

**BOLOGNA PROCESS
TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2005-2007 Netherlands 14 Dec 2006**

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	Netherlands
Date	
BFUG member (one name only) Position	Marlies Leegwater
Email address	m.e.leegwater@minocw.nl
Contributors to the report	Vsnu, hbo-raad, paepon, nva

Main achievements since Bergen

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

The Lissabon recognition convention is implemented at universities according to their own commitments. The grounds are in the process of being taken up in legislation as part of a proposal for an entire new legislation for higher education (WHOO). This has been sent to Parliament 6th June 2006. It will be dealt with by the new Parliament after November 22 2006.

National organisation

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

Please include:

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

No changes since the Bergen meeting in the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education.

In the debates to prepare policies, also employers and employees are involved. These two groups have been included into the “regie groep” for the Bologna process, see for further information the answer to question nr 4.

(see annex A for the text of the report for the Bergen meeting 2005)

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

Please include:

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

No changes to the institutional structure

The number of *hogescholen*, providing professional higher education, has declined to 40 in 2005, due to mergers of governing boards (was 49 in 2003).

The total number of enrolments in HEI in 2005 is 559,400 (was 513,000 in 2003)

(see Annex B for the text of the report for the Bergen meeting 2005)

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 “*regie groep*” a “conducting” co-operating group in which the government (ministry of Education, Culture and Science), the rectors conferences (VSNU and HBO-Raad), the private institutions organisation (PAEPON) the student organisations (ISO and LSVb), the quality assurance organisation NVAO, the employer organisations (VNO-NCW and MKB) and the employee organisations (via AOb) participate, follows developments and signals strength and weaknesses in implementation of the process. It also advises on new focus. This group is chaired and administered by the government. Decisions on implementation of the process take place during regular meetings at chief executive level.

The group of *Bologna promoters* consists of the member of the BFUG (government), 6 university staff (various assignments), 1 Nuffic participant and 2 students. This group promotes good practice via meetings focussed on various instruments of the Bologna process. This group is chaired by a Bologna promoter and administered by the Nuffic, the Dutch agency for administration of EU-Education programmes

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.

Universities

Governing boards of universities consists of persons of high esteem for the university. They are independent.

Staff and students are stakeholders. Dependent on the structure chosen by the university students and staff are represented in one or in two “co-decision bodies” that co-decide on proposals of the governing board (separate- or joined co-decision). National unions of students (LSVb, ISO), employers (VSNU, HBO-Rd) and staff unions (like AOb) are representing their adherents at the highest level:

Central Student/Advice councils, in which above bodies are represented, exist at every HEI. As mentioned just above, sometimes students and staff are separated (mainly at universities), sometimes students and staff are together (mainly at universities of professional education. These councils are authorized to make decisions in some cases, give advice and they have the right to be heard by for example the Board of control of the Institute. (www.lofnet.nl for an overview of several councils).

Faculty Student/Advice Councils: Exactly as the ones mentioned above but for the faculty level.

The above is regulated in the WHW, articles 9.30 – 9.49

Programmes

For each education programme an education committee is installed. Art 9.18 of the WHW (Law on HE) reads: The task of the committee is:

- a. to advise on the education- and exam regulation, mentioned in article 7.13
- b. to assess yearly the implementation of the Education and Exam regulation
- c. to advise (upon request, or at its own initiative) the board of the programme, mentioned in art 9.17 and the dean on all issues related to the education in the programme concerned

On the number of students in that committee art 9.18.3 reads:

The faculty regulations regulate the composition of the education committee and the way its members are selected, provided half of the number of the members of the committee is composed of or nominated by the students registered for that programme.

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

The business and social partners are member of the “*regie groep*” Bologna a “conducting” co-operating/coordinating group (see also question 4).

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.

The enrolment data concerning 2006/2007 are not yet available.

