



Bologna Process Stocktaking London 2007



department for
education and skills



Education and Culture

Socrates

Bologna Process Stocktaking Report 2007

**Report from a working group appointed by the Bologna
Follow-up Group to the Ministerial Conference in London,
May 2007**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission in the framework of the Socrates programme. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Bologna Follow-up Group

Stocktaking Working Group 2005-2007

Chair

Prof Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia)

Members

Marie-Anne Persoons (Belgium - Flemish Community)

Heli Aru (Estonia)

Uta Grund (Germany)

Foteini Asderaki (Greece)

Sverre Rustad (Norway)

Camelia Sturza (Romania, replaced Prof Vasile Isan)

Darinka Vrecko (Slovenia)

Prof Aybar Ertepinar (Turkey)

David Crosier (European University Association)

Stéphanie Oberheidt (Eurydice European Unit)

Ann McVie (Bologna Secretariat)

Expert appointed to assist working group

Cynthia Deane (Options Consulting)

The work on the 2007 Bologna Process stocktaking was supported by the European Commission, both through the Socrates Programme and by facilitating analysis of data from the 'non-Socrates' countries by Eurydice European Unit. The Working Group would like to thank Eurydice and the European University Association (EUA) for supporting their representatives' participation in the Working Group. This ensured that the stocktaking was informed by the results of Eurydice *Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe* and the EUA *Trends V* studies. We also thank the Council of Europe for its generous support.

Contents

Acknowledgements		iv
Executive summary		1
Part 1	2007 stocktaking: background and methodology	5
Part 2	Analysis of 2007 stocktaking results	11
Part 3	Conclusions and recommendations	47
Annex	2007 stocktaking scorecards	55

Acknowledgements

As chair of the Working Group on Stocktaking, I would like to pay tribute to my colleagues on the group for their valuable contributions and for the nice, friendly and constructive atmosphere throughout our work. I would also like to acknowledge the work of Ann McVie of the UK Secretariat who not only ensured a smooth work process but also took up a substantial share of the overall work herself and did it in an elegant and efficient manner.

It was a real pleasure for the Working Group to have Cynthia Deane as an expert. Her analytical approach, knowledge and experience, not least in the previous stocktaking were highly appreciated by the Working Group and to a great extent eased the task of the Working Group chair.

Finally, I would like to thank the Bologna Follow-up Group representatives from each of the participating countries who provided the material in the National Reports, which in turn forms the basis of the Stocktaking Report.

I am confident that the Working Group has produced a report that integrates quantifiable indicators and qualitative analysis and therefore provides an objective statement of the level of progress in the aspects for which the Ministers requested taking stock in 2007. The report identifies both the areas where the progress has been the strongest and the aspects in which most effort has to be made as we move towards the overall Bologna Process goals. I also believe that the combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis should be continued and further developed in the next phase of stocktaking.

Andrejs Rauhvargers,

Chair, BFUG Working Group on Stocktaking

April 2007

Executive summary

Outline of the 2007 stocktaking report

This report on the Bologna Process stocktaking was prepared for the London Ministerial meeting in May 2007. The report has three parts.

Part 1 explains the background to the 2007 stocktaking exercise, linking it to the findings of the 2005 stocktaking report and to the Bergen Communiqué. It also describes the methodology that was used in the 2007 stocktaking.

Part 2 includes quantitative and qualitative analysis of the stocktaking results.

Part 3 draws conclusions about progress towards achieving the goals that were set by the Ministers in Bergen and makes recommendations for the future based on the analysis of the 2007 stocktaking results.

Summary of findings from the 2007 stocktaking

There are three main findings from the 2007 stocktaking:

1. There has been good progress in the Bologna Process since Bergen.
2. The outlook for achieving the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010 is good, but there are still some challenges to be faced.
3. Stocktaking works well as an integral part of the Bologna Process strategy.

Conclusion 1

There has been good progress in the Bologna Process since Bergen

The 2007 scorecard shows that the overall picture within the Bologna Process is much more “green” than it was in 2005. The stocktaking results show that there has been considerable progress towards achieving the goals set by the Ministers in Bergen.

Good progress on the three-cycle degree system

The three-cycle degree system is now at an advanced stage of implementation across the participating countries. The access from one cycle to the next has improved, and there is a trend towards providing structured doctoral programmes.

Work has started on implementing national frameworks for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Some elements of flexible learning paths in higher education exist in all countries. In some countries they are at a more developed stage and include procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

Good progress on quality assurance

Implementation of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, adopted in Bergen, has started on a widespread basis.

Student involvement in quality assurance has grown significantly since 2005, while there is more work to be done on extending the level of international participation.

Good progress on recognition of degrees and study periods

There is good progress towards incorporating the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in national legislation and institutional practice. However, not all countries have yet ratified the Convention.

Countries have developed national action plans to improve the quality of their recognition processes.

There is potential for a significant increase in the number of joint degrees awarded in two or more countries. Legal barriers to the recognition of joint degrees have been largely removed.

Higher education institutions have begun to recognise prior learning (including non-formal and informal learning) for access to higher education programmes and qualifications. However there is more work to be done in this area.

Linking higher education and research

Many countries are strengthening the links between the higher education and research sectors.

Some countries have concrete plans to increase the numbers of doctoral graduates taking up research careers.

Conclusion 2

The outlook for achieving the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010 is good, but there are still some challenges to be faced

There has been good progress up to now, however it is not uniform across all countries and all action lines. There is a need to look ahead and focus on reaching all the goals of the Bologna Process in each participating country by 2010.

The Bologna Process is an effective catalyst for reform at national level

The Bologna Process has driven the process of higher education reform at national level. Higher education institutions, their staff and students, business and social partners, and international organisations are more actively engaged as partners in implementing the Bologna Process than was previously the case.

The sharing of expertise has contributed to building capacity at both institutional and national levels so that there has been measurable progress across all participating countries.

There is a need to link all the action lines

While the 2007 stocktaking found that there has been good progress on specific action lines and indicators, it is not enough to look at these in isolation because all aspects of the Bologna Process are interdependent. There are two themes that link all action lines: a focus on *learners*, and a focus on *learning outcomes*.

If the Bologna Process is to be successful in meeting the needs and expectations of learners, all countries need to use learning outcomes as a basis for their national qualifications frameworks, systems for credit transfer and accumulation, the diploma supplement, recognition of prior learning and quality assurance. This is a precondition for achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010.

Conclusion 3

Stocktaking works well as an integral part of the Bologna Process strategy

Stocktaking within the Bologna Process involves collaborative peer-reported self-evaluation, which has been effective in encouraging countries to take action at national level. All countries have made progress, and stocktaking has made the progress visible.

From the experience of both the 2005 and 2007 stocktaking exercises, it is clear that stocktaking within the Bologna Process works best when it is an integral part of a goal-driven development strategy that includes five “steps to success”:

1. Agree the policy goals, linking them to a vision for the future that is shared by all participating countries
2. Set targets to be achieved within a certain time frame (make sure they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed: SMART)

3. Take action at national level and collectively (provide relevant support, share good practice, encourage peer collaboration)
4. Review progress individually: self-evaluation using agreed criteria (scorecard) complemented by qualitative reporting
5. Evaluate achievement collectively (stocktaking).

Recommendations from the 2007 stocktaking

Recommendation to Ministers

Set clear policy goals and specific targets for the next period of the Bologna Process, especially in the areas of the third cycle, employability, recognition, lifelong learning, flexible learning paths and the social dimension.

Recommendations for countries

1. Work towards fully implementing a national qualifications framework based on learning outcomes by 2010.
2. Link the development of the qualifications framework to other Bologna action lines, including quality assurance, credit transfer and accumulation systems, lifelong learning, flexible learning paths and the social dimension.
3. Ensure that progress is promoted across all action lines, including the more challenging aspects that are not easily and immediately attainable.
4. Make formal links between the Bologna Process and the ENIC/NARIC (European Network of Information Centres/ National Academic Recognition Information Centre) network to undertake further work on developing and implementing national action plans for recognition.

Recommendations for future stocktaking

Repeat the stocktaking in 2009, with the close collaboration of other partner organisations, including Eurydice European Unit, European University Association (EUA) and ESIB (National Unions of Students in Europe), in setting out the timetable and the arrangements for data collection and analysis.

2007 stocktaking: background and methodology

This part of the report explains the background to the 2007 stocktaking exercise, linking it to the findings of the 2005 Stocktaking Report and to the Bergen Communiqué. It also describes the methodology that was used in the 2007 stocktaking.

Background to the 2007 stocktaking exercise

The first stocktaking of progress in the Bologna Process was carried out in 2005, following a decision taken by the Ministers at their 2003 meeting in Berlin. When the Stocktaking Working Group presented its report to the ministerial meeting in Bergen in 2005, the Ministers accepted the recommendation that the stocktaking exercise should continue and they asked that a further report should be prepared for their meeting in London in May 2007.

This report presents the results of the 2007 stocktaking, which was designed to check the progress that participating countries have made on the aspects of the Bologna Process that are included in the Bergen Communiqué. The report gives an overview of progress since 2005 and also of progress towards achieving the 2010 goals of the Bologna Process.

Building on the findings of the 2005 stocktaking

The 2005 stocktaking report concluded that very good progress had been made on achieving the targets in the three priority action lines set by Ministers in the Berlin Communiqué: quality assurance, degree system and recognition. However, the report also identified a number of important gaps in those areas.

For the *quality assurance* action line, the two main issues were the low level of student and international participation and the need to go beyond establishing quality assurance *systems* to promote a quality assurance *culture* in all aspects of higher education.

In the *degree system* action line, the issue of providing access to the next cycle gave rise to some controversy based on differing interpretations of the term “access”. Another issue was the need to engage social partners, especially employers, in the governance and decision-making of higher education systems to ensure the continuing relevance of degrees to employment.

In the *recognition* action line, the 2005 Stocktaking Report showed that there were some problems in implementing tools such as the diploma supplement and it also emphasised the need for progress to be made on developing the emerging framework for qualifications of the EHEA.

The report recommended that the stocktaking exercise would continue and this was endorsed by the Ministers in the Bergen Communiqué.

The Bergen Communiqué: issues for stocktaking in 2007

In the Bergen Communiqué, Ministers charged the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) with continuing and widening the stocktaking process, and stated that they expected implementation of the three intermediate priorities (degree system, quality assurance, recognition of degrees and study periods) to be largely completed by 2007. Ministers asked the BFUG to include a number of specific issues in the 2007 stocktaking and underlined important aspects in which they expected results.

We expect stocktaking ... to continue in the fields of the degree system, quality assurance and recognition of degrees and study periods....

In particular, we shall look for progress in

- implementation of the standards and guidelines for quality assurance as proposed in the ENQA report;
- implementation of the national frameworks for qualifications;
- the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level;
- creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

(*Bergen Communiqué*¹, p.5)

Questions for the 2007 stocktaking

The priority action areas and the other main themes identified by the Ministers in the Bergen Communiqué gave rise to a set of questions as a starting point for the 2007 stocktaking.

Questions about the degree system

How advanced is the implementation of the three cycle degree system?

Has work started on implementing a national framework for qualifications compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications of the EHEA?

Questions about quality assurance

Has each country started to implement the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* adopted in Bergen?

¹ The full text of the *Bergen Communiqué* is at http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf

What progress has been made as regards student involvement and international cooperation in quality assurance?

Questions about recognition of degrees and study periods

Have all countries ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention as urged in the Bergen Communiqué?

Has each country implemented the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and incorporated them in national legislation as appropriate?

Has each country developed a national action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications?

Have all countries removed the obstacles for awarding and recognition of joint degrees (i.e. degrees awarded jointly by higher education institutions in two or more countries)?

Questions about flexible learning paths in higher education and recognition of prior learning

What progress has been made on creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning?

Are there procedures and arrangements in all countries for recognition of prior learning (including non-formal and informal learning) for access to higher education programmes and for allocating credits?

Questions about other themes from the Bergen Communiqué

In addition to the three interim priority action lines, the Bergen Communiqué gave rise to questions about the role of higher education in research; about the employability of graduates, and about the role of the Bologna Process in promoting partnership at institutional and national levels. These questions were also included in the template for national reports.

Higher education and research

How well is the higher education sector linked with other research sectors in the participating countries?

What plans are in place to increase the numbers of doctoral candidates taking up research careers?

Employability of graduates

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

Partnership

How well are higher education institutions, their staff and students engaged as partners in the implementation of the Bologna Process?

To what extent are organisations representing business and the social partners cooperating in reaching the goals of the Bologna Process?

2007 stocktaking methodology

The Bologna Follow-up Group appointed a working group chaired by Prof. Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia) to carry out the stocktaking. The members of the working group were: Marie-Anne Persoons (Belgium - Flemish Community); Heli Aru (Estonia); Uta Grund (Germany); Foteini Asderaki (Greece); Sverre Rustad (Norway); Camelia Sturza (Romania, replaced Prof. Vasile Isan); Darinka Vrecko (Slovenia); Prof. Aybar Ertepinar (Turkey); David Crosier (European University Association); Stéphanie Oberheidt (Eurydice European Unit); Ann McVie (Bologna Secretariat); Cynthia Deane (Expert).

Terms of reference of the 2007 Stocktaking Working Group

The Bologna Follow-up Group asked the Stocktaking Working Group to include two aspects in the 2007 stocktaking: firstly the issues that were explicitly mentioned in the Bergen Communiqué as being part of the next stocktaking exercise, and secondly the related issues mentioned in the communiqué where Ministers wanted to see that progress had been made by 2007.

The Working Group was asked to:

1. Identify the key issues to be addressed through the stocktaking exercise as well as the methodology to be used in this exercise
2. Collaborate with partner and other organisations in order to maximise the use of data sources
3. Define, where appropriate, the structure of a separate questionnaire to be used in the stocktaking should this be required
4. Prepare a structure for the national contributions to the stocktaking to be submitted by participating countries
5. Prepare a report for approval by the BFUG in advance of the London Conference in 2007.

Steps in the stocktaking process

In the period from December 2005 to April 2007 the Working Group, supported by the expert and the secretariat, completed the following steps in the stocktaking process:

- defined the stocktaking framework, which integrated data from various sources
- developed the stocktaking indicators and criteria for the 2007 scorecard
- formulated questions and devised a template for national reports
- gathered data by asking countries to submit national reports
- analysed data from national reports and other sources
- prepared the Stocktaking Report.²

² The Working Group met five times: 9 December 2005; 27 February and 11 October 2006; 12-13 February and 26-27 March 2007.

The framework for stocktaking in 2007

The 2007 stocktaking built on the methodology that was developed in 2005, and combined a quantitative and a qualitative approach to assessing progress within the Bologna Process. The first step for the Working Group was to decide how to include the “related issues” in the stocktaking exercise. The BFUG advised that the experience of the previous stocktaking exercise, where clearly measurable information was included in the scorecard and other issues were covered in the text, was relevant in this context. The Stocktaking Working Group adopted this framework as a way of combining quantitative and qualitative analysis of progress. It was also a way of keeping the stocktaking exercise manageable within the available resources.

It was decided that the data for the stocktaking would be drawn mainly from national reports submitted by all countries, backed up and validated by data from a number of other sources. As in 2005, the other data sources in 2007 were:

- Eurydice report: *Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe*
- EUA (European University Association) report: *Trends V*
- ESIB (National Unions of Students in Europe) survey: *Bologna With Student Eyes*.

The Working Group included a member from Eurydice and one from the EUA, which made it possible to share data.

The 2007 scorecard: stocktaking indicators and criteria

The Working Group used the 2005 scorecard indicators as a starting point, and made changes to take account of the progress that was expected to have happened within the two years since the previous stocktaking.³ This meant that some of the 2005 indicators were amalgamated, some of the criteria for the colour categories were changed and some new indicators were added.

The Working Group decided that there would not be scorecard indicators for third cycle doctoral studies and flexible learning paths in higher education, but that these aspects would be included in national reports. They would then be treated within the qualitative part of the stocktaking report. The indicators for the 2007 stocktaking were approved by the Bologna Follow-up Group in April 2006.

National reports

The 2007 stocktaking differed from the 2005 exercise in that the scorecard criteria were agreed at an earlier stage in the process. The template for national reports was then designed to elicit the appropriate data and it was sent to all participating countries in May 2006 together with the scorecard.⁴ This meant that all countries knew in advance the criteria against which progress on the indicators would be assessed in the stocktaking exercise.

3 The 2005 scorecard is included in the Stocktaking Report which is available at http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Bergen/050509_Stocktaking.pdf

4 The 2007 scorecard criteria and the template for national reports are at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list&DocCategoryID=2>

The deadline for submitting national reports was 15 December 2006, and by that date reports had been received from only eight countries. Most reports were submitted within a month of the closing date. There were a few countries that delayed the stocktaking process by submitting their reports very late. The last national report was received three months after the deadline. The total number of reports was 48: there are 46 countries in the Bologna Process, with two reports for each of Belgium and the United Kingdom.⁵

Analysing data from national reports and other sources

In their national reports, countries provided data about their progress on the Bologna action lines. They also described the processes initiated at national level to support implementation of the Bologna reforms. All national reports conformed to the template that was supplied, but not all responses directly answered the questions that were asked. This made it difficult to assign scores for the indicators, and on several occasions countries were asked to supply more information.

The secretariat sent the first draft of country scorecards to the countries for checking at the end of January 2007. If countries saw grounds to have a score revised, they were asked to supply relevant evidence to justify the change. In almost three-quarters of the requests, the score was changed on the basis of the new information that the country submitted. In some other cases, it was decided that the score would not change but an explanatory note would be added to the text accompanying the country scorecard in the report.

It is significant to note that in 2007 six countries asked that a score be revised compared to just one country in 2005. This may suggest that countries are now more willing to present a true picture of their stage of progress and are less concerned with “looking good”. It is also important to recognise that the situation is dynamic and ever-changing. While this Stocktaking Report presents an overview of the situation at the end of 2006, some countries have made more progress since scores were assigned on the basis of the information they gave in their national reports. This is mentioned in the note that accompanies each country scorecard, where appropriate.

When the analysis of stocktaking results from the national reports was complete, the Working Group had an opportunity to validate the findings against the Eurydice, EUA and ESIB data.

Preparing the Stocktaking Report

In preparing the 2007 Stocktaking Report, the Working Group wanted to produce a document that would give Ministers, policy makers and higher education practitioners a clear and comprehensive analysis of progress. While the scorecard is an important part of the report, the results need to be read in conjunction with the commentary to get a full picture of how the Bologna Process has advanced since 2005, and how it is positioned to achieve all its goals by 2010.

⁵ All 2007 national reports are available at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list>

Analysis of 2007 stocktaking results

This part of the report analyses the results of the stocktaking, showing where there has been any notable progress or lack of progress. It includes results, comments and analysis for each indicator in the scorecard and also for the other aspects of the stocktaking that were not included in the scorecard. The level of progress is assessed by comparing the 2007 data with the 2005 stocktaking results, where the indicators are directly comparable. An “at a glance” summary scorecard and the individual scorecards for all countries are included in the Annex.

Stocktaking results for indicators included in the scorecard

Stocktaking on the Degree System

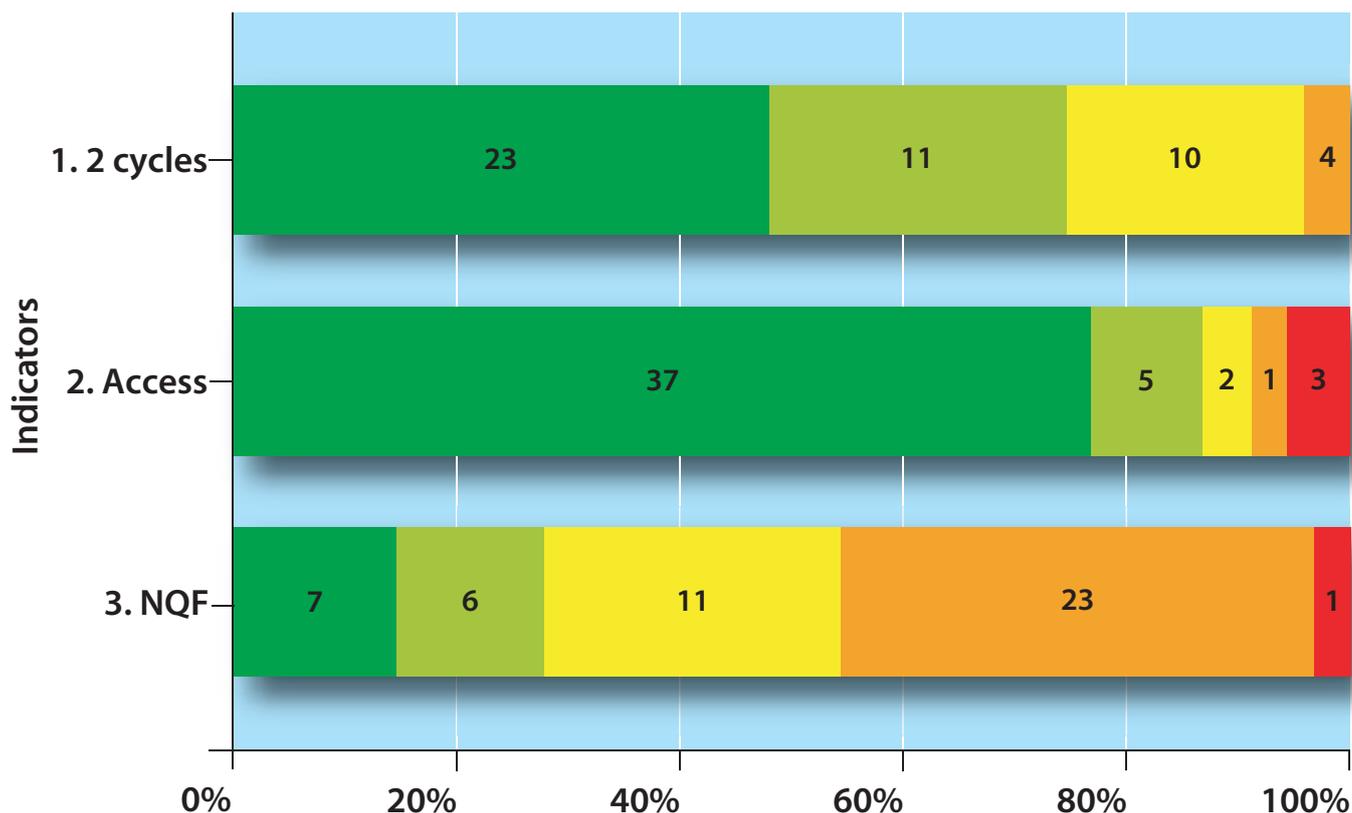
Table 1

Number of countries in each colour category for indicators 1-3

Degree System	Green	Light green	Yellow	Orange	Red
1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle	23	11	10	4	0
2. Access to the next cycle ⁶	37	5	2	1	3
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework	7	6	11	23	1

⁶ “Access” is defined according to the Lisbon Recognition Convention: “Access : the right of qualified candidates to apply and to be considered for admission”.

