, education experts and governmental civil servants. East-West and West-East mobility grants are currently available as well. The individual Mobility Grants supports:

- Preparation of Joint European Projects proposals;
- Participation in special events from the field of higher education in the EU Member States or candidate countries;
- Retraining of study period, collaboration on a specific academic subject and dissemination of a good practice.
- Faculties offer paid leave to all staff, up to one year for purposes of research and visiting arrangements in other universities, after which the professor/s are obliged to spend a period of four years in active teaching at the HEI;

Country's involvement in international cooperation has been the main driver of teachers and staff mobility from/to the country (Tempus, the Framework program, COST, bilateral cooperation). Since 1996, Tempus has supported around 350 individual mobility to/from EU Member states and candidate's countries and numerous academic and administrative staff mobility in Joint European Projects and Structural and Complementary Measures. The Stability Pact supports academic mobility in SEE. Bilateral agreements with 15 EU and non-EU countries have been signed. Under the CEEPUS academic mobility scheme, which started from March 2005 are the possibilities for staff mobility as well.

Obstacles to teachers and staff mobility are mainly the following: differences in living costs, visa and residence permits, and languages.

Important measures already taken:

- Development of study programs in widely spoken foreign languages;
- Development of tools such as: Diploma Supplement and ECTS, compatible qualifications framework;
- Development of study programs that facilitate transfer of credits;
- Development of information centers that provide information for mobility opportunities;

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

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

Higher Education Strategy in Macedonia is based on the last recommendations linked to the development of higher education. In certain point, the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Macedonia is stated already.

The goals and instruments of the Bologna declaration – the adoption of easily recognizable and comparable diplomas, the adoption of a system with two main levels, the introduction of credit system and the diploma supplement, the promotion of mobility, the promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance, the promotion of the European dimension in higher education, higher education as a public good and lifelong learning, the regulation of student status, particularly regarding their role in managing higher education institutions are already a constituent part of the Strategy. The following issues are a particular strategic aims contributing to the promotion of the attractiveness of the EHEA:

- Increasing the proportion of the younger generation in tertiary education;
- Increasing the number of places in the tertiary education system as a whole and gradually eliminating restrictions on enrolment for the majority of study programs;
- Gradual co-financing part-time studies and discussing the possibilities for free of charge studies for full-time undergraduate study programs and fostering diverse sources of funding for higher education activities;
- Improving and modernizing the scholarship system and student standards of living;
- Increasing the success and effectiveness of undergraduate and postgraduate studies through appropriate investment in personnel, equipment and structure of higher education institutions, as well as through operational modernization, integration of research and educational work, improvement of teaching and educational capabilities, introduction of the credit system, distance education and self assessment of the quality of academic work in higher education institutions, with full student participation.
- Ensuring the conditions for successful, autonomous and socially responsible universities and ensuring their continuous development and allowing for the creation of a decentralized higher education infrastructure;
- Encouraging cooperation among universities and cooperation between the economy;
- Improving the success and effectiveness of studies by investing in different forms of university fields;
- Encouraging international cooperation among higher education institutions, in particular in the projects of the European Union and regional programs and encouraging the formation of a European Higher Education Area in accordance with the declaration of the European Education Ministers.

Future challenges

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

The process of rethinking and revising higher education and university in Macedonia includes a focus on the development of knowledge, skills, perspectives and values in each of three important aspects: society, economy and environment.

In this context, creating a more sustainable academic future will not occur

by increasing the amount of education institution, instead, it is an issue of content and relevance. These also include developing skills for creative and critical thinking, collaboration and cooperation. It includes a general review of approaches to teaching, learning and assessment where the lifelong learning skills are fostered.

To improve the quality and relevance of higher education in Macedonia make demands for developing new educational and study programs that will meet the requirements of an information and knowledge society, employment, and the active participation in the life of a democratic society in an integrated Europe.

Demands are also towards building a system of evaluation of educational institutions' activities at all levels of government and administration, of monitoring results, examinations, assessment of personal development level.

Macedonian HE is going to achieve the following important goals:

- To replace the information-based, teacher-directed learning provided within a formal education system with a new type of learning that emphasizes creativity, applying, analyzing and synthesizing knowledge and engaging in collaborative learning throughout the lifetime;
- To offer more flexible learning opportunities within the Macedonian higher education system.
- To increase the successes and effectiveness of undergraduate and postgraduate studies through appropriate investment in personnel, equipment and structure of higher education institutions.

Academic ethics is enhanced in many of the educational documents and higher education strives to become highly accessible, the governance is going to be fully shared among all who participate in the academic community. Efficient financing and efficient use of the resources are becoming very important, and high quality of teaching and research is stressed as the best possible contribution of higher education to the country and its influence on the human resources, the quality of life and the system of values.

There are important challenges to the universities in Macedonia: building and safeguarding academic and research standards and ensuring the quality of higher education throughout the flexibility of the curricula. Not least important is ensuring intellectual freedom and making overall education process really democratic by giving due consideration to social, ethnic, and gender issues, all in addition to academic achievements.

Higher education in Macedonia is striving to be more than a preparing for a job. It strives to be a form of preparation for a social life, and a particular reflection of what the whole society is and what it wants to be in the future.

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
May 2006