The enrolment data concerning 2005/2006 are:

In first cycle programmes 84%

In second cycle programmes 5%

In one tier master programmes 11% (either fading out or related to (veterinary) medicine

(Total nr of students enrolled 561.720)

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

In The Netherlands, on average some 60% of the doctorates awarded are for doctoral candidates which have followed their doctoral programmes in a research school. The normal length is 4 years and candidates take on average some 5 years and 3 months to complete the programme. The programmes comprise a few taught courses (6 months). While doctoral candidates are for the greater part employees of the university, the rest of the programme is devoted to independent and guided research. The candidate is supervised by his promotor (professor), and other experts within the field of research. In most cases, a serious assessment is carried out after the first year of the programme, by the promotor. The final assessment is often carried out by the promotor, a team of peers and concluded by the approval of the Doctorate Board.

In general the learning outcomes of the doctoral studies are in line with the "Dublin" descriptors for the end of the third cycle. The candidate has proven that he/she has the competencies mentioned in the Dublin descriptors before being awarded with the doctorate. In 2004, the universities have established a number of desirable competencies for the doctoral candidate in Hora Est, Renewal of Doctoral Education in The Netherlands. The intention is that the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences will carry out a periodic assessment of the organisational context of doctoral programmes and the related research environment. The assessment will be provided for in the newly proposed Higher Education and Research Act (scheduled for 2007). The assessment criteria will concern in any case, that doctoral degrees are of an internationally comparable level.

As part of the discussion about differentiation of the 3rd cycle, a further introduction of transferable skills has been argued. Also, the majority of universities have introduced graduate schools for doctoral candidates and research master students. Through the graduate schools, interdisciplinary training and transferable skills will be stimulated. While the programmes contain only partly taught courses, credits points are not used. Also, in the nearby future there is no plan to introduce such a system.

In 2007, the discussion on differentiation of the 3rd cycle will be continued. It concerns amongst others, the relation with the second cycle (master) and the

diversity in doctoral programmes as a means to meet the societal demand for researchers trained more for the broader labour market (and less only focussed on academic careers).

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Access¹ 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.

- 100% first cycle qualifications give access to the second cycle.
- 100% second cycle qualifications give access to the third cycle.
- Incidentally professors admit first cycle graduates to the third cycle.
- In general progression from a bachelor level to a master level is possible.
- Bridging courses or special “minors”/streams towards the end of the bachelor programme are necessary for admission of graduates with the bachelor degree (awarded by universities for professional education) to academic oriented master programmes in the same subject area.
- Bachelor of arts/science degrees, awarded by research universities, give admission to at least one master programme offered by the research university in the same subject area.
- Research universities and universities of professional education are increasingly keen on facilitating progression by co-operation and specific minors in the second half of the Bachelor programme, to ensure/facilitate admission to a succeeding master programme.
- For bachelor graduates in a specific professional field (i.e. in nursing and education) progression on to a master in a professional field has been made possible
- Students will in future receive learning entitlements to facilitate for each a track into professional bachelor, or academic master

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Implementation of national qualifications framework

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

10. Describe the stage of implementation of the national qualifications framework to align with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA².

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.

The National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education is drafted. The “regie groep” Bologna process advised to add some details and granted permission to discuss the draft widely in the Netherlands and with external peers.

The National Qualification Framework is in line with the QF-EHEA. The QF-EHEA cycle descriptors for the bachelor and the master are included in the accreditation framework as reference points

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

Please include where possible:

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

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

The (research) universities do not know yet if and how many students found employment after their first cycle. Recent data is not available. Yet, a first glance is possible: in 2005/6: of the students who started a new bachelor programme in 2002 and received their bachelor degree in 2005,

86 percent (1377) enrolled in a masters within their own scientific discipline.

6 percent (94) didn't continue in Dutch higher education: they found employment or enrolled in foreign university.

5 percent (84) went to another Dutch university and

3 percent (46) stayed within their own institution, but another discipline.

These universities enrol roughly 1/3 of the higher education population

For the universities of professional education the recent figures of 2006 are for graduates of 2003/2004

95,4% is employed

12,5 – 21% progressed into an academically oriented master programme

10% progressed into a master programme at a university of professional education

- For employability of graduates no substantial changes are expected in 2006/2007. Increased progression from bachelor level to master level is expected.

Quality assurance

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA³

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

Please include:

- 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.

The implementation of the standards for internal quality assurance is in the first place the responsibility of the institutions. Internal quality assurance is one of the themes in the accreditation frameworks. Important elements on which programmes will be assessed for accreditation are whether there is a coherent system of internal quality assurance with clear goals and regular monitoring which leads to continuous

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

improvement. It is also assessed whether there is sufficient involvement of all stakeholders (students, teachers, alumni, employers) in the internal quality assurance system.