Figure 1a Degree System: number and percentage of countries in each colour category for indicators 1-3



Indicator 1: Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle

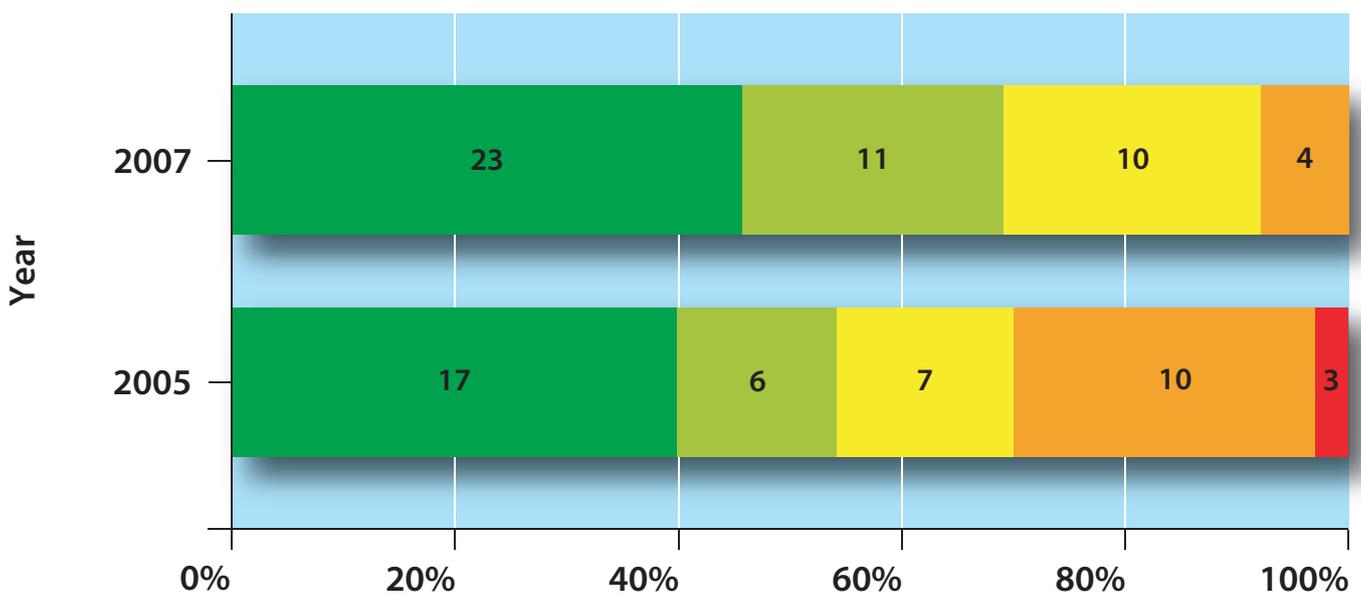


DEGREE SYSTEM	1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
Green (5)	In 2006/07 at least 90% of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
Light green (4)	In 2006/07 60-89% of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
Yellow (3)	In 2006/07 30-59% of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles
Orange (2)	In 2006/07 less than 30% of all students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles OR Legislation for a degree system in accordance with the Bologna principles has been adopted and is awaiting implementation
Red (1)	No students are enrolled in a two-cycle degree system that is in accordance with the Bologna principles AND there is no legislation in force to make the degree system compatible with the Bologna principles

This was quite a demanding indicator because it replaced two of the 2005 indicators. Countries were asked to report on the percentage of students below doctoral level enrolled in the two-cycle degree system. It was a concrete measure, but several national reports gave no exact percentages.

Almost half of the countries have the vast majority of students already studying in the two-cycle degree system and another eleven countries have at least 60 per cent of students enrolled in the two-cycle degree system.

Figure 1b **Indicator 1: Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle**
Comparison 2005-2007



Number and percentage of countries indicated in each colour category

(In 2005, there were 43 countries; in 2007, there are 48)

Progress since 2005

The 2007 indicator 1 and 2005 indicator 6 both measured the level of student enrolment in the two-cycle system. Fig. 1b shows that there has been good progress on implementing the first and second cycle since 2005: even though the indicator was more demanding in 2007, the results are substantially better.

Most countries are introducing the first and second cycle of the degree system gradually and progress is steady: there are only four countries that have completed legislation but have not yet implemented it. From the evidence of the 2007 stocktaking, this action line will be fully implemented by 2010 and this particular goal of the Bologna Process will be achieved.

7 2005 criteria: "green" >81% of students enrolled in 2-cycle system; "light green" 51-80%; "yellow" 25-50%; "orange" 1-24%; "red"=no students enrolled.

Indicator 2: Access to the next cycle

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 2	37	5	2	1	3
--	----	---	---	---	---

DEGREE SYSTEM	2. Access to the next cycle
Green (5)	All first cycle qualifications give access to several second cycle programmes and all second cycle qualifications give access to at least one third cycle programme without major transitional problems
Light green (4)	All first cycle qualifications give access to at least one second cycle programme and all second cycle qualifications give access to at least one third cycle programme without major transitional problems
Yellow (3)	There are some (less than 25%) first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle and/or some second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle
Orange (2)	A significant number (25-50%) of first and/or second cycle qualifications do not give access to the next cycle
Red (1)	Most (more than 50%) first and/or second cycle qualifications do not give access to the next cycle OR there are no arrangements for access to the next cycle

This indicator was meant to check whether national higher education structures ensure that students completing a Bologna cycle have access to the next cycle. The countries were asked to report whether first cycle graduates have access to several second cycle programmes (with a view to having more choice after the introduction of the two-cycle system) and whether second cycle graduates have access to at least one third cycle programme. As in the 2005 stocktaking, access was defined according to the Lisbon Recognition Convention as “the right of qualified candidates to apply and to be considered for admission”. Thus, the indicator measured whether students had the right to apply and be considered for admission, rather than the actual student numbers progressing to the next cycle.

More than four-fifths of the countries report that there is access to the next cycle without barriers.

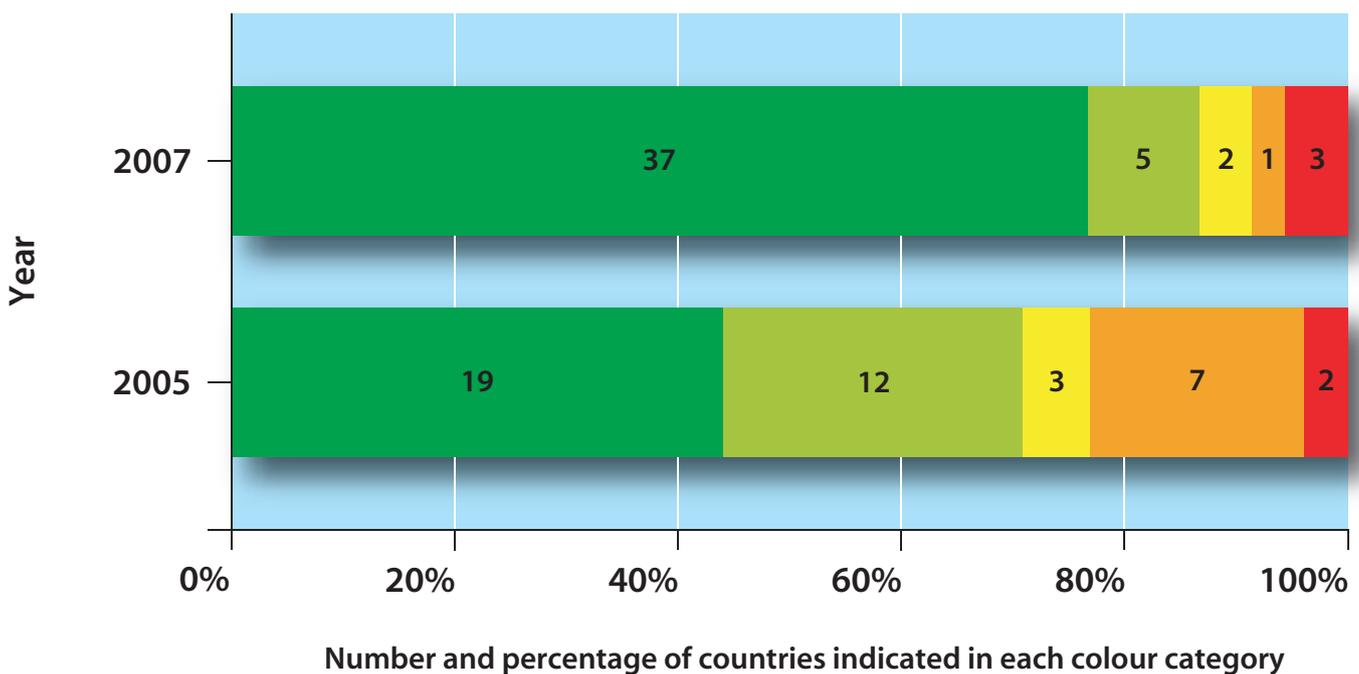
The principle behind this indicator is that there are clear pathways of progression for graduates from one cycle to the next cycle. While countries have reported that there are no “major transitional problems” between cycles, students and graduates may have different perceptions. With regard to progression between cycles, countries have taken a range of approaches.

- Bridging courses or other measures may be required in some countries when the students either seek admission to a different study field or they switch between academic and professional streams.

- In some countries there are two levels of bachelors, each of which matches the Dublin descriptors. However some of these qualifications do not usually give direct access to the second cycle and bridging courses or a period of relevant experience may be required. Such measures are seen by those countries as ways of widening access to the next cycle.
- In most countries, a second cycle qualification qualifies candidates for admission to the third cycle. The exceptions in some countries may be those second cycle qualifications that are in a different subject area than the first cycle, but even then bridging may be possible. Some countries admit first cycle graduates directly to third cycle studies under certain conditions.

For the future, national frameworks of qualifications will enable countries to ensure that there are more transparent transition arrangements between cycles. The Ministers agreed in Bergen that they would have in place by 2010 national frameworks that are compatible with the overarching three-cycle framework of qualifications for the EHEA. The Bergen Communiqué also mentions the possibility that “intermediate qualifications” can be included “within national contexts” to take account of short programmes in the first and second cycle.

Figure 1c **Indicator 2: Access to the next cycle**
Comparison 2005-2007



Progress since 2005

The current indicator 2 was also more demanding than in 2005: it considered access to both second and third cycle compared to just first-to-second cycle transition in 2005. In addition, in 2007 the criterion for the highest score required that a first cycle graduate had access to several second cycle programmes rather than “at least one” in 2005.

Fig 1c shows that there has been good progress on access to the next cycle since 2005: even though the indicator was more demanding, the results are better in 2007.

Indicator 3: Implementation of national qualifications framework

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 3	7	6	11	23	1
--	---	---	----	----	---

DEGREE SYSTEM	3. Implementation of national qualifications framework (QF)
Green (5)	A national QF in line with the overarching QF for EHEA is in place
Light green (4)	A proposal for a national QF in line with the overarching QF for EHEA has been discussed with all relevant stakeholders at the national level and a timetable for implementation has been agreed
Yellow (3)	A proposal for a national QF in line with the overarching QF for EHEA has been prepared
Orange (2)	The development process leading to definition of national QF in line with the overarching QF for EHEA has started, and it includes all the relevant national stakeholders
Red (1)	Work at establishing national QF in line with the overarching QF for EHEA has not started

This is a new indicator for 2007, and countries are at varying stages of progress towards implementing a national qualifications framework in line with the framework for the EHEA that was adopted by the Ministers in Bergen.

The Ministers in Bergen asked that countries should have started work on their national qualifications frameworks by 2007, and all but one have done so. A small number of countries have already developed and implemented their national frameworks; some others have prepared legislation and are ready to start implementation. Almost all countries have at least started the development process and have engaged all relevant stakeholders, usually by putting in place working groups or special commissions.

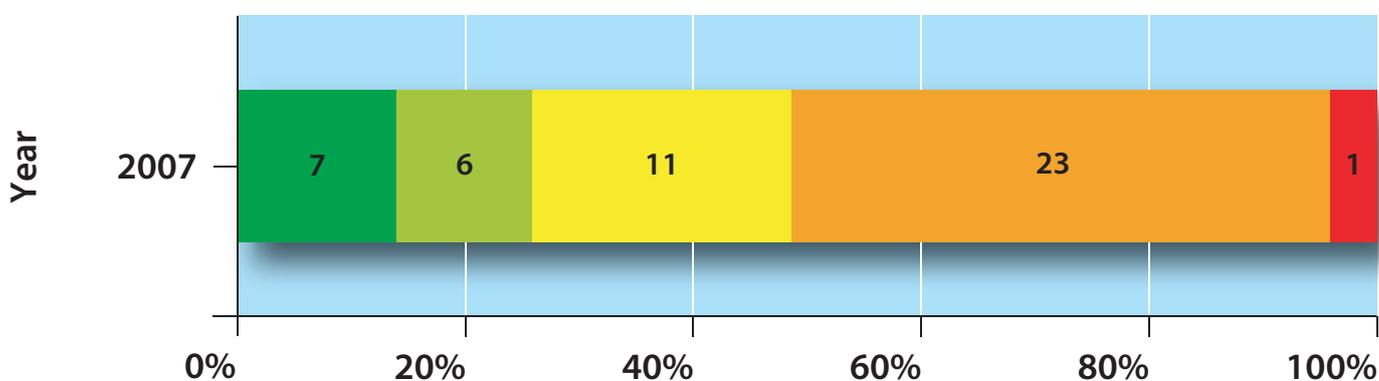
Most of the countries that are in the green category had started developing their national framework before 2005: some have taken ten to fifteen years to complete the development process and implement their framework fully. In view of this, there is a concern among some of the other countries that the goal of having national frameworks in place by 2010 might rush the national process. They recognise that while the principles of the framework can be introduced in legislation relatively quickly, it is likely to take some years before the framework is fully implemented.

While national qualification frameworks that are compatible with the overarching EHEA framework will also be compatible with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) proposed by the European Commission, it was noted by some countries that there is confusion at national and institutional level between the framework for the EHEA adopted in Bergen and the EQF.

It is clear that this is an indicator where a great effort needs to be made before 2010. There is still a lot of work to be done in many countries, and there is a need to consider what kinds of collegial support can be provided through the Bologna Process to help these countries to develop their national frameworks. This might include continuation of the regional workshops started in the 2005-2007 period, having an appropriate international organisation or network to facilitate meetings and the creation of an expert pool, as suggested by the Qualifications Frameworks Working Group.

Developing national frameworks of qualifications will bring together a number of strands of the Bologna Process, all of which are based on a learning outcomes approach: quality assurance; credit transfer and accumulation systems; recognition of prior learning; lifelong learning; flexible learning paths and the social dimension.

Figure 1d **Indicator 3: Implementation of national qualifications framework**
Progress up to 2007



Number and percentage of countries indicated in each colour category

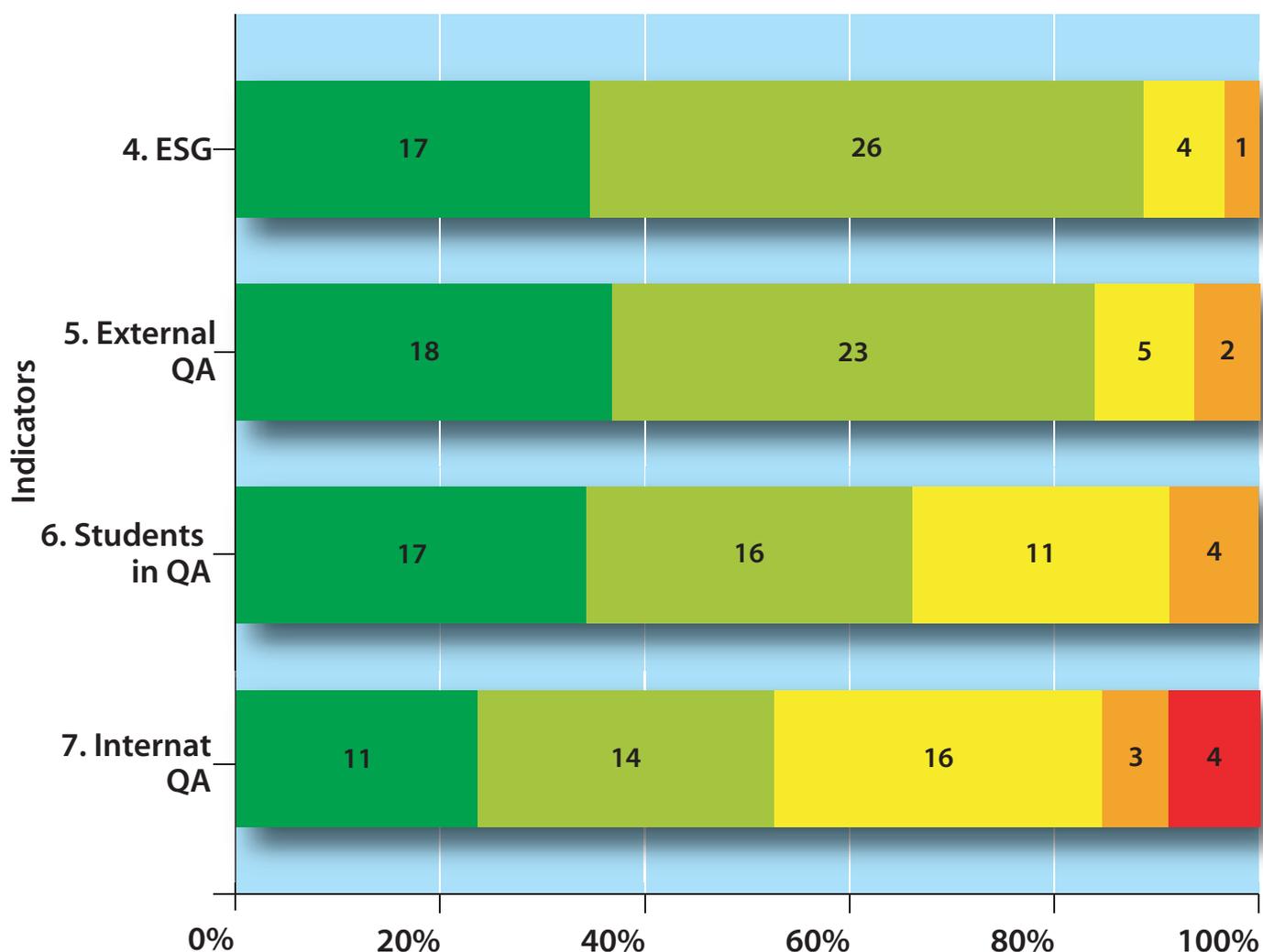
Stocktaking on Quality Assurance

Table 2

Number of countries in each colour category for indicators 4-7

Degree System	Green	Light green	Yellow	Orange	Red
4. National implementation of <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA (ESG)</i>	17	26	4	1	0
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system	18	23	5	2	0
6. Level of student participation	17	16	11	4	0
7. Level of international participation	11	14	16	3	4

Figure 2 Quality assurance: number and percentage of countries in each colour category for indicators 4-7



Indicator 4: National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (QA) in the EHEA*

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 4	17	26	4	1	0
--	----	----	---	---	---

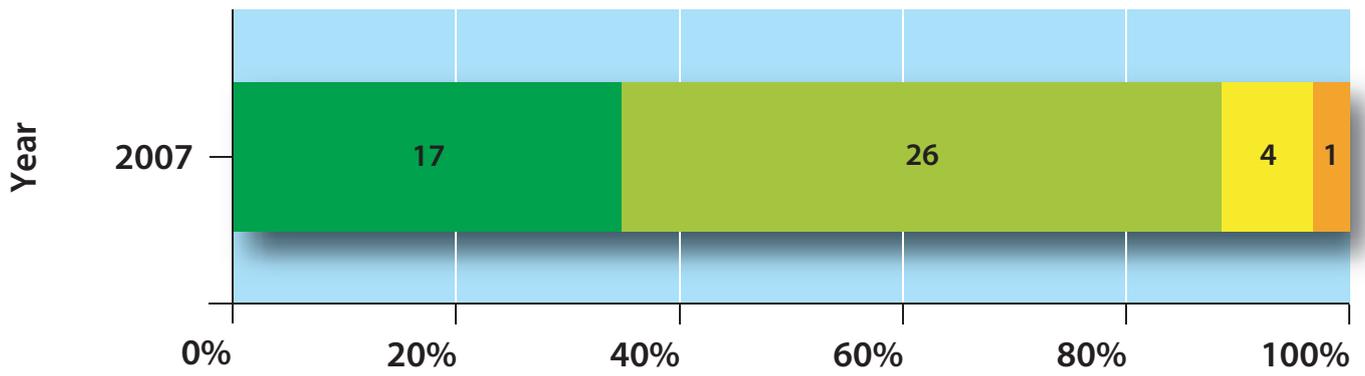
QUALITY ASSURANCE	4. National implementation of <i>Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (QA) in the EHEA</i>
Green (5)	A national QA system in line with the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i> is fully operational
Light green (4)	The process of implementing a national QA system in line with the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i> has started
Yellow (3)	There are plans and established deadlines for amending the national QA system in line with the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i>
Orange (2)	National quality assurance system is under review in line with the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i>
Red (1)	No arrangements to implement the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i>

This is a new indicator and its purpose was to check whether countries have started to implement the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* (often referred to as ESG). The criterion for green was that a national QA system in line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* is fully operational. However, countries could achieve a score of light green without necessarily having completed the steps indicated in *yellow* and *orange*.

In effect, the indicator shows that in close to one-third of countries a national quality assurance system in line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* is already fully operational (*green*), while all others (*light green, yellow* and *orange*) have started work on aligning their quality assurance system with the Standards and Guidelines.

However, there is widespread recognition that in many countries there is still a lot to be done and there are many gaps to be filled. While the formal structures for quality assurance are in place, a finding that is supported by the *EUA Trends V* study, there is a need to provide more support for internal quality assurance/ quality improvement processes that will “embed” a genuine quality culture in higher education institutions. For 2009, the stocktaking process may need to ask for more detailed information about the operation of internal quality assurance processes.