With regard to the standards for external quality assurance and quality assurance agencies implementation is also in place. Accreditation procedures are designed in such a way that they comprise the standards for external quality assurance. The quality assessment agencies that carry out the assessments of each programme are in turn assessed by the NVAO (Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders). The NVAO has formulated a protocol for assessment of quality assessment agencies. Each agency is assessed on fulfilling the protocol. A list of positively assessed agencies is published each year. This protocol, and also the assessment by NVAO of the methodology, panel composition, and reporting by each agency comprises the standards for external quality assurance and agencies.

The NVAO itself is also subject to external scrutiny. In 2007 the NVAO will undergo an independent external review. The writing of the self-evaluation for this review has started in the Autumn of 2006. The review committee will assess whether NVAO has implemented the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA. At the same time the review committee will assess whether the NVAO fulfils the standards of ECA Code of Good Practice. The ENQA Board has stipulated that the ECA standards are compatible to the European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies. The NVAO has, together with other ECA members, already made a self-assessment of compliance to the ECA standards. This monitoring in the context of ECA has shown that the standards were fulfilled by the end of 2006.

(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 education⁴
- which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:
 - internal assessment
 - external review
 - publication of results
- 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.

The external quality assurance system is required by law.

It operates at the national level; only accredited higher education programmes are entitled to award by national law protected bachelor and master degrees.

All three elements (internal assessment, external review and publication of results) are included in the external quality assurance system. All of higher education is covered (public and private; associate, bachelor's and master's levels). See also the Bergen stocktaking report.

An external peer review of the NVAO, according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA is scheduled for 2007. The self-evaluation for this review is currently being written.

(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)

⁴ 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.

- in internal evaluations.

A doctoral student is member of the governing board of the NVAO. Students are also represented in the advisory council of NVAO. Meetings between the NVAO Executive Board and student unions take place frequently.

The NVAO requires that at least 1 student participates as full member of all assessment panels or committees that assess existing programmes of universities and other higher education institutions.

Thus they are part of the decision making process for external quality assessments of all existing programmes.

The assessment panels and committees always interview students during the site-visit of the assessed programme.

In addition, students must be consulted in internal evaluations. One of the accreditation standards refers to the involvement of students and other stakeholders in the internal quality assurance system.

(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.

NVAO is set up by a Treaty between the governments of the Netherlands and Flanders (Belgium). The Board, the Executive Board, and the Advisory Council include Dutch and Flemish members. The members of the Board are appointed by the Committee of Ministers from the Netherlands and Flanders. So international participation is ensured.

The external review in 2007 will be carried out by an international review committee, i.e. not only Dutch and Flemish but also other international members.

NVAO requires that there is international representation in all assessment panels and committees. These are mostly Dutch and Flemish experts, as the work is carried out in the Dutch language. Because of the necessity of costly English translations of self-evaluations and assessment reports it is not always possible to conduct assessments in English with other international experts. But if a programme is taught in English, attracts many foreign students or has an international profile then assessments are often conducted in English with an international panel. Experts from various European countries, the USA and South Africa have been involved in assessments. Observers from other European countries (Ireland, France, Switzerland, Austria, Norway, Germany) have also been involved in assessment procedures. NVAO has agreed with other European accreditation organisations working together in ECA (European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education) to participate in mutual observations of procedures, and does so. In addition, NVAO has carried out joint procedures with German and French ECA members and with the Swedish HSV in the ENQA TEEP II project.

NVAO is full member of ENQA, ECA and INQAAHE. NVAO is represented in the Board of ENQA and ECA for which it also provides the secretariat. The quality assessment agencies QANU and NQA are also members of ENQA and INQAAHE.

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.

All universities are requested to issue Diploma Supplements, free of charge, in English. At the research universities an estimated 75% of the students receive it automatically with their Bachelor c.q. Master award; the other 25%, receive it upon request. There are less data on the provision of Diploma Supplements by universities of professional education.