Figure 2a **Indicator 4: National implementation of
Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA
Progress up to 2007**



Number and percentage of countries indicated in each colour category

Indicator 5: Stage of development of external quality assurance system

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 5	18	23	5	2	0
--	----	----	---	---	---

QUALITY ASSURANCE	5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
Green (5)	<p>A fully functioning quality assurance system is in operation at national level and applies to all HE</p> <p>Evaluation of programmes or institutions includes three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● internal assessment, ● external review, ● publication of results. <p>In addition, procedures have been established for peer review of national QA agency(ies) according to the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i></p>
Light green (4)	<p>A Quality Assurance system is in operation at national level and applies to all HE</p> <p>The quality assurance system covers three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● internal assessment ● external review ● publication of results <p>But no procedures are in place for peer review of national QA agency(ies) according to the <i>Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA</i></p>
Yellow (3)	<p>A Quality Assurance system is in operation at national level, but it does not apply to all HE. The quality assurance system covers at least one of the three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● internal assessment ● external review ● publication of results

Orange (2)	<p>Legislation or regulations on quality assurance of programmes or institutions, including at least the first three elements, have been prepared but are not implemented yet</p> <p>OR</p> <p>implementation of legislation or regulations has begun on a very limited scale</p>
Red (1)	<p>No legislation or regulations on evaluation of programmes or institutions with at least the first three elements</p> <p>OR</p> <p>legislation in the process of preparation</p>

The criteria for green were that

- a fully functioning quality assurance system is in operation and applies to all higher education
- evaluation of programmes or institutions includes three elements: internal assessment, external review and publication of results
- procedures have been established for peer review of quality assurance agency.

Even though this indicator was more demanding than in 2005, very good progress is reported. The biggest problem for many countries is that they have yet to establish procedures for external review of the quality assurance agency.

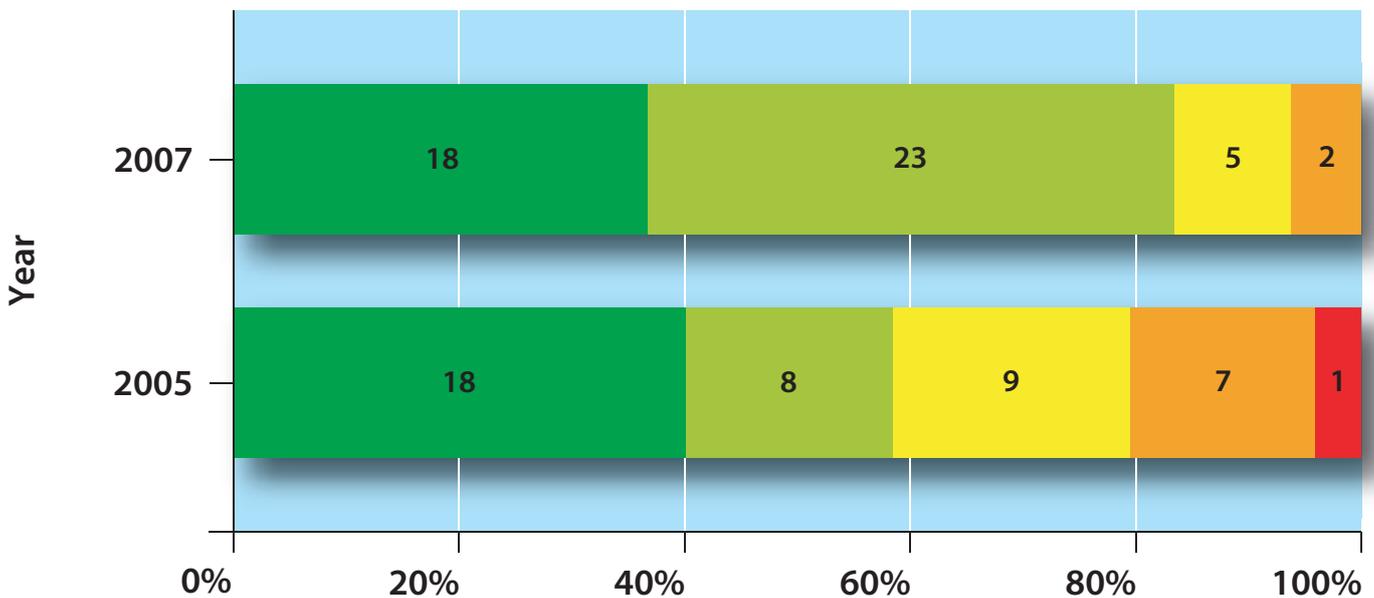
Some groups of countries have begun to cooperate with each other to support implementation of their external quality assurance systems, for example by having joint accreditation processes. It might be useful for the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) in Higher Education to provide information that would help countries to collaborate further, and for them to explain how countries have organised their external reviews.

Progress since 2005

This indicator has changed since 2005, when the criteria for green did not include peer review of quality assurance agencies. In spite of this, however, as fig 2b shows there has been significant progress in establishing systems for external evaluation, with many more countries now in the combined green/light green categories than in 2005.

However, although many countries mention plans to undertake peer review of quality assurance agencies in the next few years, not all countries have established procedures for peer review, so there is no increase in the number of countries in the *green* category in 2007.

Figure 2b **Indicator 5: Stage of development of external quality assurance systems**
Comparison 2005-2007



Number and percentage of countries indicated in each colour category

Indicator 6: Level of student participation in quality assurance

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 6	17	16	11	4	0
--	----	----	----	---	---

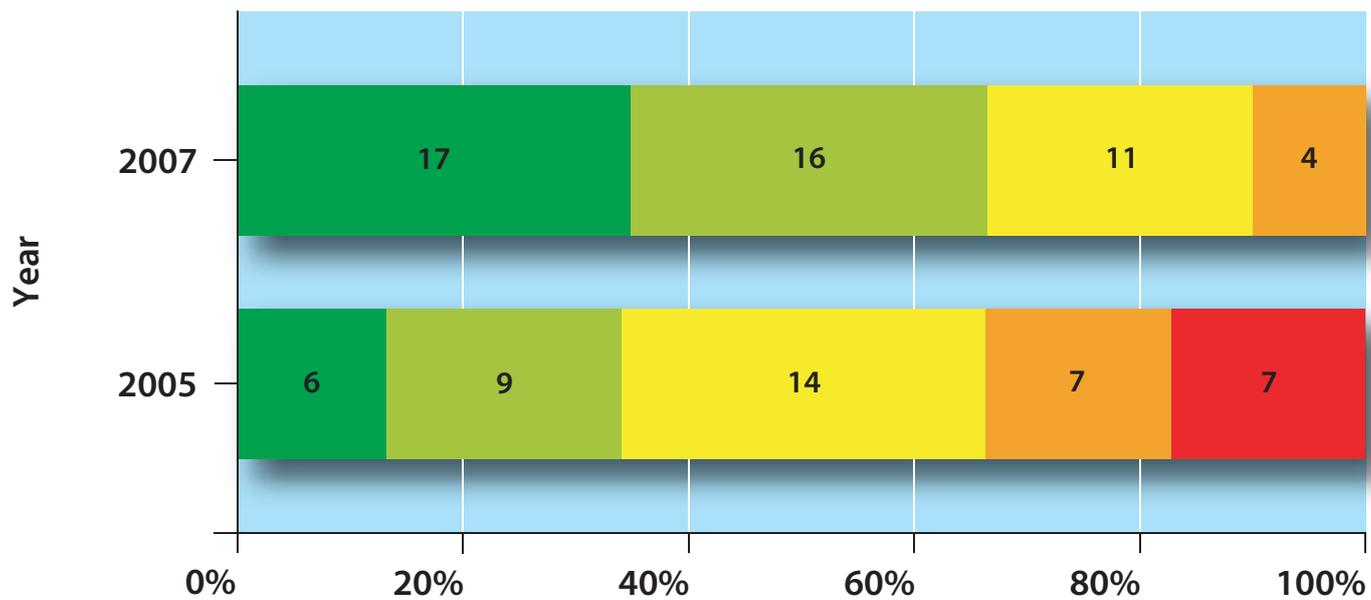
QUALITY ASSURANCE	6. Level of student participation in quality assurance
Green (5)	<p>Students participate at four levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● in the governance of national bodies for QA ● in external review of Higher education institutions and/or programmes: either in expert teams, as observers in expert teams or at the decision making stage, ● in consultation during external reviews ● in internal evaluations
Light green (4)	Students participate at three of the four above levels
Yellow (3)	Students participate at two of the four above levels
Orange (2)	Students participate at one of the four above levels
Red (1)	<p>There is no student involvement</p> <p>OR</p> <p>No clarity about structures and arrangements for student participation</p>

Every country has achieved some level of student participation in quality assurance, and in more than two-thirds of countries students participate in at least three of the four levels. This represents a significant increase since 2005, a finding which is backed up by data from *EUA Trends V* and from the ESIB survey.

Progress since 2005

This indicator is directly comparable with 2005 as the criteria have remained the same. It is also the indicator where the greatest amount of progress has been made, as shown in fig 2c.

Figure 2c **Indicator 6: Level of student participation in quality assurance**
Comparison 2005-2007



Number and percentage of countries indicated in each colour category

Indicator 7: Level of international participation in quality assurance

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 7	11	14	16	3	4
--	----	----	----	---	---

QUALITY ASSURANCE	7. Level of international participation in quality assurance
Green (5)	<p>International participation takes place at four levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● in the governance of national bodies for quality assurance ● in the external evaluation of national QA agencies ● as members or observers within teams for external review of Higher education institutions and/or programmes ● membership of ENQA or other international networks
Light green (4)	International participation takes place at three of the four above levels
Yellow (3)	International participation takes place at two of the four above levels
Orange (2)	International participation takes place at one of the four above levels
Red (1)	<p>There is no international involvement</p> <p>OR</p> <p>No clarity about structures and arrangements for international participation</p>

The stocktaking results show that there is still some way to go on international participation in quality assurance, with less than a quarter of countries in the *green* category. This reflects the fact that external review of quality assurance agencies is still at an early stage of development in most countries, so there cannot be international participation in this area yet.

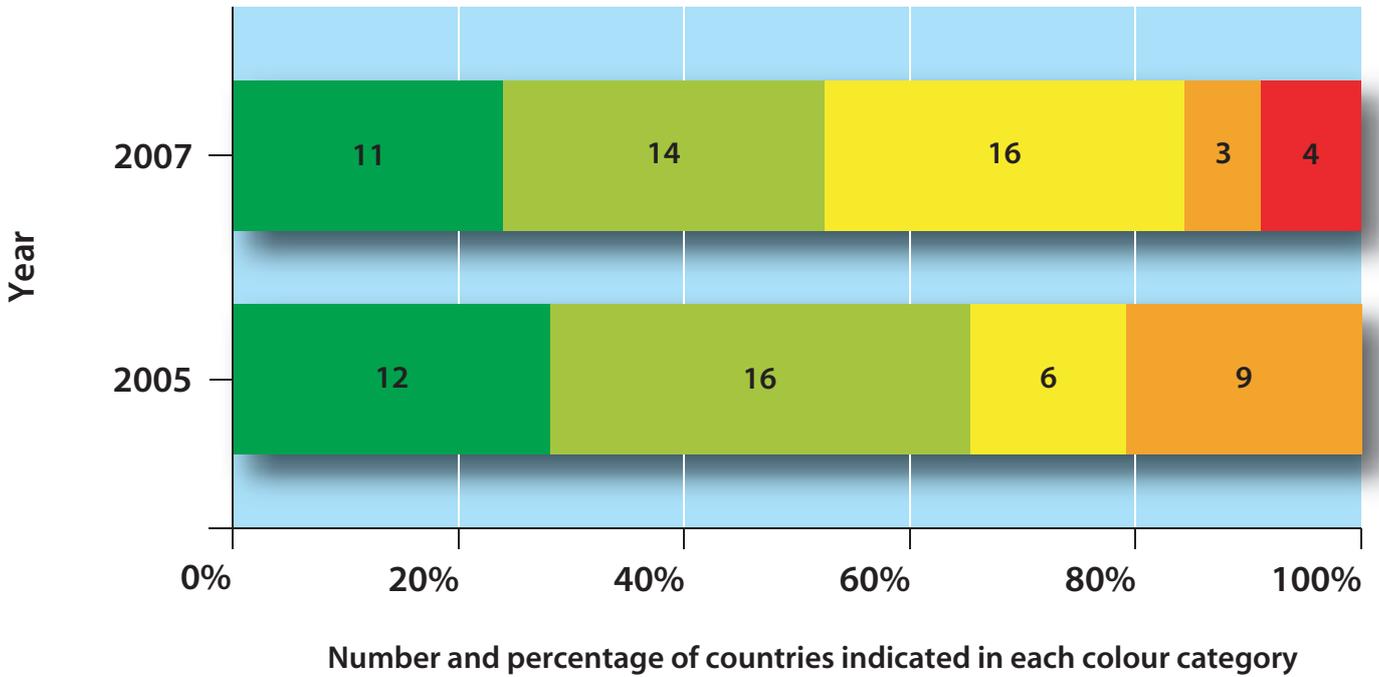
There are some barriers to including foreign experts as members of external review teams. Language was mentioned by a number of countries as an obstacle; this is particularly difficult for smaller countries with less widely-spoken languages. Some countries have solved the problem by using English or another common language throughout the external evaluation process, which greatly adds to the cost and inconvenience for the institutions concerned. International participation in the governance of quality assurance agencies is also mentioned as a problem for some countries because of legislative restrictions.

The challenge for the future is to increase international participation as a way of guaranteeing the international acceptance, openness and transparency of quality assurance processes in all countries. This might be achieved by focussing on developing an international dimension to the external review of quality assurance agencies, and by building on the initiatives of ENQA, EUA and the Council of Europe to promote international cooperation.

Progress since 2005

This indicator was more challenging in 2007 than in 2005 with the addition of *evaluation of quality assurance agencies* to the criteria for *green*. As a consequence, there are fewer countries in the *green/light green* categories and more countries in the *red* category in 2007 than there were in 2005, as shown in fig 2d.

Figure 2d **Indicator 7: Level of international participation in quality assurance**
Comparison 2005-2007



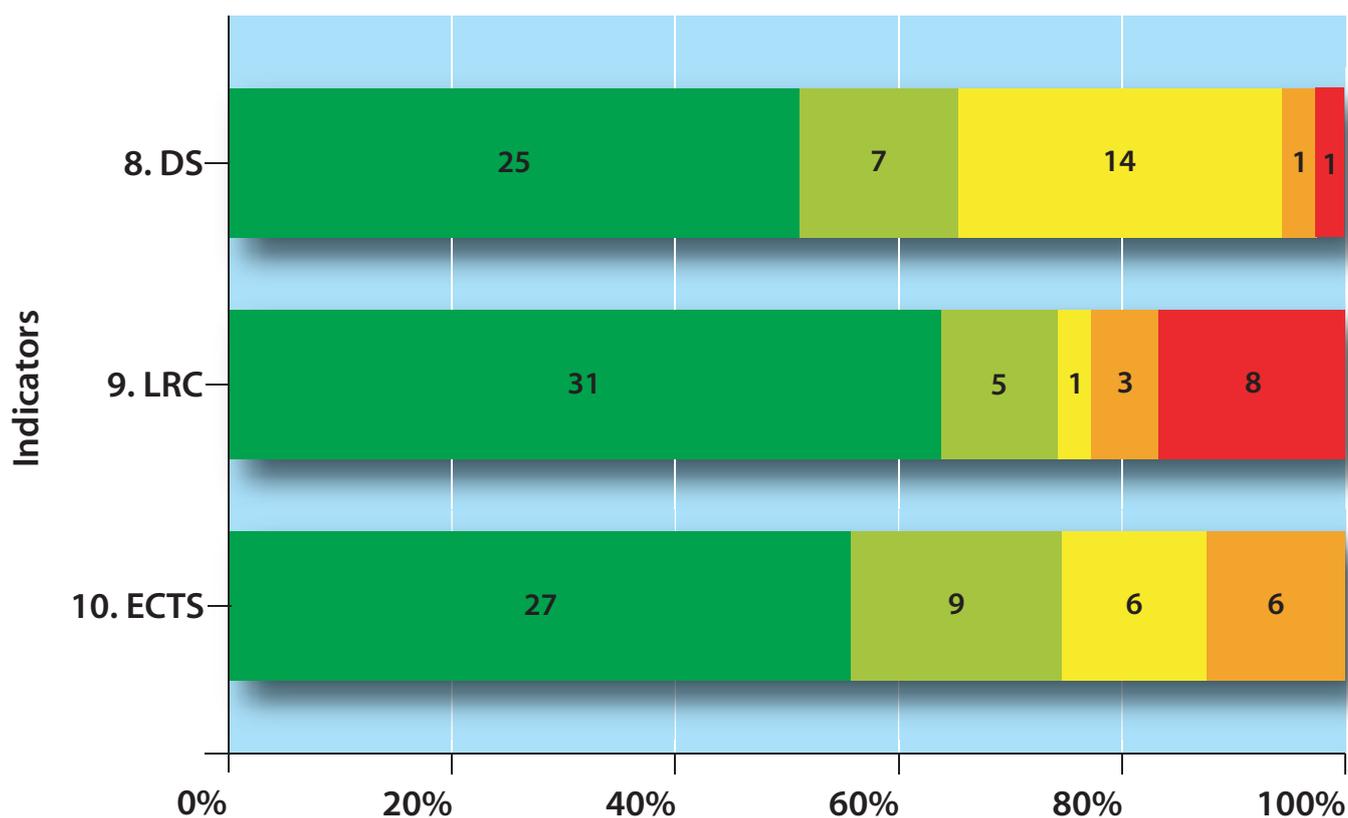
Stocktaking on Recognition of Degrees and Study Periods

Table 3

Number of countries in each colour category for indicators 8-10

Recognition of degrees and study periods	Green	Light green	Yellow	Orange	Red
8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement	25	7	14	1	1
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	31	5	1	3	8
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS	27	9	6	6	0

Figure 3 Recognition of degrees and study periods: number and percentage of countries in each colour category for indicators 8-10



Indicator 8: Stage of implementation of diploma supplement

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 8	25	7	14	1	1
--	----	---	----	---	---

RECOGNITION	8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
Green (5)	<p>Every student graduating in 2007 will receive a diploma supplement (DS) in the EU/CoE/UNESCO diploma supplement format and in a widely spoken European language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● automatically ● free of charge
Light green (4)	<p>Every student graduating in 2007 will receive the diploma supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO diploma supplement format and in a widely spoken European language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● on request ● free of charge
Yellow (3)	<p>A DS in the EU/CoE/UNESCO diploma supplement format and in a widely spoken European language will be issued to some students OR in some programmes in 2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● on request ● free of charge
Orange (2)	<p>A DS in the EU/CoE/UNESCO diploma supplement format and in a widely spoken European language will be issued to some students OR in some programmes in 2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● on request ● not free of charge
Red (1)	<p>Systematic issuing of DS in the EU/CoE/UNESCO diploma supplement format and in a widely spoken European language has not started</p>

The use of the diploma supplement is increasing steadily, with more than half the countries having fully completed implementation. In a number of countries where it is not yet issued automatically, the diploma supplement is available to all students and is issued on request. However, in one-third of countries the diploma supplement is not yet available to all students in all programmes.

A number of different approaches to issuing the diploma supplement can be identified from national reports.

- Some countries automatically issue the diploma supplement in one language, and will issue a translation on request.

- Some countries issue the diploma supplement to doctoral graduates, others do not.
- Some seem to issue the diploma supplement to bachelors on request only.
- Some issue the diploma supplement to all graduates in the two-cycle system (but they may have a large number of study programmes not yet transformed to two cycles).

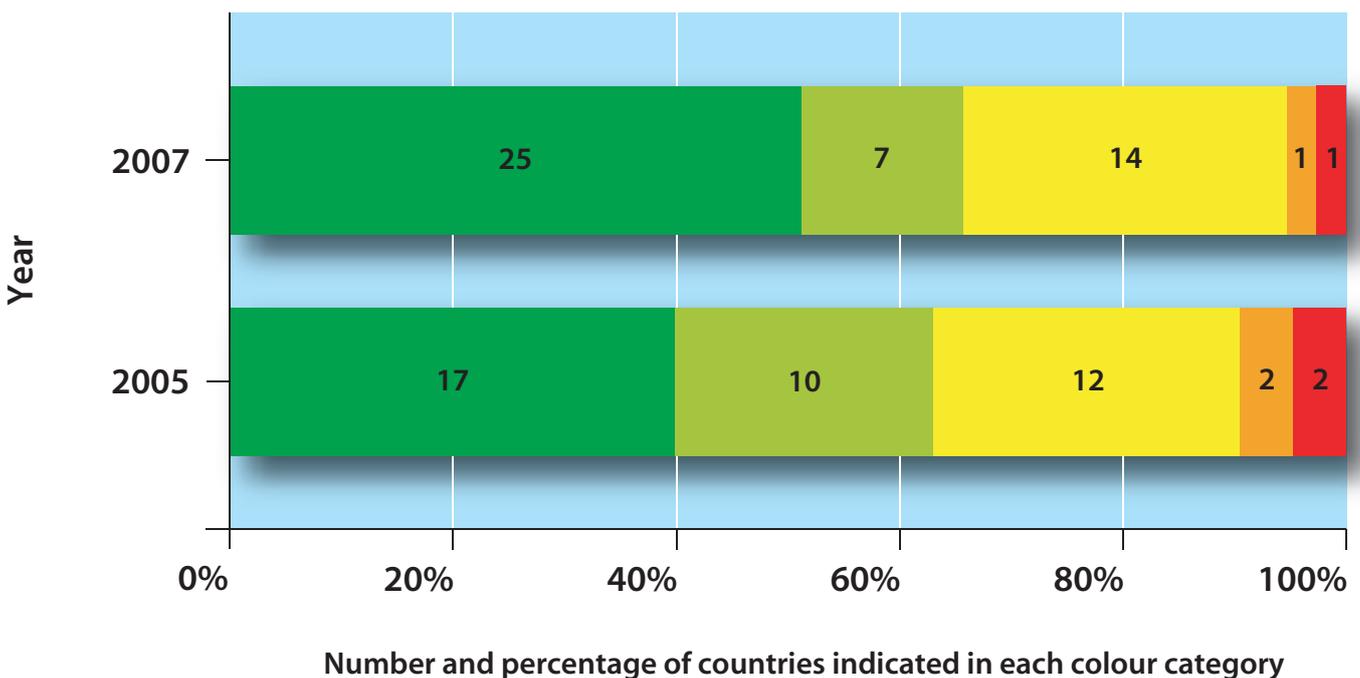
The 2007 stocktaking has raised some important issues about the diploma supplement, which might be addressed in the next two years. Firstly, there is a need to clarify that the diploma supplement applies to all three cycles of the degree system. Secondly, there is a need to look at how well the actual diploma supplements in different countries correspond to the Unesco/Council of Europe/EU joint diploma supplement format adopted in 2001. It was noted that while the format of the diploma supplement is available on the official websites of a number of international organisations, the instructions for filling the diploma supplements that were elaborated together with the format itself are not so easily accessible. The ENIC/NARIC network might be involved in gathering and analysing examples of diploma supplements issued in all countries.

Progress since 2005

The criteria for green and light green were the same in 2007 as they were in 2005, while the criteria for yellow and orange were more demanding in 2007. In 2005 it was sufficient to have plans to introduce the diploma supplement or to be carrying out pilot testing; however this is not the case in 2007.

Even though the 2007 criteria were more demanding, fig 3a shows that there has been good progress in implementing the diploma supplement since 2005.

Figure 3a **Indicator 8: Stage of implementation of diploma supplement**
Comparison 2005-2007



Indicator 9: National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 9	31	5	1	3	8
--	----	---	---	---	---

RECOGNITION	9. National Implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention ⁸
Green (5)	<p>The Convention has been ratified; appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Lisbon Convention; the later Supplementary Documents have been adopted in appropriate legislation and applied in practice, so that the five main principles are fulfilled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● applicants have a right to fair assessment, ● there is recognition if no substantial differences can be proven, ● in cases of negative decisions the competent recognition authority demonstrates the existence of (a) substantial difference(s) ● the country ensures that information on its institutions and their programmes is provided ● an ENIC has been established.
Light green (4)	<p>The Convention has been ratified; appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Lisbon Convention; the later Supplementary Documents have been adopted in appropriate legislation, but some amendments are needed to apply in practice the principles of the Supplementary Documents.</p>
Yellow (3)	<p>The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with three or four of the five above-mentioned principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.</p>
Orange (2)	<p>The Convention has been ratified and appropriate legislation complies with one or two of the five above-mentioned principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.</p>
Red (1)	<p>The Convention has been ratified but appropriate legislation has NOT been reviewed against the legal framework of the Lisbon Convention or the Supplementary Documents.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Convention has not been ratified</p>

⁸ More recognition issues are discussed in the section on national action plans for improving recognition below

The Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) is the only legally binding instrument that applies to the Bologna Process. In the Bergen Communiqué, Ministers stressed that those countries that had not yet ratified the Convention in 2005 should do so without delay. The criterion was therefore more demanding in 2007 than in 2005, with an even greater emphasis on ratification of the Convention and also on applying its five main principles in practice. The ratification process has taken longer than expected in a number of countries, with the result that only one country has ratified the Convention in the last two years.

Many countries have recently amended their legislation and do not have legal obstacles that prevent them from applying the principles of the Convention in practice. Some countries also extend the application of Convention principles to applicants from countries that are not parties to the Convention. Several countries have established databases of recognition decisions with a view to simplifying procedures in future. Countries have produced national action plans for improving recognition, which are examined later in this report.

However, some of the reality is hidden within the apparently very good results. The terminology used for national recognition procedures is often confused and this may conceal huge differences between countries. Several countries say that their higher education institutions need more information on Convention principles and training on how to apply them in practice. While it appears from national reports and action plans on recognition that legislation is largely compliant with the *letter* of the Convention, there are various approaches to recognition at institutional level that may not fully embody the *spirit* of the Convention principles. It should also be noted that some countries are in the red category because they have not ratified the Convention, but they have already started to implement the Convention principles in legislation and practice.

In the period before 2010, it would be worthwhile to examine more closely the conduct of recognition procedures at national level and in institutions, and how recognition practices can be made truly coherent across the EHEA. It would also be useful to check how well countries have transposed Convention principles into national laws, while recognising the autonomy of higher education institutions. Another aspect that is worthy of examination is how recognition and quality assurance are linked to each other: if fair recognition of qualifications is seen as an indicator of quality, implementation of the Convention could be checked as part of the quality assurance process.

Progress since 2005

This indicator is not directly comparable with the 2005 criteria, because in 2005 it was possible for a country to score yellow without having ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. In 2007, a country that has not yet ratified the Convention can score only red, regardless of whether or not the principles have been applied in legislation. For this reason, the number of countries in the red category has actually increased in 2007.

Indicator 10: Stage of implementation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 10	27	9	6	6	0
---	----	---	---	---	---

RECOGNITION	10. Stage of implementation of ECTS
Green (5)	In 2007 ECTS credits are allocated in all first and second cycle programmes, enabling credit transfer and accumulation.
Light green (4)	In 2007 credits are allocated in at least 75 per cent of the first and second cycle Higher Education programmes, using ECTS OR a fully compatible credit system enabling credit transfer and accumulation
Yellow (3)	In 2007 credits are allocated in 50-74 per cent of Higher Education programmes, using ECTS or a fully compatible national credit system enabling credit transfer and accumulation
Orange (2)	In 2007: ECTS credits are allocated in less than 50 per cent of Higher Education programmes OR A national credit system is used which is not fully compatible with ECTS OR ECTS is used in all programmes but only for credit transfer
Red (1)	No credit system is in place yet

In more than half of the countries ECTS is already used for credit transfer and accumulation, while another quarter of the countries use ECTS in at least 75 per cent of programmes, or use an ECTS compatible national credit system across the board.

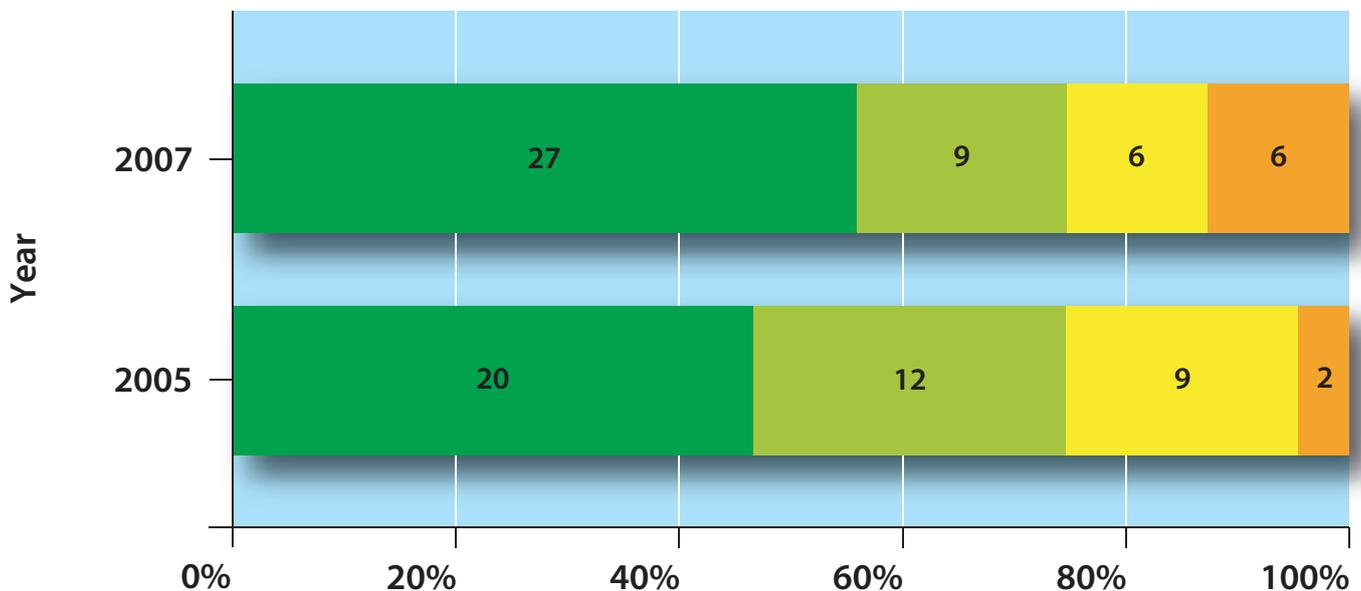
The results demonstrate that ECTS is developing as a system of credit transfer and accumulation. However, national reports also show that while many countries have begun to use credits both for transfer and for accumulation, a much smaller number link credits with learning outcomes.

For the future, there is a need for more emphasis on the links between learning outcomes, qualifications frameworks, and credit transfer and accumulation. This will be more fully in line with the key features indicated in the ECTS: “Credits in ECTS can only be obtained after successful completion of the work required and appropriate assessment of the learning outcomes achieved. Learning outcomes are sets of competences, expressing what the student will know, understand or be able to do after completion of a process of learning, long or short.”⁹

Progress since 2005

The criteria for this indicator were more specific and demanding in 2007 than in 2005. The 2005 criterion for green was that ECTS credits were allocated in most programmes enabling transfer and accumulation, while light green could be achieved if ECTS was used in a *limited number* of programmes. As a consequence of this change in the criteria, the increase in the number of countries gaining high scores has been relatively small, as shown in fig 3b.

Figure 3b **Indicator 10: Stage of implementation of ECTS**
Comparison 2005-2007



Number and percentage of countries indicated in each colour category

⁹ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Key Features, see http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/doc/ectskey_en.pdf

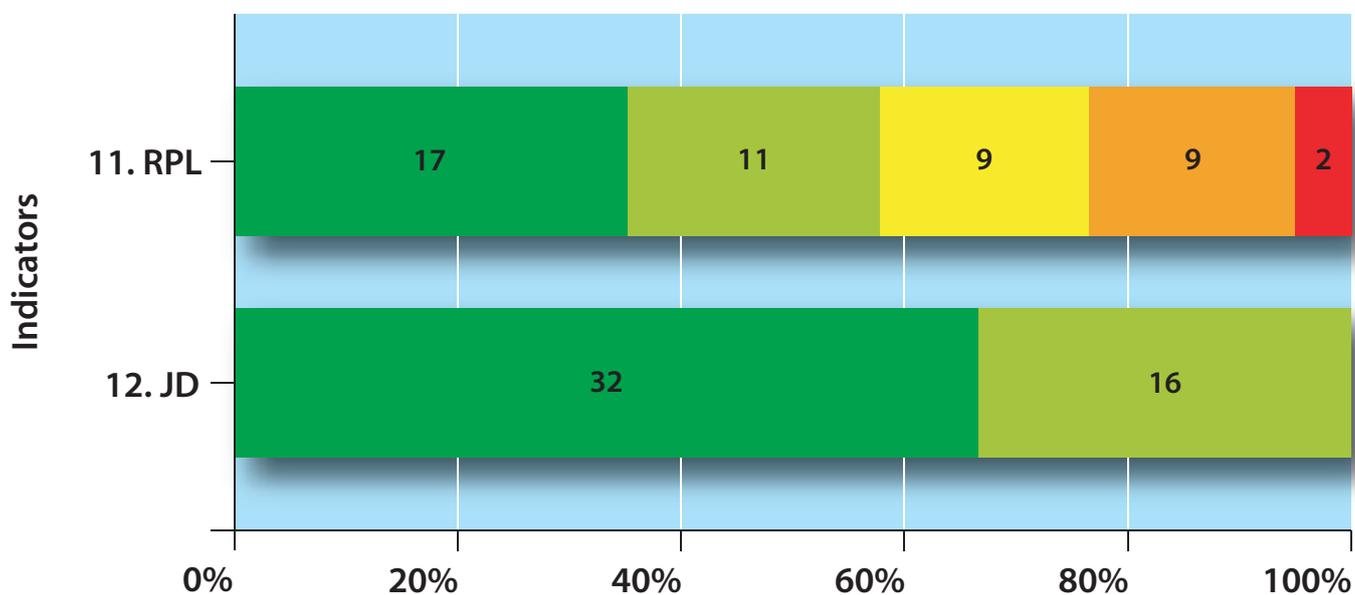
Stocktaking on Recognition of Prior Learning and Joint Degrees

Table 4

Number of countries in each colour category for indicators 11-12

Recognition of prior learning and joint degree	Green	Light green	Yellow	Orange	Red
11. Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	17	11	9	9	2
12. Establishment and recognition of joint degree	32	16	0	0	0

Figure 4 Recognition of prior learning and joint degrees: number and percentage of countries in each colour category for indicators 11-12



Indicator 11: Recognition of prior learning

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 11	17	11	9	9	2
---	----	----	---	---	---

LIFELONG LEARNING	11. Recognition of prior learning
Green (5)	There are procedures/national guidelines or policy for assessment of prior learning as a basis for 1) access to higher education programmes, and 2) allocation of credits towards a qualification and/or exemption from some programme requirements
Light green (4)	There are procedures/national guidelines or policy for assessment of prior learning but they are used for only one of the abovementioned purposes
Yellow (3)	Procedures/national guidelines or policy for establishing assessment of prior learning have been agreed or adopted and are awaiting implementation OR There are no specific procedures/national guidelines or policy for assessment of prior learning, but procedures for recognition of prior learning are demonstrably in operation at some higher education institutions or study programmes
Orange (2)	Implementation of recognition of prior learning is in a pilot phase at some higher education institutions OR Work at drawing up procedures/national guidelines or policy for recognition of prior learning has started
Red (1)	No procedures for recognition of prior learning are in place EITHER at the national OR at the institutional/programme level.

This was an entirely new indicator in 2007. Just over one-third of countries have achieved the highest score, which suggests that procedures for the recognition of prior learning are at an early stage of development in the majority of countries.

There was no common understanding of *recognition of prior learning*; in some cases it was taken to mean only recognising qualifications achieved in other institutions. There were very few concrete examples of practice in national reports.

This is an area where there is a need to raise awareness of the issues and provide support for future development. It is also important to link recognition of prior learning with the development of national frameworks of qualifications, and with systems of credit transfer and accumulation. At this stage of progress, it might be too early to apply the indicator approach to stocktaking in this area. There is further discussion of this point in the concluding part of the report.

Indicator 12: Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Number of countries in each score category for Indicator 12	32	16	0	0	0
---	----	----	---	---	---

JOINT DEGREES	12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees
Green (5)	Legislation allows and encourages establishing joint programmes and joint degrees. A number of higher education institutions have already established joint programmes and are awarding nationally recognised degrees jointly with higher education institutions of other countries at all levels.
Light green (4)	There are no legal or other obstacles to establishing joint programmes and the awarding and recognition of joint degrees or at least double or multiple degrees, but legislation does not specifically refer to joint degrees. OR Legislation for establishing joint programmes, awarding and recognition of joint degrees has been prepared and agreed, but not yet implemented.
Yellow (3)	There are no legal or other obstacles to establishing joint programmes with Higher education institutions of other countries, but a degree is awarded in only one country after completion of the joint programme.
Orange (2)	There are obstacles to establishing joint programmes, awarding or recognizing joint degrees, but legislation or regulations are being drafted.
Red (1)	There are no possibilities to establish joint programmes, award and recognize joint degrees under current legislation and there are no plans to change this situation

This was a new indicator for 2007. Almost all countries state that legislation either explicitly encourages or at least does not prevent higher education institutions awarding joint degrees with higher education institutions from other countries.

Quite a number of countries have reviewed and changed their legislation recently in order to allow establishment and recognition of joint degrees. This may be regarded as a good example of how the Bologna Process can have an effect on national policy and practice.

In the stocktaking, countries were put in the green category when they had begun to award joint degrees, even if there was no explicit reference to legislation: in some countries legislation is not needed so the existence of joint degrees was regarded as adequate evidence of having achieved this criterion in accordance with the Bergen Communiqué. It should be noted that the Eurydice study used a different approach, namely checking whether awarding and recognition were explicitly mentioned in national legislation, and therefore the results are somewhat different.

Stocktaking on areas not included in the scorecard

This section of the report comments on the stocktaking themes that were identified in the Bergen Communiqué but not included in the scorecard: the progress on implementing the third cycle; measures to increase the employability of graduates; flexible learning paths in higher education; the links between higher education and research; the benefits of international cooperation and partnership in the Bologna Process. It also outlines the main issues arising from the national action plans on recognition. Finally, it explores some of the main challenges for the future, as identified in the national reports.

Progress on implementing the third cycle

Growth of structured doctoral programmes in the third cycle

The national reports and the comparison of data from *Trends III* and *Trends IV* indicate that there is growth in the number of structured doctoral programmes in the third cycle, with new legislation adopted in several countries. Several countries say that while they have focused up to now on implementing the first and second cycles, implementing doctoral studies has become a central issue recently.

Normal length of full-time doctoral studies

Most countries have indicated 3 to 4 years full-time study, but the average time for completion of doctoral studies is often longer than the norm, sometimes because study is combined with other duties in the institution. In a large number of countries, structured doctoral programmes include taught courses, which vary in duration from half a year (30 ECTS credits) to 1.5 years.

Supervisory and assessment procedures

Most countries have supervisory activities for doctoral students, which in many cases are determined by the higher education institutions themselves. The most common assessment procedure is periodic attestation or reporting, which may take place once a year, twice a year or once every two years. Some countries indicate that doctoral candidates have to sit exams.

Qualifications framework

Many countries have already included, or propose to include, doctoral studies in their qualifications framework.

Interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills

Some countries include interdisciplinary training and development of transferable skills in doctoral studies, mainly where doctoral schools have been established, while others plan to do so in the future.

Use of credit transfer and accumulation in doctoral programmes

There is a range of approaches to the use of credit transfer and accumulation in doctoral programmes. Some countries use credit points across all doctoral studies, some use them for taught courses only, and others do not use them in any doctoral studies programmes.

Increasing the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications

Question 11 of the national report template asked “What measures are being taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?” The quality of responses to this question was very varied. The answers demonstrated that employability of graduates is seen by higher education institutions as one of the most important focal points for higher education. Since bachelors and masters are new degrees in many countries, it is not yet clear what the level of employability of graduates will be, so the responses were to some extent speculative.

Some countries estimated the current level of graduate employment based on general national employment data only. A number of countries indicated good employment prospects for graduates. However it is important to note that, as some countries suggested, variations in employment opportunities for graduates might sometimes be influenced by changes in the labour market and the national economy and might therefore not reflect institutions’ efforts to increase employability. None of the countries expects sharp changes in graduate employment in the near future.

The national reports show that the percentages of first cycle graduates progressing to the second cycle and those entering the labour market vary considerably from country to country, and also between different types of higher education. In some countries, the highest rates of first cycle graduates entering the labour market are those who hold professionally-oriented bachelor degrees. It also seems that considerable numbers of bachelor degree holders find employment in countries that have a long tradition of a two-cycle system while in some other countries that have established tradition of ‘long’ higher education programmes the holders of the newly-introduced bachelor degrees may experience employment problems. This finding is confirmed by the *Trends V* study, which raises the issue of the acceptability of bachelor degrees to employers.

The proportion of first cycle graduates following studies in the second cycle ranges across the whole spectrum: from 80-100 per cent for university graduates in some countries to as little as 5-10 per cent for professional bachelors in others. This may be linked to the employability of bachelor graduates in the country concerned.

Countries are developing different measures to increase the labour-market relevance of qualifications. Some are reforming their existing bachelor programmes with a view to enhancing the employability of graduates, while others who are currently introducing the two-cycle system are concentrating their efforts on the employability of first cycle graduates. Some countries have adopted accreditation criteria that include meeting professional requirements or skills and competencies, while others link higher education funding to graduate employment. Some of the practical measures include involving employers in formulating professional standards; introducing practical training in university first cycle programmes; introducing career consultancy at higher education institutions, or creating support systems for job-seekers.

In summary, the picture that emerges from the 2007 stocktaking about the employability of first cycle graduates is not very clear. There may be merit in sharing good practice in this area. The graduate employability issue is one of the key issues of the Bologna Process. Therefore, if it is to be the focus of more detailed stocktaking, there is a need for all countries to gather systematic data on graduate employment.

Creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education

Countries were asked to describe legislative and other measures that they have taken to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education. It is clear from the national reports that countries have different ways of interpreting “recognition of prior learning” (see analysis of indicator 11 above) and “flexible learning paths”. In their responses, countries mentioned flexible entry requirements, delivery methods and structures of programmes.

Some countries admit people to higher education without the typical entry qualifications, if the higher education institutions consider them qualified. There may be special conditions that apply: for example a certain minimum age limit, belonging to a socially disadvantaged group, or passing a special entrance examination. Some countries admit holders of secondary vocational qualifications who would not formally qualify for admission; in other countries a combination of preparatory and higher education studies has been introduced.

Many countries have a long tradition of organising alternative ways of learning for students who, for various reasons, cannot study in the typical full-time study programmes. The arrangements mainly concern the timing of study programmes: for example providing opportunities to study in the evenings, at weekends, or by correspondence. These arrangements seem to exist, in one way or another, nearly everywhere, either in parallel with full-time programmes within the same institutions or in higher education institutions specialising in providing these alternative learning paths.

A number of countries are focussing on introducing e-learning opportunities, either alone or in combination with traditional studies. Some “Net universities” seem to be emerging, while one country has organised a virtual open university and an open polytechnic that are fully accessible to learners with different educational backgrounds.

In some countries, new initiatives are emerging to introduce truly flexible learning paths combining different kinds of learning. These developments are often made possible by the implementation of a national framework of qualifications, based on awarding credit for learning outcomes achieved in a range of formal, informal and non-formal learning contexts.

Developments in this area are still at an early stage, and results may not be easily quantifiable for some time, but the development process should start with setting clear policy goals. There is a need to raise awareness of the role higher education can play in advancing social and economic cohesion, especially by providing increased access for people who have traditionally been under-represented at this level.

Higher education and research

In their national reports, countries were asked to describe the relationship between higher education and research, and to indicate the proportion of research carried out in higher education institutions. In addition, they were asked to say whether they are taking any steps to improve the synergy between higher education and other research sectors.

The responses of most countries were quite vague: they generally stated that they had policies for strengthening the relationship between higher education and research, without specifying the measures they were taking. Where specified, these were usually measures to strengthen research in itself, by allocating extra funding or promoting new research programmes.

In many countries higher education is seen as an important component of the national approach to research and development (R&D) and innovation. This depends on investment to develop institutional research capacity; to generate new knowledge, and to implement leading edge research technologies. It also requires concerted effort to spread knowledge about the results from scholarly work and scientific research so that it is seen as a benefit to the economy.

In the minority of countries that supplied relevant data, the percentage of research carried out at higher education institutions ranged from 12 per cent to 80 per cent. Many countries said that most research is carried out or led by universities. Some countries are encouraging higher education institutions to set up their own research institutes, while research institutions outnumber universities in a small number of countries.

Among the steps that countries mentioned they were taking to improve the synergy between higher education and other research sectors were:

- adopting national strategy and policy measures to strengthen research cooperation between higher education institutions and research institutes, as well as with business and industry
- encouraging mobility between the academic and industrial worlds
- providing incentives to attract the best researchers
- promoting cooperation between different sectors of HE in research
- strengthening technology transfer
- creating a technology park

- merging research institutes into universities
- establishing spin-off firms, forming venture capital funds, establishment and promotion of regional HE and research centres
- changing higher education institutional structures to integrate research institutes
- establishing joint centres of research, higher education and business
- increasing focus on commercialisation and communication of research results
- subsidising public-private research consortia.