Institutions are encouraged to use the EU/CoE/UNESCO-format, but current practice is that institutions use an adapted, often simplified version of the EU/CoE/UNESCO-format. The Bologna promoters are currently actively evaluating the DS practice of universities and advising institutions to use the proper format, listing all required details in the prescribed order.

It is expected that in 2009, 100 percent of the students (bachelor and master) will receive a Diploma Supplement automatically, free of charge, in English and corresponding to the EU/CoE/UNESCO format.

(Scorecard)

National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents⁵ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Please include:

- 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 programmes 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.

The Netherlands has signed the Lisbon recognition convention

The process of ratification is in progress. This involves an amendment to the current WHW legislation which is due to be sent to the Parliament early 2007, and which will become the legal ground for the current practice.

All legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents.

The following principles of the Lisbon Recognition convention are applied in practice:

- Applicants right to fair assessment (will be even better taken care of in the newly proposed legislation, sent to Parliament in 2006.
- Recognition if no substantial differences can be proven by the HEI
- Demonstration of substantial differences by the HEI, in case recognition is not granted.

Information based on independent quality assessments about the Netherlands HE programmes is provided via www.studiekeuze123. This unbiased information site is due to be translated into the English language by the end of 2006.

There is a fully operational ENIC/NARIC (at Nuffic)

See above: the obligation is at present based on commitments of institutions; the legislation proposed to Parliament makes it mandatory and is considered needed for ratification.

⁵ 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)

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 programmes 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 is the ratio between national and ECTS credits.

ECTS is implemented throughout all HEI programmes
100% of first and second cycle programmes uses ECTS

19. Has your country produced a national plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications⁶? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.

See separate document of ENIC/NARIC

Lifelong Learning

(Scorecard)

Recognition of prior learning

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

Please include:

- the stage of development of any procedures or national guidelines to recognise 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 programme requirements.

The amendment to the WHW legislation (2007), which is in preparation, regulates the Lisbon recognition convention as the standard procedure for recognition of prior learning of foreign students.

In view of admission to Master programmes, and the diverse bachelor programmes that students have completed before asking for admission, many master programmes develop kind of standard admission tests on the basis of competencies acquired in preceding Bachelor programme, which distinguish competencies acquired and competencies still to be acquired by bridging programmes before admission is granted.

With government funding - a major project on recognizing prior learning – is developed by the Open University. Other universities follow suit since the flexibility after the introduction of the Bachelor Master structure. It is understood that it is highly relevant for enrolling students in the second cycle, but there is still experience with a structural approach of recognizing prior learning yet.

A joint project of the ministries of Education and Labour, developed a subsidy scheme for appraisal of prior learning (a.p.l.) for universities of professional education. Ca 20 HEI ask to subsidize 8.000 a.p.l paths. An expertise centre and a framework for quality guarantees is developed for this together with employer organisations and branch organisations. The agreement on this between all stakeholders involved has been signed in November 2006.

The organisation of privately funded education institutions, together with other branch organisations commissioned a feasibility study for a framework for entrance exams to non-formal educational programmes. It resulted in the decision to do two pilot projects, especially concerning the progression from secondary vocational education to higher vocational education.

⁶ ENIC/NARIC has produced guidelines for National Action Plans for Recognition.

In general exemptions from some programme requirements on the basis of prior learning can be granted by exam committees of institutions. Also admission of foreigners to a study programme can be granted by exam committees. This has always been the situation. Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition convention changes the terms of who should prove students (in)competencies.

For admission of foreign candidates into a Bachelor programme the universities administer a list to judge similarity of previous education, provided by the ENIC/NARIC of the Netherlands. It is updated every 5 years.

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

Please include:

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

Since September 2006 there are pilots with the Associate degree (Ad). The Ad is a programme of 120 ECTS (two years) within the hbo-bachelor. With Ad-programmes employees and graduates from the highest level of secondary vocational education (mbo) are encouraged to participate in higher education. Employer organisations need employees with a degree between mbo and hbo-bachelor. If the pilots are evaluated as successful, the Ad will be structured in higher education in the Netherlands.

Testing competencies with a view to admission is increasingly standardized facilitated by institutions.

The legislative proposal to introduce learning entitlements increases the possibility for students to change institution. If that legislative proposal is accepted, students will be entitled to government set fees during the period of learning entitlements for a particular study, independent of the age at which students study.

The new legislation on student grants and loans allows portability of grants and loans all over the world. It also entitles students to loans for fees. The maximum amount for a loan for fees is 5x the government set fee, to enable students also to lending for studies (abroad) which are more costly then regular studies in the Netherlands.

In 2002 when universities introduced the bachelor master structure they often also introduced a major minor model. The major minor model consists of Majors (Required Component or Core Modules) and minors (Electives). Most of the universities have 30 ECTS free space for electives in the third bachelor year. The board of examiners plays an important role in approving flexible learning paths. The role of ICT and e-learning begins to play a more important role in flexible delivery methods Learning Content Management System).

The universities for professional education feel a tension between the wishes of employers both for a broad field of competencies and detailed programme requirements; a tension between overstretched flexibility and coherent study programmes

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 programmes
- whether joint⁷ 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 programmes and are awarding nationally recognised degrees jointly with HEIs of other countries
- any action being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes.

The legislative proposal to explicitly formalise Joint degrees is sent to Parliament in June 2006.

Double degrees are possible anyhow, even joint degrees via recognition of competencies acquired elsewhere. Current legislation does not mention this specifically.

Co-operation with foreign institutions is encouraged, whether this should be in the form of joint degrees or different is up to institutions and professors to decide.

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.

The percentage of research carried out in the universities amounts approximately 48 percent if the academic medical hospitals are included and approximately 51 percent if the academic medical hospitals are not included. There are no data on the research at universities of professional education.

Innovation charter

The Association of Universities (VSNU), the Association of Academic Medical Centres (NFU) and the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (VNO-NCW) agreed in 2004 on a number of principles that can serve as a set of guidelines for contracts between companies and knowledge institutes when applying knowledge.

These guidelines regard the stimulation of cooperative agreements, the active support of

⁷ 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.

knowledge valorisation by companies and knowledge institutes, knowledge use can be done in different manners, variation in knowledge protection, depending on the university, company or sector, a fair compensation of the knowledge institutes that transfers knowledge to a company, avoid insufficient use of the knowledge that is generated, to make an arrangement on the publication strategy, to scout valuable knowledge as soon as possible, scientific integrity, and the naming of the knowledge institute in a patent of a company.

Smart mix arrangement

Cooperation between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science resulted in the development of a Smart Mix arrangement. The Smart Mix is an instrument for stimulating: 1) focus and mass in excellent scientific research and 2) economic, societal and cultural valorisation. For that reason, the Smart Mix aims at large-scale research and development programmes which will be judged on both criteria although the emphasis can be on one or the other or in between. Research questions considered important by enterprises and social society organisations can push the research agenda. In this way, contents of research programmes may vary widely, ranging from fundamental research to pre-competitive development of processes, services and products. The Smart Mix scheme was published at the end of March 2006. As of 2007, both ministries together invest € 100 million each year in these large scale research programmes which are targeted at cooperation of consortia of enterprises and/or civil society organisations with public knowledge institutes (such as universities, scientific research institutes, and technological institutes).

Extra funding scheme

The Investment Incentive Scheme for the Knowledge Infrastructure (Bsik) is part of the general funding scheme for strengthening the economic structure of the Netherlands. It is a scheme that subsidises projects in public-private consortia with the aim of strengthening the knowledge infrastructure in areas of societal importance. Two such schemes have been implemented. The third scheme will run from 2004 to 2010, with a budget of €800 million.

Mobility of researchers

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science have started an initiative to stimulate the mobility of researchers between the public and the private sector under the name of the Casimir scheme. The Casimir scheme aims to increase public-private mobility of researchers by giving the Dutch private sector a financial incentive to hire Dutch young researchers as opposed to hiring foreign scientists. The Casimir scheme also intends that Dutch researchers become more familiar with the public as well as the private sector and to pursue a career in both. Provided that the experiments become a success, the Casimir scheme will be embedded in policy on a structural basis.

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?