From the wide variation in responses in the 2007 national reports, it is difficult to establish a clear picture of the relationship between higher education and research and whether that is changing as a result of the Bologna Process. If there is to be further development in this area there is a need to formulate clear policy goals and to measure progress against these goals.

Doctoral candidates and graduates taking up research careers

Question 24 of the national report template asked “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?”

A number of countries did not state the percentage of doctoral graduates that continue in research careers. The available data or estimates indicate that the percentage of doctoral graduates taking up research careers varies greatly: from more than 90 per cent in some countries to “very few” in a small number of cases.

The main measures to attract doctoral graduates to research careers include:

- creating or supporting post-doctoral positions
- providing specific grants to post-doctoral researchers
- raising salaries
- increasing funding for research in general
- providing information on career opportunities in research
- measures related to taxation
- promoting mobility of doctoral students and internationalisation of doctoral studies
- finding research posts for young researchers in the private sector.

In some countries, the main concern is that there are still small numbers of students enrolled in doctoral studies programmes, so the first step is to increase these numbers.

Benefits of international cooperation and partnership within the Bologna Process

It is clear from the 2007 stocktaking that international cooperation within the Bologna Process has contributed to building capacity at both institutional and governmental levels and this has led to significant progress across all participating countries. While the initiative for the Bologna Process came from governments, it is becoming increasingly evident that the process is successful because it is built on effective partnerships between government, higher education institutions, (including staff and students), business and social partners.

In the national reports for the 2007 stocktaking, countries were asked to describe arrangements for involving students and staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of higher education institutions. The responses suggest that there is an increasingly high level engagement of higher education institutions' staff and students as partners in the implementation of the Bologna Process. At institutional level, most countries have formal arrangements for involving students and staff representative bodies in the governance of higher education institutions. The usual approach is to set a compulsory ratio or a certain number of student and staff representatives. Representation of different staff groups is the norm. Staff trade unions however are more likely to be involved in specific commissions dealing with issues such as equal rights or labour legislation rather than as representatives in higher education governing bodies.

Countries were also asked to describe how they ensured the cooperation of business and social partners with higher education. Countries reported that they involve business and social partners in higher education in a number of ways, including:

- coordinating the implementation of the Bologna Process
- drafting legislation or policy papers
- elaborating qualifications frameworks
- membership of governance bodies for higher education institutions or at national level
- membership of committees for drafting higher education legislation, improving research and development, employability of graduates, setting graduation requirements/standards
- supporting practical placements for students and graduates.

Some countries are in the process of drafting new laws that will widen business and employer involvement.

It appears from the 2007 stocktaking that the Bologna Process is promoting increased involvement of students and staff in the governance of higher education institutions and better cooperation of business and social partners with higher education. Such developments should, in the long run, facilitate reaching the Bologna goals such as increasing employability of graduates, achieving more flexibility in higher education, establishing a quality enhancement culture, and outcomes-based curricula that lead to relevant qualifications.

Main issues arising from national action plans on recognition

The template for national action plans for recognition included a number of questions about recognition issues. There were questions about how the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention were embedded into national legislation and about how recognition practices are applied at state and institutional level. This included ratification of the Convention and the practical implementation of its principles at national level (see the analysis of results for scorecard indicator 9 earlier in this report). The plans also addressed the mechanisms used at national level to ensure implementation of the Convention principles at institutional level.

The need to achieve a balance between respecting institutional autonomy and implementing an international agreement gave rise to a wide spectrum of issues and solutions. Some countries said that they had difficulties ensuring implementation of the Convention principles by higher education institutions because of institutional autonomy. At the other end of the spectrum, in some countries recognition decisions are made at the national level and higher education institutions do not have any role in recognition.

A solution used by some countries was to transpose Lisbon Recognition Convention principles into national legislation: autonomous higher education institutions still have to observe the laws. Another solution was to include implementation of the Convention in the areas examined as part of the quality assessment of higher education institutions.

National action plans clearly demonstrate that not only are the procedures for assessment of foreign qualifications very different in different countries, but even the terminology used in different countries is diverse and often confusing. It might be helpful if national action plans on recognition were further analysed by the ENIC/NARIC networks with a view to achieving coherence in the treatment of foreign degrees and study periods across the EHEA.

The national action plans for recognition also contain a number of examples of good practice that might be further studied and disseminated including:

- finding nationally acceptable solutions for ensuring that higher education institutions follow the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in their recognition practices
- ensuring that recognition of foreign qualifications or study periods is based on identifying and comparing learning outcomes rather than programme details
- making the assessment of prior and experiential learning an integral part of the assessment of qualifications
- ensuring that a qualification is assessed even in those cases where it is difficult to provide full documentary support
- working towards using national qualifications frameworks and the overarching EHEA framework as a basis for comparing qualifications
- granting partial recognition rather than denying recognition even where substantial differences are indicated.

Future challenges

In their national reports, countries were asked to indicate the main challenges that they saw ahead at national level. As table 5 shows, quality assurance and accreditation-related issues were the most frequently mentioned challenges, followed by mobility-related ones, with student mobility being mentioned more often than staff mobility. Many countries said they were concerned about employability of graduates and involvement of stakeholders in higher education. A significant number of countries have also identified challenges related to research and/or doctoral studies; establishing national qualifications frameworks and outcomes-based qualifications, and funding - from securing sufficient funding to better administration of funds.

The European dimension of programmes, combined with the establishment of joint degrees, seems to be an important challenge for some countries, while others are concerned about the introduction of the three-cycle degree system; lifelong learning and its recognition; widening participation; governance, strategy and legislation. It is significant that few countries see recognition of degrees and study periods as major issues for the future, and this suggests that there may be a level of complacency because most countries have complied with the *letter* of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, as mentioned earlier in this report.

In the concluding section of the report, there is further comment on the challenges for the future that have been identified objectively through the 2007 stocktaking.

Table 5
National level challenges identified by countries

Future challenges mentioned in national reports	Number of countries (%: n=48)
Quality assurance, accreditation	27 (56%)
Student and staff mobility (more related to students)	23 (48%)
Employability and stakeholder involvement	20 (42%)
Research (including doctoral studies)	18 (38%)
National qualifications framework, outcomes-based qualifications	17 (35%)
Funding (including better allocation of resources; management)	17 (35%)
European dimension in programmes, joint degrees	14 (29%)
Issues at institutional level (including autonomy)	13 (27%)
National level governance, strategy and legislation for higher education	9 (19%)
Degree system	8 (17%)
Lifelong learning	8 (17%)
Widening participation	8 (17%)
Recognition	5 (10%)

Conclusions and recommendations

This part of the report draws conclusions about the progress within the Bologna Process since 2005. It also makes recommendations for the future based on the analysis in the preceding chapters.

Conclusions of the 2007 stocktaking

There are three main conclusions that can be drawn from the 2007 stocktaking.

1. There has been good progress in the Bologna Process since Bergen.
2. The outlook for achieving the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010 is good, but there are still some challenges to be faced.
3. Stocktaking works well as an integral part of the Bologna Process strategy.

Conclusion 1

There has been good progress in the Bologna Process since Bergen.

The stocktaking shows that there has been good progress on all the priority action lines that the Ministers set in the Bergen communiqué. The indicators were more demanding in 2007 than in 2005, to reflect the progress that is needed if the implementation of all action lines is to be completed by 2010.

Table 6 below shows the rank order of mean scores on all twelve indicators in the 2007 stocktaking.

Table 6
Rank order of indicators for 2007 stocktaking

Rank	Indicator (number in scorecard)	Mean score 2007
1	Establishment and recognition of joint degrees (12)	4.6
2	Access to the next cycle (2)	4.5
3	Implementation of external quality assurance (5)	4.2
4	Stage of implementation of ECTS (10)	4.2
5	Implementation of ESG in quality assurance (4)	4.2
6	Implementation of 1st and 2nd cycle (1)	4.1
7	Implementation of diploma supplement (8)	4.1
8	Student participation in quality assurance (6)	4.0
9	Implementation of LRC principles (9)	4.0
10	Recognition of prior learning (11)	3.7
11	International participation in quality assurance (7)	3.5
12	Implementation of national qualifications framework (3)	2.9

The indicators with the greatest growth in mean scores since the 2005 stocktaking are shown in table 7.

Table 7
Indicators with greatest growth in mean scores since 2005

Indicator	Mean scores	
	2007	2005
Student participation in quality assurance	4.0	3.0
Access to the next cycle	4.5	3.9
Implementation of two-cycle degree system	4.1	3.6
Implementation of external quality assurance system	4.2	3.8

Areas where there has been most progress in 2007

Degree system

Countries have made good progress on implementing the two-cycle degree system and on providing access to the next cycle, as shown by indicators 1 and 2. It is likely that there will be further progress on these indicators in the near future, because there are a number of countries where new laws have already been adopted, or where implementation of the two-cycle system has started. There is also a trend towards the introduction of structured doctoral programmes in the third cycle.

Quality assurance

The results on indicator 5 show that there has been good progress on the development of external quality assurance systems at national level. Indicator 6, student participation in quality assurance, while leaving room for further development, is the indicator that shows the greatest improvement since 2005. Indicator 4 demonstrates that there is potential for further progress in implementing the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* adopted by the Ministers in Bergen.

However, while there has been progress across the board in the area of quality assurance, the establishment of a genuine quality enhancement culture in higher education institutions is the future guarantee of sustainable quality. Some elements of internal quality already exist in all higher education institutions and some others are new. Bringing all these elements together to achieve a “quality culture” will be the task for the coming years.

Recognition

The very strong result on indicator 12 demonstrates that arrangements are largely in place for the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, but it does not show the level of real implementation. There has been good overall progress on implementing the diploma supplement and ECTS, which is being used for both credit transfer and accumulation. However, credits are not always awarded on the basis of learning outcomes, a finding which is confirmed by the ESIB survey.

Conclusion 2

The outlook for achieving the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010 is good, but there are still some challenges to be faced.

The evidence from the 2007 stocktaking shows that the Bologna Process is moving towards achieving its goals by 2010, but there is still some way to go before the process of reform is complete across all action lines and all countries.

Areas where there is still work to be done

National frameworks of qualifications

The Ministers said in Bergen that they expected countries to have started work on implementing their national frameworks of qualifications by 2007. From the results on indicator 3, it is clear that while work has indeed started, it is not very advanced in most countries. As this is a relatively new element of the Bologna Process, there may be confusion and even resistance to the notion of a national qualifications framework. The benefits of a framework for learners, higher education institutions and the economy may not yet be fully recognised in some countries.

The stocktaking found that there is some confusion between the proposed European Framework of Qualifications for Lifelong Learning and the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*, which may also have delayed development in some cases.

International participation in quality assurance

Another area where there has been little progress is international participation in quality assurance (indicator 7), which appears to pose difficulties for many countries. There has nevertheless been progress on cooperation through ENQA, with an increasing number of quality assurance agencies applying for membership. The results for this indicator will improve when more countries introduce external evaluation of their quality assurance agencies, which has not yet happened widely.

Linking the different action lines

While the 2007 stocktaking found that there has been progress on specific action lines and indicators, it is not enough to look at these in isolation because all aspects of the Bologna Process need to be seen as interdependent. There are two themes that link all action lines: a focus on *learners*, and a focus on *learning outcomes*.

Focus on learners

It is important to consider how the Bologna Process is meeting the needs and expectations of learners. Based on the goals that Ministers have declared in the series of communiqués since 1999, learners can reasonably expect that by 2010 the Bologna Process will ensure that:

- the different cycles of higher education in all participating countries are easily understood
- the quality of higher education in these countries is assured
- higher education qualifications that are awarded in all participating countries are recognised in all other countries for access to employment, education and research opportunities
- higher education provides flexible learning paths that are part of the lifelong learning continuum
- higher education is accessible to everyone without social or economic obstacles.

The 2007 stocktaking shows that there has been good progress on the first two points related to the transparency and quality of higher education, but there are still some problems with recognition. In addition, there are still questions about the employability of bachelor degree holders and about the opportunities that exist for doctoral graduates to take up research careers. It also seems that it will be some time before flexible learning paths become a reality in all countries.

Focus on learning outcomes

The three Bologna cycles are based on generic descriptors of learning outcomes, so it is clear that describing higher education programmes in terms of learning outcomes is a precondition for achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process by 2010. Learning outcomes are critically important in the development of national qualifications frameworks, systems for credit transfer and accumulation, the diploma supplement, recognition of prior learning and quality assurance.

However, the 2007 stocktaking shows that the movement towards adopting a learning outcomes approach in higher education takes time. This is particularly evident in the slow progress on establishing national qualifications frameworks and arrangements for the recognition of prior learning. Very few countries have put in place national qualifications frameworks that provide seamless progression for learners through all cycles of higher education, thus affirming the national commitment to lifelong learning.

Conclusion 3

Stocktaking works well as an integral part of the Bologna Process strategy.

It is evident from the 2005 and 2007 stocktaking that the process of collaborative peer-reported self-evaluation has been effective in encouraging countries to take action at national level.

The 2007 scorecard summary shows that the overall picture within the Bologna Process is much more “green” than it was in 2005. The results in the preceding section of this report indicate that there has been considerable movement towards achieving many of the main goals set by the Ministers in Bergen. The stocktaking used a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to assess not only the progress against a set of objective indicators and criteria, but also to examine the stage of development in a number of other related areas.

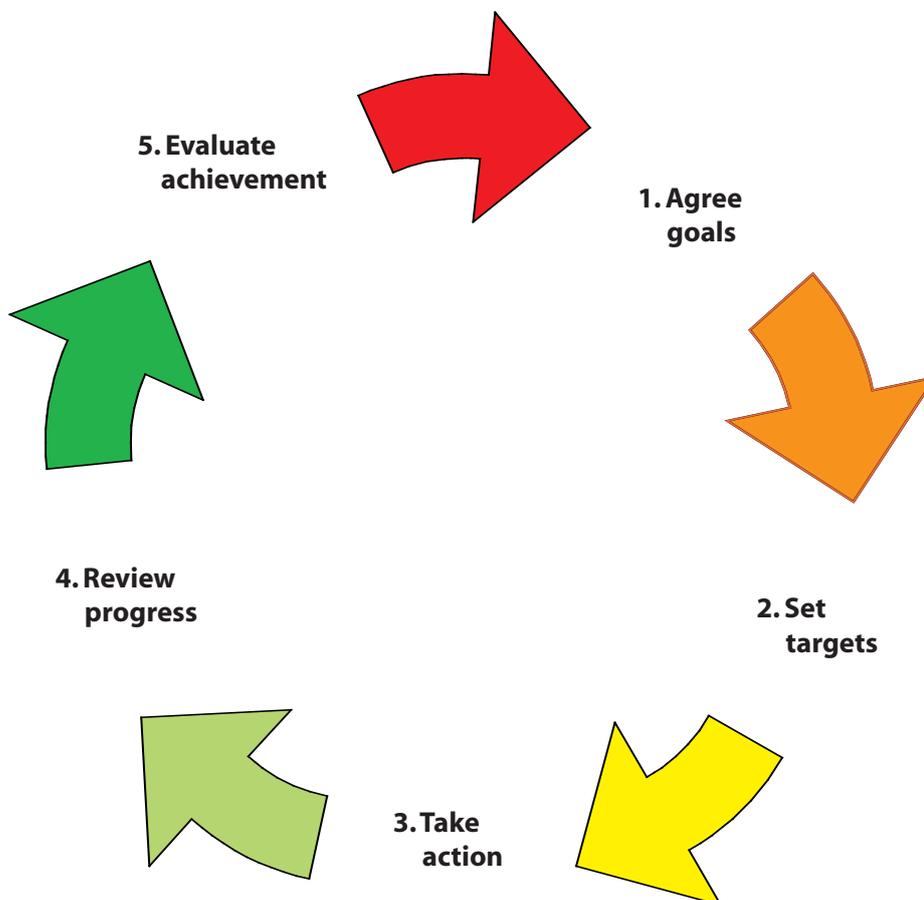
From the experience of both the 2005 and 2007 stocktaking exercises, it is clear that the quantitative aspect of stocktaking works well when there are clear policy goals and specific targets that can be translated into a scorecard that enables countries to measure their progress against these goals and targets. In 2005 the Bologna scorecard was used for the first time, and it was used again in 2007. Although the indicators and criteria were modified to take account of the changes that were expected to have happened in the intervening period, the scorecard nevertheless provides a valid measurement of progress over the two years.

The 2007 stocktaking also included qualitative analysis of a number of themes from the Bergen Communiqué that were covered in national reports but not included in the scorecard. This enabled countries to report on their progress using a process of self-review. The stocktaking then evaluated progress at collective level, and complemented the scorecard analysis with qualitative reporting on these themes.

This combination of analytical approaches reflects the fact that the various aspects of the Bologna Process are at different stages of development and some may not yet be ready for quantitative measurement. Fig 4 below shows a model of a goal-driven development cycle that includes five “steps to success”.

1. Agree the policy goals, linking them to a vision for the future that is shared by all participating countries.
2. Set targets to be achieved within a certain time frame (make sure they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed: SMART).
3. Take action at national level and collectively (provide relevant support, share good practice, encourage peer collaboration).
4. Review progress individually: self-evaluation by countries using agreed criteria (scorecard) complemented by qualitative reporting.
5. Evaluate achievement collectively (stocktaking).

Figure 4a A goal-driven development system



Recommendations from the 2007 stocktaking

Recommendation to Ministers

Set clear policy goals and specific targets for the next period of the Bologna Process, especially in the areas of the third cycle, employability, recognition, lifelong learning, flexible learning paths and the social dimension.

Recommendations for countries

1. Work towards fully implementing a national qualifications framework based on learning outcomes by 2010.
2. Link the development of the qualifications framework to other Bologna action lines, including quality assurance, credit transfer and accumulation systems, lifelong learning, flexible learning paths and the social dimension.
3. Ensure that progress is promoted across all action lines, including the more challenging aspects that are not easily and immediately attainable.
4. Make formal links between the Bologna Process and the ENIC/NARIC network to undertake further work on developing and implementing national action plans for recognition.

Recommendations for future stocktaking

Repeat the stocktaking in 2009, with the close collaboration of other partner organisations, including Eurydice European Unit, EUA and ESIB, in setting out the timetable and the arrangements for data collection and analysis.

2007 Stocktaking Scorecards

ALBANIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Albania joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: holding a series of seminars with European experts on curricula development, national qualifications frameworks and developing a "State Matura" higher education entrance qualification; drafting the Master Plan of Higher Education in Albania; and making legislative amendments to implement Bologna reforms. Some 50% of the student population are now following first cycle degrees. Second and third cycle qualifications will be introduced from 2008- 09. A working group has been set up to implement more fully the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Future challenges include: completing and securing approval of the master plan; ratifying the new law of higher education; and pursuing all of the Bologna action lines.

ANDORRA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Andorra joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: establishing an external quality assurance system; preparing legislation on higher education, scholarships and recognition of diplomas; and moving towards ratifying the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The implementation of the first cycle is well under way. Second cycle qualifications will be introduced in three years. The newly established quality assurance agency is expected to cooperate with other international quality assurance agencies.

ARMENIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Armenia joined the Bologna Process in 2005. Key developments since then include: introducing a two-cycle degree system, a credit transfer and accumulation system and diploma supplements; developing greater links between higher education and research through doctoral programmes; and creating recognition and quality assurance agencies. The newly established quality assurance agency is expected to cooperate with other quality assurance agencies. A new Armenian diploma supplement, corresponding to the EU/CoE/UNESCO format, is currently under discussion. Following a pilot, national guidelines have been issued to implement ECTS as a national credit transfer and accumulation system. Once ECTS is implemented, flexible learning paths will be developed further. Some elements of lifelong learning are already in place. Future challenges include: fully implementing a three-cycle system; implementing the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*; and developing a national qualifications framework.

AUSTRIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Austria was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: setting up a process to establish a national qualifications framework; amending higher education legislation; reforming doctoral programmes; and converting teacher training programmes to bachelors. As of autumn 2006, 42% of university study programmes and 77% of other higher education study programmes were aligned with the two-cycle system. Future challenges include: fully implementing the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*; implementing a national qualifications framework; increasing staff mobility; fully embedding ECTS; and implementing the new teacher training bachelor programmes.

AZERBAIJAN

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Azerbaijan joined the Bologna Process in 2005. Key developments since then include: adopting a national action plan to implement Bologna reforms by 2010 and adopting legislation on the accreditation of higher education institutions. Full implementation of the new credit system is planned for 2010. Work has not yet started on developing a national qualifications framework, although bachelor and masters degree awarding bodies are in place. Up to 20% of bachelor graduates can be admitted to the second cycle. International experts and organisations are not involved directly in the quality assurance process, but take part in joint projects on quality issues through TEMPUS TACIS and UNESCO. Future challenges include: modernising and strengthening the higher education system; directing financial support to improve learning and teaching and update curricula; developing democratic principles in institutional management, modernising the quality assurance system; expanding the introduction of the new credit system; improving the recognition of degrees outside Azerbaijan; and increasing staff and student mobility.

BELGIUM FLEMISH

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Belgium was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments in the Flemish Community since 2005 include: moving towards full implementation of the new first and second cycle programmes; introducing new legislation to support the recognition of prior learning, increase institutional autonomy, adjust student grants and amend teacher training provision; and preparing legislation on adult education, piloting short-cycle qualifications and a new funding model for higher education. Work is continuing towards the ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention by all four Parliaments in Belgium. This was completed by the Flemish Community Parliament in November 2006 and it is hoped that the process will be complete throughout Belgium before May 2007. The principles of the Convention are applied in practice and a fully operational ENIC is in place. The two-cycle system is in place and is systematically replacing the old system. This process will be complete by the academic year 2008-9. Future challenges include: improving international recognition of degrees and qualifications; reforming the higher education funding system; enhancing synergies between education, research and innovation; enhancing accreditation procedures and institutional autonomy; making research careers more attractive; internationalising both the student and staff populations; and widening access to higher education.