Conservative estimate is that 30-40% of the PhD graduates is taking up a research career within universities. 60-70% of the PhD graduates takes up a career outside university. Of these latter group 80% continues to do research (AWT report 2005 on research careers). Considering the nr of PhD graduates is 2.645 (2003) the above would mean that 926 graduates would continue to do research inside universities and 1327 outside universities, or:

of all PhD graduates 87% is taking up a research career, irrespective of this being inside or outside university.

No measures are taken to increase the number of doctoral candidates taking up a research career, other than general actions to increase the number of academic staff. For the greater part, doctorates will enrol in "society" in knowledge-intensive positions. To ensure preparation for a societal career, doctoral candidates are stimulated to pursue career orientation and receive guidance in this.

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.

Of the students grants and loans a limited amount is for all students, further amounts are allocated if the parental or student income is below a certain level (means tested). Loans have to be refunded if the graduate or ex-students income is above a certain level.

Regulations to additionally facilitate handicapped students are in place.

Students from foreign background are additionally facilitated via a specialized organisation.

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

Please include:

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

- Universities take all kind of measures to improve retention. One of the instruments is a “binding study advice” by the institution. At the end of the first year student are required to have obtained a certain amount of credits. It is a method to (de)select students for study success. Other instruments are guidance and counselling, valid and up-to-date course results, special guidance for writing a bachelor or master thesis.

- In the universities for professional education special projects exist to facilitate a) the study of students living in the Netherlands with a foreign background b) progression of graduates from the highest level of secondary vocational education into higher education

- The ministry recently organised a conference to exchange existing good practice at universities. This was highly valued by HEI and may give rise to further policy development.

- The facilitation of the association ECHO, to promote Dutch foreigners in higher education.

- Yearly Student monitor facilitated by government, including participation in Eurostudent.

Mobility

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

Please include:

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

To increase inward mobility:

- Special grants by government (scholarships) (amongst others for Belarus)
- Abolition of the need for a work permit for internships of foreign students as part of their study (as from 1st November 2006)
- Funds allocated to HEI in order to attract foreign students.
- NESO (Netherlands Educational Support Offices) to inform and attract foreign students.
- The code of conduct with respect to international students in Dutch higher education; signing by institutes guarantees good quality education and coaching and is a prerequisite for obtaining visa by the Immigration Office.
- Translation of the website www.studiekeuzeinformatie123.nl into English.

To increase outward mobility

- Portability of grants and loans (as from 1st September 2007) (see 28)
- Information on quality assurance of programmes world wide
- Special grants by government

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.

Introduction of global portability of grants and loans as of 1st September 2007

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

Please include:

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

Staff mobility is a matter of HEI (employers)

From discussions the impression exists that the greatest draw back are social considerations (more jobs in one family, etc...)

If foreign graduates from Dutch universities take up a job with a certain minimum income , within a certain time after graduation, they are entitled to a work permit.

Ongoing exchange of experience to further facilitate mobility of students and staff by Immigration office.

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.

At university level:

- A strong cooperation with other foreign universities, special information days, special internet pages (portals) for students. Special Internationalisation at home projects. Information at the students service centre.

At national level:

- Presence at fares on higher education.
- See nr 27 to increase inward mobility of students.

Future challenges

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

- 50% of labour force age 25-44 year having a higher education degree in 2020
- Improvement of relation between education, research and societal and regional needs.
- Promotion of Excellence at various levels, in education and research.
- Effective marketing of Dutch higher education
- Joint degree programmes
- Ratification of Lisbon recognition convention
- Challenge to jointly implement QF-EHEA and EQF
- Cross cultural class room (international class room)

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

Annex A

(Text of report for the Bergen meeting 2005 question 2)

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is responsible for higher education. For a few institutes who receive their funding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, that ministry bears responsibility. However, both ministries have in general the same policy on education (The ministry of Agriculture joins in with main policies of the ministry of Education.)

Institutes of HE receiving public funding report to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (The ones receiving funds from the Ministry of Agriculture report to that ministry).

Reporting is once a year.

The block grant is provided to institutions once a year.

On top of this

- NWO, the national science foundation, provides funding to research universities on the basis of proposals from which a selection is made based on the quality of the research proposed;
- the universities of professional education (hogescholen) receive funding for applied research organised in local/regional networks with employers/industry.

The institutes of Higher Education are responsible for the quality of their education. For the quality of the programmes they need to obtain accreditation (proof of quality of the programme) by the independent accreditation organisation NVAO.