BELGIUM FRENCH

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Belgium was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments in the French Community since 2005 include: modifying legislation to take forward Bologna reforms; expanding the use of ECTS and diploma supplements; awarding the first bachelor degrees; enabling higher education institutions to develop joint programmes; and establishing a student mobility fund and an Upper Council for Student Mobility. A "think tank" has been set up to develop a national qualifications framework. It presented its initial report in November 2006. Some higher education institutions are already starting to express their curricula in terms of learning outcomes. Work is continuing towards the ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention by all four Parliaments in Belgium. This was completed by the French Community Parliament in March 2005. It is hoped that the process will be complete throughout Belgium before May 2007. All of the principles of the Convention are already in place in existing legislation. Future challenges include: continuing to harmonise legislation applying to different aspects of higher education; increasing the number of science students and researchers; creating stronger synergies between education, research and innovation; managing student mobility more effectively; and developing a national qualifications framework.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: implementing first cycle qualifications, based on new curricula and supported by diploma supplements; introducing ECTS for all new study programmes; setting up international projects on quality assurance, recognition of qualifications and study periods and a national qualifications framework; and higher education institutions taking forward Bologna reforms, despite delays in the adoption of new legislation on higher education at State level. The Working Group for Quality Assurance is currently developing procedures for internal and external quality assurance, based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*. The Lisbon Recognition Convention was ratified in 2003 and some progress has been made to implement the principles of the Convention. Future challenges include: adopting at national level the new law on higher education; establishing a national agency for the development of higher education and quality assurance and an ENIC centre; financing and revising the structure of higher education institutions; promoting academic research and adapting learning and teaching to new societal demands.

BULGARIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Bulgaria was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: opening up Bulgarian higher education to foreign students; improving recognition of foreign qualifications; encouraging staff and student mobility; aligning the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA) to the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*, and becoming a candidate member of ENQA; and preparing a new strategy for the development of higher education. NEAA has well-established procedures for involving foreign experts in working groups. Financial constraints prevent foreign experts being involved in all of NEAA's activities. Students are not involved in the governance of quality assurance, although they do contribute to self evaluation reports and report to external review teams. Future challenges include: securing EU structural funds for educational reform; enhancing the quality of higher education; ensuring the employability of Bulgarian graduates across the EHEA; and modernising and developing the higher education system.

CROATIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Croatia joined the Bologna Process in 2001. Key developments since 2005 include: completing the restructuring of all study programmes into the first and second cycle, following an evaluation programme carried out by teams including foreign experts; introducing a more efficient recognition process for foreign qualifications; and creating the Agency for Science and Higher Education, which is developing the framework for a quality assurance system. A working group was formed in 2006 to prepare a proposal for a Croatian qualifications framework. The two-cycle system is being phased in from 2005/06, and 50% of students are now enrolled in the two-cycle system. Diploma supplements in the EU/CoE/UNESCO format will be provided automatically, free of charge, in Croatian and English from 2007. Future challenges include: revising the structure of universities and strengthening the binary system; developing quality assurance; increasing alignment between higher education and the needs of the labour market; and developing more efficient funding mechanisms.

CYPRUS

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Cyprus joined the Bologna Process in 2001. Key developments since 2005 include: preparing the Open University of Cyprus and Cyprus University of Technology to receive their first student intakes in October 2006 and September 2007 respectively; expanding provision at the University of Cyprus to include masters and doctoral students from 2007; fully implementing ECTS and introducing diploma supplements; and developing proposals to establish a quality assurance and accreditation board for Cyprus in 2007, which will apply to all higher education and include student and international participation in external reviews. A working group, including all relevant stakeholders, has been set up to develop proposals for a national qualifications framework. Plans are under way to use ECTS across all programmes, both public and private. Future challenges include: continuing the educational reform programme to increase higher education provision substantially, enhancing the quality of private providers, and establishing a quality assurance and accreditation agency; developing and implementing a comprehensive lifelong learning strategy; and introducing a national qualifications framework.

CZECH REPUBLIC

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

The Czech Republic was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: introducing the new long term plan of the Ministry for 2006-2010, which includes programmes of development to align higher education institution funding to their long term plans; amending the Act on higher education institutions; increasing institutional autonomy, particularly in financial matters; and taking part in the OECD project, Thematic Review of Tertiary Education. Work has started on improving recognition of non-formal and informal learning, in the context of the development of the national qualifications framework, planned for the tertiary sector in 2007-2010. ECTS is not stipulated in legislation, although all public higher education institutions have introduced ECTS for bachelors and masters degree programmes, incentivised by the introduction of a development programme under which higher education institutions can submit projects for ECTS 'labelling'. Discussions have started about how to increase student involvement in external evaluation and accreditation processes. Future challenges include: taking forward the outcomes from the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education, particularly the higher education system, governance and leadership at national as well as at institutional level, and funding mechanisms.

DENMARK

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Denmark was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: launching in April 2006 a new "Strategy for Denmark in the Global Economy". Future objectives for the higher education sector include: at least 50% of all young people should complete a higher education programme; all university programmes should be evaluated according to international standards; more systematic dialogue with employers; and doubling the number of doctoral scholarships.

ESTONIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Estonia was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adoption by Parliament of a new higher education strategy for 2006-2016; preparing an internationalisation strategy for higher education 2006-2015; improving recognition procedures; undertaking an extensive survey on student social and economic conditions; preparing legislation on joint degrees and learning outcomes-based programme development; and taking part in an EU project focusing on quality improvement and the development of student support systems. A representative working group has been set up to develop a national qualifications framework by autumn 2007. Measures are in place to support the full implementation of ECTS, based on learning outcomes, by the 2009-2010 academic year. Although there is no international involvement in the governance of the Higher Education Quality Assessment Council, international participation is important in peer reviews for programme and institutional accreditation. Future challenges include: preparing for a decrease in the student population due to the downward demographic trend; strengthening the international dimension of higher education institutions; and ensuring appropriate funding for sustainable and competitive higher education.

FINLAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Finland was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: implementing legislation to introduce a Bologna-compatible two-tier degree structure, including official degree titles in Finnish, Swedish and English; confirming second cycle degrees in polytechnics; enhancing the quality assurance system and starting a quality audit programme, to be completed by 2011. A working group in 2004-2005 led a series of discussions, seminars and written consultations to prepare a proposal for a national qualifications framework. A decision has yet to be taken about the approval and implementation process for the proposal. The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC) is a member of ENQA and the Nordic Quality Assurance Network (NOQA), and uses international experts in its evaluation projects. Future challenges include: further internationalisation and modernisation of Finnish higher education; ensuring the international competitiveness of Finnish higher education institutions; ensuring adequate financing; and encouraging greater cooperation between higher education institutions.

FRANCE

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

France was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting legislation on joint degrees; expanding implementation of *Licence, Master, Doctorat* (LMD) reforms in universities and other higher education institutions, including preparing for the integration of short cycle qualifications into the three cycle system; re-organising doctoral schools and programmes; and creating a new evaluation agency for research and higher education (AERES). AERES was set up in 2007 and is run by a board composed of French and international members. Students are being increasingly involved in internal evaluation processes. Work is under way to provide diploma supplements for all graduates. The national qualifications framework in place since 2002 is being revised to bring it into line with the overarching qualifications framework for the EHEA. Future challenges include: enhancing the international competitiveness of French higher education institutions; making university governance more efficient; strengthening university autonomy; and improving the transparency of university funding decisions.

GEORGIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Georgia joined the Bologna Process in 2005. Key developments since then include: adopting legislation to facilitate the implementation of Bologna reforms on degree systems, diploma supplements, student finance, accreditation procedures and institutional governance; and preparing legislation on the integration of the Centre for Academic Recognition and Mobility with the National Centre of Education Accreditation (NCEA), the introduction of new professional qualifications, and the development of higher education institutions as centres of research as well as preparation for the labour market. Two stakeholder events have been held on the development of a national qualifications framework over the last two years. Work to take this forward is a priority within the Action Plan of the European Neighbourhood Policy for the first quarter of 2007. NCEA operates at the national level and is developing further its accreditation procedures. It is envisaged that students and international experts will take part in future accreditation and quality assurance procedures. By law, all higher education institutions will have to be accredited by NCEA by 2008. A draft law on professional education provides for recognition of qualifications gained through informal education. Future challenges include: developing a national qualifications framework; completing the accreditation of all higher education institutions; establishing a quality culture within higher education institutions; increasing staff and student mobility; strengthening cooperation between all stakeholders, including employers; and ensuring citizens can study and work abroad free from discrimination.

GERMANY

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Germany was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: progressing towards the implementation of a two-cycle degree structure; adopting the "Qualifications Framework for German Higher Education Degrees"; developing accreditation and quality assurance procedures; and preparing for the enactment of the Lisbon Recognition Convention after ratification. The number of students enrolled in the two-cycle degree system is increasing. ECTS and the diploma supplement are being implemented in the majority of first cycle and second cycle programmes. The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) provides examples of subject specific diploma supplements and other tools on its website. Future challenges include: further developing the two-cycle system and the acceptance of bachelors and masters qualifications; implementing ECTS and diploma supplements; developing the higher education qualifications framework to include interfaces with other areas of education; further developing internal quality management at higher education institutions; enhancing structured doctoral programmes while at the same time retaining different paths for doctoral studies; and progressing the social dimension of higher education.

Bologna Scorecard

GREECE

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Greece was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: introducing a number of laws to implement Bologna reforms on recognition, quality assurance, ECTS, diploma supplements, lifelong learning, joint programmes and consortia, enhancing student support, increasing institutional accountability, increasing provision in languages other than Greek; increasing student involvement in institutional governance and access to higher education. A working group, chaired by the Secretary for Higher Education, has been set up to develop a national qualifications framework. Greece has not signed or ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention although some of its principles already apply, such as the establishment of a fully operational ENIC, the Agency for Degree Recognition. Measures to recognise non-formal and informal learning are currently being considered, following pilot projects. Future challenges include: reorganising and modernising the higher education system in response to contemporary societal and economic demands; ensuring quality, openness and transparency; increasing institutional autonomy and flexibility; revising research policy and developing new post graduate study programmes; and internationalising the Greek higher education system.

Bologna Scorecard

HOLY SEE

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

The Holy See joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: holding an official Bologna seminar on "The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area" in March 2006; and setting up numerous international and bilateral contracts to increase cooperation with other national higher education systems. Most of the necessary legislation to introduce Bologna reforms is already in place. Consultation has started to examine what steps will be necessary to adopt a national qualifications framework for the Holy See. This is also expected to address lifelong learning through the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The adoption of ECTS for credit transfer became obligatory in 2005 for all higher education institutions. The use of ECTS for credit accumulation is still under debate. All Holy See higher education institutions were asked to issue diploma supplements from 2005 onwards. The level of implementation has not yet been assessed. The level of student collaboration in quality assurance varies from region to region. Work is progressing to implement the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, and developing the Holy See ENIC will be a priority for 2007-2009. Future challenges include: reorganising ENIC, further developing quality assurance procedures; and drafting a national qualifications framework. The Holy See faces particular challenges which arise from the necessary collaboration between two 'national' higher education systems (the host country and the Holy See).

HUNGARY

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Hungary was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting the new Higher Education Act in March 2006 and the Hungarian Universities Programme for 2006-2010. These have led to changes in a number of areas, including: course structure; institutional governance and autonomy; student and teacher mobility; financial contributions from students; admissions policy; and equality issues. The number of first and second cycle programmes is gradually increasing, with the new Higher Education Act launching the multi-cycle course structure from September 2006. Future challenges are set out in the new Hungary Development Plan 2007-2013 and include: improving the quality of higher education; broadening participation; fostering lifelong learning, based on the recognition of prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning; harmonising degrees with the needs of the economy and the labour market; and enhancing the role of higher education in the establishment of a knowledge based economy.

ICELAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Iceland was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting a new law in July 2006 to strengthen the legal basis for implementing Bologna reforms, covering areas such as: automatically issuing diploma supplements in English; consolidating the three-cycle structure; adopting ECTS and a national qualifications framework. Iceland is an associate member of ENQA, and a full member of the Nordic Quality Assurance Network. The Icelandic higher education system will undergo an accreditation process by July 2008. This will be carried out by committees consisting of foreign experts. Future challenges include: ensuring appropriate funding for the higher education system, and completing the accreditation process for all higher education institutions by mid 2008.

IRELAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Ireland was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting the Institute of Technology Act 2006 which brings these institutions under the responsibility of the Higher Education Authority; continuing to implement the national framework of qualifications; establishing a legal basis for the Irish Universities Quality Board; and completing peer reviews of Irish Universities and the Higher Education and Training Awards Council. Future challenges include: encouraging and deepening change at the institutional level.

ITALY

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Italy was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: simplifying the transition from the first to the second cycle; and adopting legislation to increase the internationalisation of higher education institutions, enhance links between higher education institutions and industry, and set up new research doctorate schools. Following a national consultation exercise and a pilot, a committee has been appointed to implement a national qualifications framework, based on learning outcomes. Italy has made all the necessary amendments to legislation for ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which is expected to be completed soon. The legal framework underpinning the Convention and its supplementary documents are already in place. Future challenges include: further reducing the drop-out rate; increasing the number of students who obtain their degrees within the prescribed time; improving the employability of first cycle graduates; and enhancing the internationalisation of the higher education system.

Bologna Scorecard

LATVIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Latvia was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting new accreditation regulations which promote internal and external quality assurance and outcomes-based curricula; increasing research funding and staff salaries; introducing financial incentives for students to study science and engineering; drafting a new higher education law to address recent Bologna developments, including a national qualifications framework, flexible learning paths, recognition of prior learning and joint degrees; switching fully from a national credit accumulation system to ECTS. The draft law is being discussed in the Government before adoption by Parliament. Future challenges include: fully embedding the learning outcomes approach; developing a comprehensive internal quality system; fully integrating short cycle qualifications into the first cycle; increasing the number of doctoral graduates; increasing inward staff and student mobility; recognising prior learning; and providing greater financial support to students and staff.

Bologna Scorecard

LIECHTENSTEIN

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Liechtenstein has been part of the Bologna Process since the beginning. Key developments since 2005 include: carrying out quality assurance peer reviews by international experts in all three higher education institutions; commissioning a task force to improve the regulation of executive masters and other tertiary courses, and setting up legal provision to promote joint degrees. A working group has been established to develop a national qualifications framework. The draft is to be presented to the appropriate body for approval in 2008. Due to the country's small size, there is no national quality assurance agency. Higher education institutions are required to report annually on their quality assurance procedures, which have included student surveys in the past. By law, higher education institutions are required to undergo an external peer review involving international experts at least once every six years. It is envisaged that higher education institutions will increasingly have their courses accredited by international agencies. There is extensive cooperation with neighbouring countries. Future challenges include: revising the Higher Education Act; developing a national qualifications framework, including national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications; and developing further measures on the recognition of prior learning.

LITHUANIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Lithuania was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: approving the Lithuanian Higher Education System Development Plan for 2006-2010 and measures for the first stage of its implementation for 2006-2007, to improve the governance and management of higher education institutions; enhance quality and ensure the effective use of financial and other resources; amending the Law on Higher Education to enable colleges to award professional bachelor qualifications; and creating a legal basis for joint degrees. The introduction of professional bachelor degrees in 2007 will facilitate access to the second cycle for graduates from the college sector. A working group has been established to develop a national qualifications framework, drawing on a pilot project undertaken in 2005. Proposals are expected by 2008. The Development Plan for 2006-2010 includes both the development of a national qualifications framework for higher education linked to a national qualifications framework for lifelong learning and the implementation of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*. The Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education is planning to apply for full ENQA membership in 2007-2008. Future challenges include: developing further the higher education system as a whole as well as individual higher education institutions; implementing successfully the Development Plan for 2006-2010 and the national programme for the Lisbon Strategy.

LUXEMBOURG

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Luxembourg was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting legislation on the three-cycle system, including the modularisation of study programmes, the use of ECTS and the introduction of joint degrees; and inviting OECD to review the research sector. A working group was established to implement a national qualifications framework. Work has been suspended pending the outcome of the European Commission proposal on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. The issue of the diploma supplement is now compulsory and will commence in June 2008 for bachelor programmes and in June 2007 for master programmes. Future challenges include: ensuring sustainable growth for the higher education sector; increasing participation in higher education and the number of young people taking up research careers; and accelerating the implementation of three-cycle study programmes.

MALTA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Malta was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include introducing new legislation to establish a National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) and the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). NCHE is working to establish a national quality assurance system in line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*. All higher education institutions in Malta have a high level of international participation within their quality assurance systems, and regular external monitoring of their study programmes. A pilot scheme for the issue of diploma supplements was carried out in 2006 and full implementation is expected by 2009. The Malta Qualifications Council has developed a national qualifications framework for lifelong learning in line with the overarching framework for qualifications of the EHEA. It is expected to be adopted by autumn 2007. The recognition of prior learning (including informal, non-formal and formal learning) will be considered during 2008. Future challenges include: establishing the infrastructure for NCHE and the Malta Qualifications Council; restructuring the higher education sector, including aspects of governance, funding and accountability; increasing mobility; and creating more flexible learning pathways in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

MOLDOVA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Moldova joined the Bologna Process in 2005. Key developments since then include: implementing the new two-cycle system in all higher education institutions from 2005-2006; introducing ECTS; drafting a new higher education law based on the concept of modernisation; and approving a working plan for 2005-2010 to implement Bologna reforms. Approximately 48% of students entered the first cycle in 2005-2006. The first graduates will enter the second cycle in 2008. The implementation of ECTS for all higher education courses will enable access to the second cycle. ECTS currently applies to the first and second year of study in the first cycle and will apply to the second cycle from 2008. The Ministry of Education and Youth has organised a range of activities to support the development of a national qualifications framework, including a comparative analysis of frameworks in other countries. Higher education institutions are entitled to recognise non-formal and informal learning, by establishing special examination procedures. There is cooperation with international networks and foreign national agencies for quality assurance. Foreign experts are invited to take part in external evaluations for fields such as art, medicine and engineering. Students participate in internal procedures through the completion of questionnaires, and senior students can participate in external evaluations, as full members of specialised commissions. Future challenges include: continuing the modernisation of higher education; approving the higher education law; implementing an efficient quality management system; elaborating the national qualifications framework; enhancing institutional autonomy and stakeholder engagement, including students; and diversifying the financial resources available to higher education institutions.

MONTENEGRO

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Montenegro has participated in the Bologna Process since 2003 and expects to become a full member from May 2007. Key developments since 2005 include: developing further the three-cycle system, improving quality assurance; and implementing the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The quality assurance system is still relatively new. There is currently a lack of trained professionals. Procedures for accrediting study programmes and higher education institutions in line with *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA* have been adopted. Students will participate at two levels: in internal evaluations and in consultations during external reviews. Diploma Supplements are now required for all degree programmes and will start to be issued from 2006-07. A national qualifications working group has been set up and a draft framework produced. The University of Montenegro assesses diplomas and foreign qualifications for recognition purposes. In February 2007, draft legislation on recognition, incorporating all the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention (ratified in March 2004), was issued for public discussion. The ENIC centre is fully operational. The draft legislation prescribes the recognition of prior learning, as well as other forms of education. Future challenges include: strengthening the European dimension of education; promoting cooperation and mobility; encouraging innovation; improving quality and developing a quality assurance system and improving the mutual recognition of qualifications.

NETHERLANDS

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

The Netherlands was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include drafting legislation to ratify the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The principles of the Convention are applied in practice and a fully operational ENIC is in place. The new legislation will establish a procedure for recognising prior learning. A national qualifications framework for higher education has been drafted and will be discussed widely in the Netherlands and with external peers. Future challenges include: meeting the target for 50% of the labour workforce aged 25-44 to have a higher education degree by 2020; improving links between higher education, research and regional needs; promoting excellence and internationalisation; developing joint degree programmes; implementing a national qualifications framework which is consistent with the both the EHEA framework and European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning; and ratifying the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

NORWAY

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Norway was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: revising the Higher Education Act, which sets out a common framework that includes: authority to introduce and withdraw study programmes; quality assurance; students' rights and responsibilities; institutional autonomy; and internal leadership structure. This forms part of the Quality Reform that has been in place since 2003 and has recently been evaluated by two independent research centres. A draft national qualifications framework in line with the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA has been prepared by a working group following consultation with stakeholders. The draft has been presented to the Government and will be subject to national consultation. Future challenges include: increasing mobility and participation in the Erasmus programme; increasing the volume of research; and increasing cooperation between higher education and business.

POLAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Poland was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting legislation to implement a three-cycle system, diploma supplements, a credit transfer and accumulation system, joint degrees, interdisciplinary programmes, and consortia of higher education institutions; developing internal quality assurance systems; and developing distance learning. The adoption of the three-cycle system has been introduced on a voluntary basis and will become mandatory for all higher education institutions from October 2007. ECTS was also introduced on a voluntary basis, but has been mandatory since January 2007. A working group was set up in October 2006 to develop the higher education national qualifications framework. The group has prepared a timetable, a preliminary activity plan and a glossary of basic terms. This work will include discussion about the development of national guidelines to recognise prior learning. The diploma supplement is issued in Polish, which is regarded as a 'widely spoken European language' and is available on request in English. Future challenges include: developing a national qualifications framework; increasing staff and student mobility; increasing the number of graduates in mathematics, engineering and science; developing quality assurance procedures; adjusting education to the needs of the labour market; developing lifelong learning; and revising the higher education institutional funding system.

PORTUGAL

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Portugal was a signatory to the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting legislation to implement Bologna reforms; introducing a three-cycle system based on learning outcomes and credit ranges, joint degrees, and recognition of prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning, and short first cycle vocational qualifications; inviting ENQA to review the existing quality assurance procedures and EUA to review some higher education institutions; taking part in the OECD Review of Tertiary Education; and taking steps to create a Portuguese accreditation and evaluation agency in 2007. The percentage of first and second cycle study programmes will increase to around 80% by 2007-2008. The remaining study programmes will be reorganised into first and second cycle in 2008-2009. The use of ECTS is mandatory for all study programmes created after June 2005 and for those being reorganised into the first and second cycle. Future challenges include: improving access to lifelong learning and widening participation; improving the quality and relevance of the training provided; enhancing autonomy and accountability; encouraging mobility and internationalisation; and clarifying the higher education institution funding system.

ROMANIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Romania was a signatory to the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include implementing legislation to define structured third cycle study programmes; creating the necessary preconditions for developing a system of post-doctoral individual grants; extending the use of ECTS and diploma supplements; and developing a quality assurance framework by establishing the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, which applied for ENQA membership; and a new methodological framework for external evaluation of quality assurance. A national agency for qualifications in higher education has been set up, with the aim of developing and implementing a national qualifications framework. Future challenges include: developing an integrated national qualifications framework for lifelong learning based on learning outcomes; evaluating all higher education institutions and their study programmes; increasing funding for higher education, allocated on the basis of quality and increasing staff and student mobility by introducing portable grants.

RUSSIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Russia joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: approving the list of higher education institutions implementing Bologna reforms; working to introduce a system of student loans; increasing institutional autonomy; streamlining quality assurance procedures; and improving entrance procedures to higher education. Some 7% of the student population is following bachelor programmes, with 700,000 students studying in the two-cycle system. New educational standards for bachelors and masters are now being developed. A public campaign is under way to inform the higher education institution community and employers about the value of the new study programmes. The involvement of foreign experts in the external review of the quality of education in Russian higher education institutions is planned for the near future. The National Accreditation Agency is a candidate member of ENQA. Currently, only 2% of graduates in Russia receive a diploma supplement. Plans are in hand for all graduates to receive diploma supplements automatically and free of charge by 2008. The first stage of development of a national qualifications framework is complete. The Lisbon Recognition Convention was ratified in 2000, and amendments to laws are proposed to take forward the main provisions of the Convention. Future challenges include: stimulating demand from employers for bachelor graduates; increasing participation in mobility programmes; and increasing flexibility and adaptability in curricula.

SERBIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Serbia joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting the new Law on Higher Education (LHE), which includes establishing the National Council for Higher Education and the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission; approving new standards for study programmes in October 2006; and setting up review teams to evaluate higher education institutions against the new standards. All study programmes allow access to the next level. In some cases, there is a requirement to take additional examinations. A commission involving all relevant stakeholders has been set up to develop a national qualifications framework. The framework is expected to be in place by mid 2007. The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission became a full member of INQAAHE in December 2006. Plans are in hand to seek ENQA membership. The Commission may seek the services of international organisations and associations in pursuing its work. Higher education institutions must define in their statutes how they recognise previously obtained qualifications. Future challenges include: developing a national qualifications framework and improving recognition.

SLOVAKIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

The Slovak Republic was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include amending legislation to elaborate the position of higher education institutions within the EHEA and the European Research Area, and to regulate the awarding of joint degrees after completing joint study programmes. A working group of the Ministry of Higher Education was set up in December 2006 to develop a national qualifications framework, which will be fully compatible with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. Lifelong learning is offered at workplaces, through civic organisations, education establishments and private education institutions. Recognition of education received by informal learning has not yet been included in legislation. Future challenges include: building up a knowledge-based society; quality enhancement and developing an international dimension of quality assurance; creating new financial resources for higher education institutions through the introduction of part-time courses; and developing research capabilities, through joint collaborations, developing centres of excellence or by other means.

SLOVENIA

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Slovenia was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: increasing the number of student enrolments in the new structure since 2005-2006; adopting new legislation on the relationship between old and new qualifications, quality assurance arrangements and the provision of financial resources to second cycle students; adopting a new Decree on the public financing of higher education in December 2006; extending the remit of the Council of Higher Education to include external quality assurance evaluations; organising a public consultation and setting up a working group to prepare a national qualifications framework. The introduction of the new three-cycle degree structure will be completed by 2009-2010. The phasing in of the new structure means that only 13% of students are enrolled in the new programmes so far. External reviews are not currently included in the quality assurance system, although several higher education institutions have undergone international accreditations on their own initiative. There is international cooperation in some aspects of quality assurance. Future challenges include: developing quality assurance in higher education; promoting national and international mobility; further decentralising higher education; creating mechanisms for business investment in and cooperation with higher education institutions; recognising informal learning; developing flexible and joint study programmes; promoting student-centred learning; developing knowledge transfer and linking financing and quality indicators; and fostering better cooperation amongst higher education stakeholders.

Bologna Scorecard

SPAIN

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Spain was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: approving the Organic Law of Universities (LOU); confirming the three-cycle structure; improving mobility and coordinating the implementation of the Bologna reforms on a nationwide basis; and setting aside funding to allow greater staff and student mobility, and to encourage participation in joint study programmes. An extensive reform programme is currently under way to implement a system of higher education based on three cycles. Work is also under way to develop a national qualifications framework. A Royal Decree will set up a working group comprising all relevant stakeholders. Higher education institutions are working to introduce diploma supplements and ECTS is expected to replace completely the national system of credits from 2008-2009 onwards. Internal processes necessary to ratify the Lisbon Recognition Convention have been completed, and a number of steps have already been taken to improve recognition practice. The quality assurance agency, ANECA, has developed plans for student involvement in quality assurance from 2007. Future challenges include: implementing reforms to support participation in the EHEA; consolidating the reform of the degree system; implementing the national qualifications framework; and increasing the mobility of students and staff.

Bologna Scorecard

SWEDEN

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Sweden was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting a new law in February 2006 to reform the higher education system in line with the Bologna Process; developing degrees and courses in line with the three-cycle system; adopting new degree descriptions based on learning outcomes; introducing a new two-year masters degree in the second cycle; reforming the credit system in line with ECTS; and extending the implementation of diploma supplements to include the third cycle. All students in higher education will be enrolled in the three-cycle degree system from July 2007. Future challenges include: establishing joint degrees; further promoting staff and student mobility; maintaining a high quality of higher education and the link between higher education and research.

SWITZERLAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Switzerland was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments since 2005 include: securing the enrolment of all first year students (apart from medicine) in bachelor programmes; working to introduce bachelor programmes in medicine from autumn 2007; working to simplify the mechanism for cooperation between federal and cantonal authorities; and enhancing the transparency and efficiency of resource allocation. Traditional single-tier study courses are being discontinued. Current estimates suggest that by 2010-11 more than 95% of students will be enrolled in first and/or second cycle courses. A steering group was set up in September 2005 to develop a national qualifications framework. A first draft is under development and the final draft is expected to be presented to the relevant political bodies for approval in 2008. Higher education institutions have the right to admit students who do not satisfy usual admissions conditions. Work experience and informal learning are also taken into account for admission to many continuing education programmes. Future challenges include: increasing the coherence of Swiss higher education; ensuring adequate funding; completing the introduction of high quality masters programmes in all disciplinary fields; creating flexible pathways between different types of higher education institutions; increasing the number of structured doctoral programmes; and providing easily accessible and user friendly information on study opportunities at Swiss higher education institutions.

"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" joined the Bologna Process in 2003. Key developments since 2005 include: increasing the autonomy of the higher education sector; developing learning outcomes-based curricula that meet employers' needs; working towards student-centred learning; widening access to higher education and expanding the type of provision offered; and restructuring higher education institutions, to facilitate greater internal mobility. Implementation of the three-cycle system is continuing. A working group has been set up to develop a national qualifications framework, based on learning outcomes. Consultations and seminars were held in 2006 to develop a draft framework, which is expected to be finalised by 2010. Students are involved in higher education institution self-evaluation procedures, which inform the external evaluation undertaken by the Evaluation Agency. Foreign experts generally take part in external review teams. An external review of the Evaluation Agency involving foreign experts is planned by 2010. The introduction of the diploma supplement and the recognition of prior learning are expected to be addressed in forthcoming legislation. ECTS has been implemented in some areas and work is under way to widen its application. Future challenges include: improving the quality and relevance of higher education; developing a comprehensive evaluation system; modernising teaching methods; offering more flexible learning opportunities; increasing the effectiveness of higher education through appropriate investment; improving governance, and safeguarding academic and research standards.

TURKEY

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Turkey joined the Bologna Process in 2001. Key developments since 2005 include: adopting a number of regulations to take forward Bologna reforms; completing the ratification process for the Lisbon Recognition Convention; establishing the independent Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education Institutions (YODEK), a national student council and a commission to develop a national qualifications framework; mandatory introduction of ECTS and diploma supplements; enabling joint degrees; widening access for disabled students; and preparing a Report on the Strategy for Higher Education to 2025. It is envisaged that YODEK will cooperate with foreign experts in external assessments. YODEK is planning to apply for ENQA membership. Future challenges include: balancing supply and demand for higher education; implementing an internationally accepted national quality assessment system; designing a more effective and efficient funding model; widening access to higher education; and maximising the opportunity presented by the increasing young population.

UKRAINE

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

Ukraine joined the Bologna Process in 2005. Key developments since then include: preparing an Action Plan for implementation up to 2010; setting up a Bologna Follow-up Group within the Ministry of Education and Science, a Bologna Follow-up Inter-departmental Commission and a national team of Bologna Promoters; the council of students applying for ESIB membership; progressing the implementing of ECTS and diploma supplements; and increasing the higher education sector's engagement with the EHEA. Work has started to develop a national qualifications framework, following discussion with all interested parties at the national level. It is expected to be completed by 2010. Plans have been developed to improve and coordinate national quality assurance arrangements, with a seminar to be held in April 2007. Some international involvement in quality assurance takes place at the institutional level, and universities are in direct contact with international accreditation agencies. Plans are in place for graduates to receive diploma supplements from 2008-09. Future challenges include: developing a quality assurance system in line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*; implementing the third cycle; increasing the employability of bachelor graduates; increasing staff and student mobility; and extending higher education institution and community links.

UNITED KINGDOM – ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

The United Kingdom was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since 2005 include: providing the Bologna Secretariat from 2005-2007; publishing a guide to the diploma supplement and a revised guide to the Bologna Process in 2006; setting up a steering group to develop a credit framework for higher education in England; improving the student support system; and further expanding Foundation Degrees provision (short cycle qualifications). A survey in 2005 showed that around one-third of higher education institutions in the UK were issuing diploma supplements and some 50% of respondents planned to do so in the following two years. A further survey planned for the summer of 2007 will measure progress. Implementation of ECTS is being undertaken alongside the credit framework being developed for England (Northern Ireland and Wales already have credit systems in operation). Many institutions use ECTS, primarily within European programmes, but it is not compulsory. Future challenges include: encouraging greater sectoral participation in the Bologna Process; developing a national credit system in England; stimulating outward mobility; increasing engagement with employers; encouraging interest in science and technology, and encouraging the comprehensive use of the diploma supplement.

UNITED KINGDOM – SCOTLAND

> DEGREE SYSTEM <

1. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle
2. Access to the next cycle
3. Implementation of national qualifications framework

> QUALITY ASSURANCE <

4. National implementation of *Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA*
5. Stage of development of external quality assurance system
6. Level of student participation
7. Level of international participation

> RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS <

8. Stage of implementation of diploma supplement
9. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
10. Stage of implementation of ECTS

> LIFELONG LEARNING <

11. Recognition of prior learning

> JOINT DEGREES <

12. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

The United Kingdom was a signatory of the Bologna Declaration. Key developments in Scotland since 2005 include: successfully self-certifying the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland against the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA; reviewing the Quality Enhancement Framework against the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA*; undertaking sector-wide quality enhancement initiatives on enhancing the student experience and flexible delivery; implementing diploma supplements and ECTS, alongside the compatible national system; publishing guidelines for the recognition of prior learning; merging the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Councils, and extending academic freedom to cover all staff. International participation in the governance of the national quality assurance agency has been agreed, and international involvement in external review teams is under consideration. Scottish representatives have been active in European quality assurance discussions and each Quality Enhancement Theme explicitly looks for international good practice. Future challenges include: maintaining the competitiveness of higher education in Scotland; internationalising curricula; developing more joint degrees; improving retention within under represented groups; supporting peer learning; and increasing outward student mobility.

ISBN: 978-1-84478-945-0

PPAPG/D16(6909)/0507

© Crown copyright 2007

www.dfes.gov.uk

Published by the Department for Education and Skills

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial research, education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged.

75% recycled

This leaflet is printed
on 75% recycled paper



When you have finished with
this leaflet please recycle it



Bergen to London 2007

Secretariat Report on the
Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007



department for
education and skills

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission in the framework of the Socrates programme. This publication reflects the views of the contributors, and neither the Commission nor the Department for Education and Skills can be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Extracts from this document may be reproduced free of charge for non commercial education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged.



Socrates

This report, prepared by the Secretariat, gives an overview of the key elements of the Bologna Work Programme for 2005 –2007. It includes contributions from the Chairs of Working Groups, seminar organisers, the European Commission and consultative members. It also includes, in an Annex, some contributions from individual country members, summarising the main developments at national level over the period 2005-2007. Country members contributed on a voluntary basis. Hence, not all countries are included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007	3
Key Outcomes from Working Groups and Projects	7
Report from the Stocktaking Working Group	7
Report from the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process	8
Report from the Working Group on Social Dimension and Data on the Mobility of Staff and Students in Participating Countries	9
Report from the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks	11
Report from the Working Group on Portability of Grants and Loans	11
E4's work on the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies	12
EUA project: Developing Doctoral Programmes in Europe	13
Key Outcomes from Bologna Seminars	14
"The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area", Holy See	14
"Putting European Higher Education Area on the Map: Developing Strategies for Attractiveness", Greece	15
"Enhancing European Employability", UK	16
"Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area?", Germany	17
"Looking out: Bologna in a Global Setting", Norway	18
"New Challenges in Recognition", Latvia	19
"Making Bologna a Reality: Mobility of Staff and Students", EI, ESIB & UCU	20

Contributions from the European Commission and Consultative Members	21
BUSINESSEUROPE	21
Council of Europe	22
Education International	24
European Commission	25
ENQA	26
ESIB	27
EUA	29
EURASHE	30
UNESCO-CEPES	31

Conclusions from the UK Secretariat	33
--	-----------

ANNEX A

Contributions from Country Members	34
---	-----------

Albania	34
Armenia	35
Austria	35
Cyprus	36
Czech Republic	36
Georgia	37
Germany	39
Greece	39
Holy See	41
Netherlands	41
Poland	42
Romania	43
Serbia	43
Slovak Republic	44
Spain	45
Switzerland	45
Turkey	46
United Kingdom	47

ANNEX B

BFUG Work Programme 2005-2007	48
--------------------------------------	-----------

BOLOGNA WORK PROGRAMME 2005-2007

The context for the work of the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) between 2005 and 2007 was clearly set out in the Bergen Communiqué¹, agreed by Ministers responsible for higher education in the Bologna signatory countries at their 4th conference in Bergen, Norway in May 2005. The Bergen Communiqué charged BFUG with a number of tasks, including:

- reporting on the implementation and further development of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
- considering the practicalities of implementing a European register for quality assurance agencies
- preparing a report on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes
- elaborating a strategy for the external dimension
- continuing and widening the stocktaking process
- presenting comparable data on the social dimension and student and staff mobility
- exploring the issues around arrangements for supporting the continuing development of the EHEA beyond 2010.

Individual BFUG members also took note of the need to continue to pursue the 10 Action Lines previously agreed in the Bologna Declaration² and the subsequent Prague³ and Berlin⁴ Communiqués, with a view to realising the EHEA by 2010. These are:

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees
2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles (later three)
3. Establishment of a system of credits
4. Promotion of mobility
5. Promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance

1 http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf
2 http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/990719BOLOGNA_DECLARATION.PDF
3 http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/010519PRAGUE_COMMUNIQUE.PDF
4 http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/030919Berlin_Communique.PDF

6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education
7. Lifelong learning
8. Higher education institutions and students
9. Promoting the attractiveness of the EHEA
10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and the European Research Area.

In recent years, there has been a gradual evolution in the working methods used by BFUG to pursue Ministerial goals. The number of Bologna seminars, where higher education stakeholders from across the EHEA come together to develop policy, is reducing. Conversely, working groups and projects are becoming more effective working methods, as policy lines have been largely elaborated and there is an increasing focus on more detailed implementation issues. The need to share good practice and focus on completing the implementation of the Bologna Action Lines at the national level is also becoming more significant as we approach 2010.

Taking this into account, and based on advice from the BFUG Chair (UK), and the BFUG Board, the Secretariat prepared a draft Work Programme for 2005-2007 over the summer of 2005. For the first time, all BFUG members were invited to comment on the draft Work Programme, suggest topics for policy development seminars and volunteer to take part in working groups.

Comments on the draft Work Programme were received from more than half the BFUG members, with some 60 members volunteering to take part in working groups. This demonstrates the level of interest in working collaboratively to develop the EHEA. Working Group members were then selected, taking account of the need to ensure group membership reflected the geographical scope of the EHEA.

Following discussion at the Manchester BFUG (October 2005), this led to an agreed BFUG Work Programme for 2005-07 comprising:

– 5 (later 6) working groups on:

- stocktaking
- external dimension
- social dimension and data on staff and student mobility
- qualifications frameworks
- portable grants and loans
- drafting the communiqué

– 8 Bologna seminars, considering:

- cultural heritage and values of the EHEA
- the attractiveness of the EHEA
- employability
- joint degrees
- Bologna in a global setting

- recognition
 - staff and student mobility
 - doctoral programmes
- 2 projects:
- the practicalities of implementing a European register of quality assurance agencies
 - doctoral programmes
- a number of topics for discussion of BFUG, including:
- capacity building within the EHEA
 - European dimension
- agreed priorities for implementation at the national level.

The final Work Programme, attached at Annex B, was agreed by December 2005⁵, posted on the Bologna Secretariat website and updated on a regular basis thereafter.

Role of Secretariat

The role of the Secretariat was also confirmed at the Manchester BFUG. There, it was agreed that the Secretariat would:

- provide administrative and operational support to BFUG and its Board – including planning meetings; preparing papers; and minute-taking
- assist BFUG and its Board in the follow up work for the period July 2005 to June 2007 – including planning of activities and following up on BFUG decisions; supporting Bologna Working Groups and carrying out any special tasks concerning the implementation of the Work Programme
- maintain the Bologna Secretariat website and archives
- act as an external and internal contact point for the Bologna Process
- provide representation at external events, in consultation with the BFUG Chair.

Over the last two years, the Secretariat has supported all BFUG, Board and Working Group meetings and worked with the BFUG Chairs to ensure delivery of the Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007.

BFUG meetings

During the period 2005-07, BFUG, and its subset, the Bologna Board, has continued to meet regularly. Under the Chair of the UK, Austria, Finland and Germany, meetings took place on:

- BFUG7: 12-13 October 2005, Manchester, United Kingdom
- BFUG Board 11: 25 January 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUG8: 6-7 April 2006, Vienna, Austria

⁵ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/>

- BFUG Board 12: 13 June 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUG Board 13: 1 September 2006, Helsinki, Finland
- BFUG9:12-13 October 2006, Helsinki, Finland
- BFUG Board 14: 23 January 2007, Berlin, Germany
- BFUG10: 5-6 March 2007, Berlin, Germany
- BFUG11:17-18 April 2007, Berlin, Germany

The Work Programme provided the basis of the agenda for each meeting, with Working Group Chairs, EUA, and ENQA (on behalf of E4) regularly presenting updates on their work, and seeking advice from BFUG on particular aspects of their tasks. Seminar organisers also provided feedback to BFUG, highlighting relevant issues for consideration.

Copies of all BFUG and Board papers are available on the website at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna>

Throughout, attendance at BFUG meetings has been good, with most of the 45 countries taking part in each meeting. For a few countries, participation in BFUG meetings has been irregular. If the Process is to remain successful, it will be important for all participating countries to take part in BFUG meetings and contribute to the delivery of the Work Programme, in the run up to 2010.

Interest in supporting the continuing development of the Bologna Process remains high, with two countries and one consortium of three countries expressing an interest in providing the Secretariat for 2007-2009, and hosting the 2009 Ministerial conference.

Delivery of Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007

Overall, good progress is being made against the goals of the Bologna Process. The key elements of the Work Programme for 2005-2007 have been delivered. All Working Groups and projects have reported against their terms of reference and contributed to the sharing of good practice and policy development within the EHEA. Discussions at seminars and BFUG meetings have helped develop understanding of specific aspects of the Bologna Process, supporting the implementation of the 10 Action Lines in all participating countries by 2010. BFUG has also started to look ahead, giving some initial consideration to what support might be required and how the EHEA might develop over the longer term, to ensure it remains attractive and competitive in response to the new challenges that will inevitably arise.

Ann McVie

Head of the Bologna Secretariat

May 2007

KEY OUTCOMES FROM WORKING GROUP AND PROJECTS

Introduction

This rest of this report allows the Working Group Chairs, EUA, ENQA (on behalf of E4), seminar organisers, the European Commission, the consultative members and some country members to describe their contribution to the realisation of the EHEA over the last two years.

This section contains short contributions from each of the Working Group Chairs, describing the main outcomes of their work. It also contains contributions from ENQA (on behalf of E4) on their work to implement a European register of quality assurance agencies, and from EUA on their work on developing doctoral programmes in the EHEA.

Report from the Stocktaking Working Group

In their Bergen Communiqué, Ministers requested the continuing and widening of the stocktaking process. In the fields of the degree system, quality assurance and recognition of degrees and study periods, stocktaking had to include several new issues such as reflecting on three cycles rather than two, implementation of national qualifications frameworks, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA, as well as the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Stocktaking had to be widened to include several new areas: flexible learning paths in higher education, procedures for the recognition of prior learning, and awarding and recognition of joint degrees.

The Stocktaking Working Group drew up, and BFUG approved, a list of twelve indicators⁶ covering most of the above issues, and proposed to cover in the text of the stocktaking report those aspects that were not appropriate to be reflected in the scorecard. According to the Ministers' statement that the work on the first three priority areas should be largely completed by 2007⁷, the criteria for stocktaking indicators in these areas were made more demanding to measure the success against the final goals rather than checking whether the work had been started. In order to have comparable information from all countries, the Working Group prepared a template for national reports⁸.

The main sources of information for stocktaking were the national reports and Eurydice. For the recognition issues, national action plans on recognition⁹ were used as well. The outcomes were cross-checked with the results of EUA Trends V study and ESIB survey, Bologna With Student Eyes.

The main outcomes of stocktaking are the following:

- There is a good overall progress since 2005.
- The greatest progress since 2005 is observed in the areas of student participation in quality assurance, access to the next cycle, implementation of a two-cycle degree system and the implementation of national systems for external quality assurance.
- The main areas where more efforts are needed are: implementation of national qualifications frameworks, international participation in quality assurance and recognition of prior learning. In some areas, some of the reality is hidden within the apparently very good results.

⁶ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list&DocCategoryID=2>

⁷ Bergen Communiqué, page 5 http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/uploads/documents/2_1_Bergen_Communique.pdf

⁸ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list&DocCategoryID=2>

⁹ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list&DocCategoryID=17>

- High scores in the implementation of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance testify that most countries have started implementation. At the same time, such aspects as establishing a genuine quality improvement culture, external review of quality assurance agencies and international involvement throughout quality assurance will require time and effort to be completed.
- The good results in implementation of ECTS confirm that most countries are now widely using ECTS for both credit transfer and accumulation. Yet, a much smaller number link credits with learning outcomes.
- While it appears from national reports and action plans on recognition that legislation is largely compliant with the letter of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, further work is needed at international and national level as there are huge variations in approaches to recognition at both national and institutional level that may not fully embody the spirit of the Convention principles.

Andrejs Rauhvargers, Chair of the Stocktaking Working Group, Latvia

Report from the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process

The BFUG Working Group on the External Dimension was approved by the BFUG in November 2005, chaired by Norway, and was composed of BFUG representatives from eleven countries and eight consultative members.

The Working Group has arranged six meetings and corresponded extensively by e-mail. In addition to this, the use of several subgroups has been of the utmost importance in producing the necessary background documents and proposals for discussion in the group. Working Group members have also participated actively in the three seminars on the external dimension of the Bologna Process arranged during 2006 in the Vatican City, Athens and Oslo. The outcome of the BFUG Working Group is a proposal for a strategy on the Bologna Process in a global setting as well as a proposal for a text for the London Communiqué on this issue.