Accreditation of a study programme by the NVAO (Dutch Flemish accreditation organisation) is required for students to obtain government grants, which is called study-finance. (Study-finance is also available for students enrolled in non-government funded private institutions, provided programmes are accredited by the NVAO.)

Accreditation of programmes is also required for government funding of universities for students enrolled (provided the universities are government funded.), and for government recognition of degrees.

The NVAO is government funded and is responsible for the accreditation of study programmes forwarded to them by the HE institutes. These proposals for accreditation of study programmes have to be accompanied by an external review of the programme. For the external review the institutes can use various organisations, experienced with reviewing programmes and acknowledged by the NVAO on the basis of applying criteria which match criteria of the NVAO. In addition, the NVAO carries out the initial (first time) accreditation of new programmes and installs the expert panels that advise the NVAO on the quality of these new programmes. An initial accreditation by the NVAO is a necessary but not sufficient condition for funding of new programmes; the minister of education decides whether funding of new programmes is appropriate.

Both the rectors conferences, i.e. the VSNU for the research universities and the HBO-Raad for the universities of professional education, have an important role as partners in debates on preparation of policies.

The rectors conferences provide information on higher education and research. They voice opinions and arguments on policy development concerning higher education and research to the ministry, the parliament, and the public in general. The ministry consults them on all

intended policy changes and counts on their co-operation for implementation of policy changes (regardless whether they are laid down in legislation or are otherwise agreed).

Student unions (ISO and LSVB) are likewise partners in debates on preparation of policies.

The Inspectorate for education (independent part of the Ministry of Education) is responsible for overseeing the quality of the entire education system and reports to the minister once a year.

Annex B

(Text of the report for the Bergen meeting 2005)

The Higher Education and Research Act which came into force in 1993 provides a single legal framework for the higher education system in the Netherlands. In 2002 legislation transferred the system in conformity with important elements of the Bologna declaration (two main cycle structure, ECTS-credits and accreditation for quality assurance of programmes).

The higher education system in the Netherlands is since 2002 based on a three-cycle degree system, consisting of a Bachelor, Master and PhD.

The Netherlands has a binary system of higher education, which means there are two types of programmes: research oriented education (wetenschappelijk onderwijs, WO), traditionally offered by research universities, and professional higher education (hoger beroepsonderwijs, HBO), traditionally offered by hogescholen, or universities of professional education.

(Until 2002, the first two cycles at research universities were combined in a single integrated cycle. Degrees from this integrated system can be awarded until 2007-2009.)

In the public higher education system in the Netherlands there are 14 universities, which can be divided into nine general universities, one agricultural university, three universities of technology and the Open University offering distance education.

Professional higher education is provided by (in the year 2003) 49 hogescholen. It prepares students for particular professions and the education tends to be more practically oriented than programmes offered by research universities.

In 2003 (academic year 2003/2004) a total of 513.000 students was enrolled in these institutes of which 187.000 in research universities and 326.000 in universities of professional education.

The public HE system also includes a third branch, with a relative small number of students, known as international onderwijs (IO), or international education. IO offers advanced training courses, originally designed for people from developing countries whose jobs require highly specialized knowledge.

HE programmes must be accredited by the NVAO to become centrally registered and to entitle students to study finance and institutes to award degrees to graduates of that programmes in accordance with Dutch legislation.

In addition to the public higher education system, there are a number of privately funded institutes also offering higher education. It is possible for privately funded institutes to become recognized by the Ministry and receive the status of an "approved" research

university or "approved" university of professional education, which can have their programmes accredited by the NVAO.

Only students enrolled in accredited programmes of "approved" institutes are eligible for study finance and for being awarded academic degrees in accordance with Dutch legislation.

"Approval" of institutes will not grant them government funding. Approved institutes can set their own tuition fees. (Publicly funded universities have to oblige to government ruling on fees).

Figures on the year 2004 show that there are 62 privately funded institutions offering around 500 programmes. The total enrolment is estimated to be 60.000 - 70.000 students, of which 20% receive public study finance.

The quality assurance of many programmes offered by privately funded institutions is reported by the Inspectorate as below standards.