The whole project has been followed by a rapporteur, Professor Pavel Zgaga from the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He has actively contributed to the Working Group meetings and correspondence as well as simultaneously producing documents for the group. Professor Zgaga's own analyses and reflections, as well as an introduction to the significant historical background of the Bologna Process has been published in a report under the auspices of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

For further information about the Bologna Process in a global setting, please visit the website: www.bolognaoslo.com.

Toril Johansson, Chair of the Working Group, Norway

Report from the Working Group on Social Dimension and Data on the Mobility of Staff and Students in Participating Countries

The terms of reference for the Working Group could be summarised as follows:

- to define the concept of social dimension based on the Ministerial communiqués of the Bologna Process
- to present comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries
- to present comparable data on the mobility of staff and students
- to prepare proposals as a basis for future stocktaking.

Nine¹⁰ countries and three¹¹ organisations have been represented in the group. A subgroup with statistical experts and data providers was established with the task of collecting data.

Social Dimension of Higher Education

Strengthening the social dimension is key to enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the EHEA. There are, however, considerable differences and challenges in relation to the social dimension of higher education between the participating countries. The Working Group has found that it is not appropriate to narrowly define the social dimension or suggest a number of detailed actions for all countries to implement. Instead, the Working Group proposes that the following overall objective for the social dimension should be agreed by the Ministers:

We strive for the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations. We therefore pledge to take action to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.

Each country should develop its own strategy, including an action plan, for the social dimension.

Concerning data on the social dimension, there is no comprehensive survey which covers the necessary aspects of the social dimension. The Working Group has also found that there are several important data gaps and challenges in relation to the social dimension: not all Bologna countries are covered, there is no common deadline for surveys, requirements for indicators need to be matched with data availability and comparability, statistics from different sectors need to be brought together to get a fair picture of the social dimension and most of the currently available data is not appropriate for analysis of change.

The Working Group proposes actions at both national and European level:

- By 2009 the countries should report to the BFUG on their national strategies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to show their impact. All stakeholders should actively participate in, and support, this work at the national level. The Working Group suggests an approach to the work on national strategies in Annex 2 of their report.
- Student survey data should be collected with the aim of providing comparable and reliable data concerning the social dimension.

¹⁰ Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Russia, Sweden and UK.

¹¹ ESIB, EUA and Education International – Pan European Structure.

- The collection of data on the social dimension needs to go beyond the present stocktaking method. BFUG should entrust Eurostat, in conjunction with Eurostudent, with a mandate to develop more comparable and reliable data to inform progress towards the overall objective for the social dimension in all Bologna countries. Data should cover participative equity in higher education as well as employability for graduates. This task should be overseen by the BFUG and a report should be submitted for the 2009 Ministerial meeting.
- To give an overview of the work on strategies and action plans carried out in participating countries in order to exchange experiences.

Mobility of Students and Staff

The promotion of mobility of students and staff is at the core of the Bologna Process. The objective should be *an EHEA where students and staff can be truly mobile*. However, the participating countries face challenges concerning both the facilitation of mobility itself and finding comparable and reliable data on mobility. Among the obstacles to mobility, issues related to immigration, recognition of study and work periods abroad and lack of financial incentives feature prominently. Data are scarce and those that are there show significant weaknesses in giving a full picture of mobility. First of all, there is no common and appropriate definition of mobility for statistical purposes. Also, there are no data covering all Bologna countries, no comparable and reliable data on genuine student mobility, hardly any data on staff mobility (and the data that is there is not comparable between countries).

The Working Group proposes actions at both national and European level:

- By 2009 the countries should report to BFUG on actions taken at national level to remove obstacles to and promote the benefits of mobility of students and staff, including measures to assess their impact at a future date.
- Countries should focus on the main national challenges: delivery of visas and work permits, the full implementation of established recognition procedures and creating incentives for mobility for both individuals and higher education institutions.
- To address the institutional attitude towards and responsibility for mobility. This includes making mobility an institutional responsibility.
- To facilitate mobility through strengthening the social dimension of mobile students and staff.
- To support the development of joint programmes as one way of enhancing trust between countries and institutions.
- The collection of data on mobility of staff and students needs to go beyond the present stocktaking method. BFUG should entrust Eurostat, in conjunction with Eurostudent, with a mandate to provide comparable and reliable data on actual mobility across the EHEA.
- BFUG should also consider how best to overcome the many obstacles to mobility of students and staff. Progress in this work should be reported for the Ministerial meeting in 2009.

Annika Pontén, Chair of the Working Group, Sweden

Report from the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks

The Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks' main tasks were to consider what further development of the EHEA-framework may be required, particularly the linkage between the national frameworks and the EHEA-framework; monitor the development of the EU "European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning"; provide assistance to member countries working to introduce national frameworks.

The Working Group has conducted four regional workshops on developing national qualifications frameworks and supported especially new Bologna members through participation in conferences and meetings. It has overseen the completion of two pilot projects in Ireland and Scotland on verification of the compatibility of national qualifications frameworks with the overarching EHEA-framework.

The main findings of the Working Group are:

- We see, for the moment, no need for amendments to the overarching Framework of Qualifications for the EHEA agreed in the Bergen Communiqué, or to the procedures and criteria for verification of compatibility of national qualifications framework with the overarching framework.
- But, we see a need for facilitating experience-sharing in the elaboration and development of national qualifications frameworks. This is not a job for a new working group, but should be vested in a permanent international organisation with its own resources. The Working Group propose that this task is entrusted to the Council of Europe, which already carries out the role of secretariat for the ENIC in the field of recognition, and to which notifications of certification of national qualifications frameworks are given.
- We are satisfied that national qualifications frameworks, compatible with the overarching EHEA-framework, will also be compatible with the proposal from the European Commission on a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.
- In order to avoid confusion by the existence of two overarching frameworks, it is important that the promotion of the EHEA should build on the overarching EHEA-framework.

Mogens Berg, Chair of the Working Group, Denmark

Report from the Working Group on Portability of Grants and Loans

The Working Group took the commitments of the Bologna Ministers regarding portability as mentioned in the Berlin and Bergen Communiqués as a starting point.

The Working Group collected information on the different grants and loans systems, the current practice of countries that offer portability for full studies abroad and the legal framework of portable grants and loans for students.

The Working Group also examined the legal framework and concluded that the portability of grants and loans is possible. There are no legal barriers. The legal research also showed that students are unlikely to get much support from the host country, which confirms the desirability of portable support. In some cases students can get support from the host country, which may result in them receiving double support when they are also eligible for portable support.

The Working Group found that the different countries all have grants and/or loans systems to support their students and that each country has its own system. Although a lot of similarities are to be found among these systems, none is exactly like the other. That also means that each of them needs different information on the student, the study programme they are attending, their living situation, their income or that of their parents or partner, their achievements etc.

The information needed is less easy to obtain when students are abroad. Countries need each other's assistance to operate their grants and/or loans systems properly when students are abroad. This led to the suggestion that an informal network of national experts be set up to share information, and help to identify and overcome obstacles to the portability of grants and loans.

Although the network has to choose its own structure, we propose to chair it by a troika of countries that periodically changes. Scotland, Denmark (starting from 2008) and the Netherlands have already volunteered to chair with Ireland and Norway indicating that they are interested in co-chairing.

Austria, England, Finland, Germany, Lithuania & Sweden pointed out that they will be participating in the network. Of course we welcome all other Bologna partner countries to join this network too.

The first concrete tasks foreseen for the network are to:

- collect and provide general information on the national student support systems and the educational systems of the Bologna partner countries
- address the issue of data-protection to prevent double payment of grants and loans (by both the home and the host country) and to facilitate the repayment of loans
- collect and provide statistical data on the international mobility of students in the EHEA.

Aldrik in't Hout, Chair of the Working Group, Netherlands

E4's Work on the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies

Since the Bergen Ministerial meeting of May 2005, ENQA has followed the mandate of elaborating, in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB (E4 Group), the practical aspects of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and of reporting back on the respective developments through the BFUG. The E4 Group has met nine times since the Bergen summit. The Chair of the meetings has rotated amongst the four organisations, while the secretarial functions as well as the reporting to BFUG, have been undertaken by ENQA.

The first stage of the process consisted of a consultancy exercise. A consultant studied the Register proposal included in the report Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA and interviewed various quality assurance stakeholders in Europe. On that basis the consultant produced a report on the possible forms and practicalities of the Register. The consultancy project was funded through grants from the Socrates programme and from the Swiss Confederation. During the second stage, the E4 Group discussed further the proposals contained in the consultant's report and consulted a law firm on the legal aspects of the Register. ENQA also consulted the views of its members at its General Assembly of September 2006. The third stage included the drafting of the E4 report on the Register that was submitted to the BFUG meeting in March, and further discussed in April 2007.

Peter Williams, ENQA

EUA project: Developing Doctoral Programmes in Europe

In Bergen, the Ministers asked EUA to prepare a report, together with other interested parties, on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes set out in the Bergen Communiqué, which were in turn based on the ten “Salzburg Principles” adopted at a Bologna seminar held in February 2006. Doctoral programmes have become a focus of the Bologna Process since the inclusion of an Action Line in the Berlin Communiqué in 2003 underlining the importance of creating synergies between higher education and research. Doctoral programmes, as the third cycle of higher education and the first stage of a young researcher’s career, are the most important link between the European Higher Education and Research Areas. They are the key to realising Europe’s ambition to become the most dynamic knowledge-based economy and society in the world, and universities hold the main responsibility for the development of high quality doctoral programmes which will enhance the career prospects of young researchers in all sectors of society.

The project steering committee that was established included governmental representatives from Austria and France as well as representatives from ESIB and EURODOC. It was agreed that action should focus on three areas: the quality of doctoral programmes, the role of higher education institutions and the role of the state and the question of public responsibility in relation to the funding of doctoral education. A series of events and activities took place around these issues in 2005 and 2006. The goal was to encourage broad discussion among universities across all Bologna countries. The process culminated in a major conference held at the University of Nice in December 2006 that brought together over 400 people. In addition to the input from the series of preparatory workshops, a questionnaire on the funding of doctoral education was sent to BFUG governmental representatives. The preliminary results received from 36 governments were also debated during the conference, the results of which, entitled “Matching Ambition with Responsibilities and Resources”¹², provided the basis for the report EUA has presented to BFUG.

The report underlines in particular the responsibility universities have in embedding doctoral programmes in their institutional strategies and policies, and the joint responsibilities of institutions and governments in creating career paths and opportunities for early stage researchers, as well as for the funding of doctoral programmes and candidates. A report setting out the findings of the financing study will be published separately.

Lesley Wilson, EUA

¹² http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Nice_doctorates_seminar/final_recommendations_in_EUAtemplate.pdf

KEY OUTCOMES FROM BOLOGNA SEMINARS

Introduction

This section contains short contributions from each Bologna seminar organiser, describing the main conclusions of the discussion.

“The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”

HOLY SEE BOLOGNA SEMINAR, THE VATICAN, 30 MARCH – 1 APRIL 2006

Rooted in its conviction that some dimensions less prominent in the initial stages of the Bologna Process need to be addressed to make the EHEA a living reality, the Holy See hosted an official Bologna seminar on “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area” at the Vatican from 30 March through 1 April 2006. The seminar was held in collaboration with UNESCO-CEPES and the Council of Europe.

With the active participation of representatives from more than fifty countries, most but not all of them European, and from various sectors of the worldwide Academy and international organisations, this meeting of minds was successful in achieving some of the objectives set out in the final Communiqué released at Bergen, Norway, by the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in May 2005.

The seminar emphasised that, however important structural reform is, the EHEA concerns more than structural questions. It underlined that the values and heritage of European higher education are among the factors that make it attractive.

In order to keep the European university attractive to the nations of the continent as well as to the rest of the world, the seminar recommends to the Ministers at the 2007 London meeting to further develop and discuss the themes treated by this seminar, among which are, in particular, the following:

- The indispensable and irreplaceable role of the European university for the integration of Europe and the formation of a wisdom society.
- The commitment to Europe’s cultural heritage and its humanistic values as a living and expanding tradition which the university receives, enriches and transmits to succeeding generations.
- The core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation/exchange among institutions are necessary components of the European university’s competitive advantage in the global marketplace and thus instruments at the service of society.
- The positive value of unity in diversity and diversity in unity is a way to foster interaction, interdisciplinary studies and dialogue among different cultural and religious traditions.
- The conviction that religious faith marks the various national cultures of Europe in their literature, architecture, approach to human rights and other crucial matters, and that questions of meaning and ethical responsibility should be recognised in all the university’s programmes and research projects.

Fr. Friedrich Bechina, Holy See

“Putting European Higher Education Area on the map: developing strategies for attractiveness”

GREEK BOLOGNA SEMINAR, ATHENS, 25-26 JUNE 2006

The key outcomes from the Athens Bologna Seminar can be summarised according to the following parameters.

With regard to the *competitiveness and attractiveness horizon* it was pointed out that competition should not necessarily be seen in opposition to cooperation, since through projects and quality networks we can increase the competitiveness of European higher education and enhance institutional cooperation. In order to attract international students the organisation of European higher education fairs and media campaigns and the creation of European study centres and centres of excellence were suggested. Moreover, other proposals include extra budget provided for international students, the creation of a European standard of acceptance for international students, a code of good conduct for dealing with visa problems, the enhancement of Europe’s alumni-networks worldwide, and the establishment of a network of ambassadors or “Europe Promoters”.

As far as the *partnership and cooperation horizon* is concerned an important step towards the improvement of the current practices would be the creation of a consortia of universities, higher education stakeholder organisations and third countries, and also the joint delivery of graduate-level study programmes with integrated mobility phases of study in the other continent.

In connection with the *dialogue horizon* it is recommended that the countries of the Bologna Process share their good practice with other countries and organisations from all over the world. The policy dialogue can be accomplished through the existing fora, by giving the interested countries and organisations the chance to participate in Bologna events or even by creating a “Bologna Visitor Programme” or a higher education policy forum, involving representatives from European and third-country governments and higher education stakeholders.

Finally, with regard to the *information horizon* it was unanimously recommended by all the working groups to create an Internet portal on the EHEA, and Greece, through the Minister of Education Marietta Giannakou, has already expressed its willingness to host such a portal. This should be easy to understand and navigate, in a variety of languages and customised for different constituents and audiences.

Foteini Asderaki, Greece

“Enhancing European Employability”

UK BOLOGNA SEMINAR, SWANSEA, 12-14 JULY 2006

Swansea University and the Welsh Assembly Government jointly hosted a seminar on the theme of Enhancing European Employability at Swansea University on 12-14 July 2006. The seminar reflected upon the means of enhancing the employability of European graduates, within the EHEA and beyond, and how the understanding of graduate employability differed between Bologna signatories and for graduates exiting at different cycles.

The Bergen Communiqué identified a need to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications and to create opportunities for flexible learning paths, including the recognition of prior learning.

The **key recommendation** of the Seminar was that employability must remain an important part of the Bologna Process and should be addressed in each of the three cycles. The detailed recommendations drawn up by the workshops clearly identified a number of themes and several areas of overlap. Distilled to three key messages, these were:

- Embedding skills in the curriculum is a key element of the Bologna reforms and as such needs to be monitored, with an emphasis on sharing good practice across Europe. Recognising the wide diversity of national systems, regional priorities and circumstances together with institutional missions, the widest range of method and approaches is to be encouraged. The importance of effective links with employers cannot be over-stated, but the methods adopted must be appropriate to the context of the course of study, the institutions, the geographical regions and national policies.
- Higher education institutions should assist students to recognise and articulate the employability skills developed within the curriculum and in other activities at all three cycles – linked to the Dublin Descriptors/national qualification frameworks and to future Continuous Professional Development needs. Higher education institutions should also ensure that students receive information and advice on all sectors of the labour market, together with career management skills.
- The Bologna reforms are creating a new range of transition and exit points from higher education. The ensuing complexity of options for further study or employment, combined with the encouragement of student mobility, requires the provision of high quality professional staff guidance for students and appropriate staff development for academic and other university staff. In this context, higher education institutions and governments should promote a coherent cross-departmental strategic approach, to allow institutions to integrate the international dimension and particularly student mobility in institutional policy and curriculum planning.

Judith Cole, United Kingdom (Wales)

"Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area?"

GERMAN BOLOGNA SEMINAR, BERLIN, 21-22 SEPTEMBER 2006

Under the auspices of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and co-financed by the European Commission, an official Bologna seminar on questions and strategies related to the awarding of "Joint Degrees" in the EHEA was held on September 21-22, 2006 in Berlin.

The seminar agreed on ten conclusions and recommendations fully documented in the publication "Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area Conference Report and Relevant Documents." The main items are, inter alia:

- Joint programmes are a step forward to a truly bottom-up process in the EHEA. They combine international experience, enhanced linguistic, cultural and social competence. If these contributions to the coherence of a EHEA are in fact considered as valuable and appreciated, specific funding for them on national and/or European level is needed for enhanced marketing.
- A survey and reliable statistics/databases describing existing double, multiple and joint degree programmes at national and European level are needed.
- A list of "good criteria" that can be derived from the Stockholm, Mantova and Berlin seminars and other relevant documents should be set up as a Bologna document of reference and relevance.
- Countries, where legal provisions do not allow joint degrees, are asked to incorporate in their national legislation on higher education at least the written option for the awarding of joint degrees and to make sure that they are quality-assured according to national standards and European principles. To ensure quality assurance, the use of the E4 Standards and Guidelines has to be implemented and specific criteria assessing the added value of joint degrees as opposed to national degrees needs to be developed.
- Ministers are asked to make sure that the procedures for obtaining visas and other necessary documents will not produce obstacles to the realisation of joint study programmes.

For further information, please consult the homepages

http://www.hrk-bologna.de/bologna/de/home/9145_3007.php

<http://eu.daad.de/eu/bologna/bologna-germany/veranstaltungen/06335.html>

Andrea Herdegen, Germany

“Looking out: Bologna in a global setting”

NORDIC BOLOGNA SEMINAR, OSLO, 28 – 29 SEPTEMBER 2006

The Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – together with the Nordic Council of Ministers, hosted the Nordic Bologna Process Official Seminar 'Looking out! Bologna in a global setting' in Oslo 28 - 29 September 2006. This was the third and final seminar held in order to give input to a strategy document on the external dimension of the Bologna Process. The first seminar was arranged in the Vatican in March-April 2006, hosted by the Holy See, and the second in Athens, Greece in June 2006, hosted by the Greek Ministry of Education. About 160 delegates from 39 countries, representing universities, university colleges and central authorities as well as organisations from all continents, participated in the Nordic seminar. The seminar was scheduled from lunch to lunch and was structured with plenary sessions, including a panel discussion, as well as six parallel sessions.

The main outcome of the Nordic Bologna seminar was the broad discussion and feedback on the most important issues presented in a draft strategy document from the Working Group and a draft report from the rapporteur Professor Pavel Zgaga. The main topics discussed in the parallel sessions were:

- conditions for institutional cooperation between European and non-European higher education institutions
- international mobility – transparency – recognition
- recognition of different student programme structures
- strategy for international cooperation, attractiveness – brain drain – capacity building
- what makes the EHEA attractive?

As this was the third and last seminar before proposing a strategy document, it was the last possibility to discuss issues raised in the Working Group documents within a broader community of experts. In particular, the views presented from representatives outside the EHEA gave valuable input to the final discussion in the Working Group.

For more detailed information about the seminar outcome, please refer to the seminar report on the website: www.bolognaoslo.com

Toril Johansson, Norway

“New Challenges in Recognition”

LATVIAN BOLOGNA SEMINAR, RIGA, 25-26 JANUARY 2007

The seminar was co-organised by the Latvian authorities and the Council of Europe in Riga on January 25 - 26, 2007. It gathered some 120 participants and focused on two important but difficult areas of recognition policy: the recognition of prior learning and recognition issues between the EHEA and other parts of the world. It considered the recognition of prior learning in the context of lifelong learning on the basis of a background report by Stephen Adam (United Kingdom) and an overview of practice and developments in Belgium (Flemish Community), Canada, Estonia and France.

The conference explored recognition issues between the EHEA and other regions of the world on the basis of presentations by Dr. E. Stephen Hunt (United States) and Ms. Nina Gustafsson Åberg (ESIB) as well as through a panel debate, and conducted in-depth discussions on the two main themes of the conference in four working groups. The conference also considered the main issues raised in the national action plans for recognition, submitted by all countries party to the Bologna Process, on the basis of a presentation by Professor Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia and President of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee).

More information on the conference, including all presentations and the report by the General Rapporteur, Professor Pavel Zgaga (Slovenia), is available at <http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007/>

The conclusions and recommendations are available at http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007/presentations/P_Zgaga_Recommendations.htm

Andrejs Rauhvargers, Latvia

Sjur Bergan, Council of Europe

“Making Bologna a Reality: Mobility of Staff and Students”

EI, ESIB & UCU BOLOGNA SEMINAR, LONDON, 8-9 FEBRUARY 2007

The seminar, organised by Education International in collaboration with ESIB and UCU (the University and College Union, UK), took place in London on 8-9 February 2007, and was very well attended by stakeholders at national level. A Steering Committee and a rapporteur were appointed and two studies on mobility of staff and students were commissioned. Over 180 participants from 35 countries were present.

The first part of the agenda included a presentation of the two studies on mobility of staff and students, a presentation by Annika Persson-Pontén (the chair of the BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension and Mobility), and a panel discussion on “Increasing Academic Staff and Student Mobility: From Individual to Institutional Responsibility”. Parallel workshop sessions followed, on:

- social rights and conditions – tools or obstacles
- mobility, the external dimension and brain drain
- recognition of qualifications
- student mobility: factor for societal and economic growth?

After the workshop reports, the final panel then discussed “Realising the Potential of Mobility”, and was followed by the closing presentation on the general report, and a discussion and adoption of recommendations.

The report and conclusions of the seminar, which were welcomed with a large degree of consensus, referred to the need for data collection; the need to ease visa regulations for students and staff and to address economic and social conditions in which mobility takes place; a positive attitude towards staff and students taking matters into their own hands; and a suggestion that ESIB and EI undertake a project on mobility under the authority of BFUG, for the period 2007-2009, to build on the constructive work they have undertaken so far. The documents from the seminar are available from www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/calendarshow.php?id=68&theme=highereducation. As a follow up to this work, EI is currently working with EUA on the possibility of producing a section on mobility of staff and students for the EUA Bologna Handbook.

Monique Fouilhoux, Education International

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND CONSULTATIVE MEMBERS

Introduction

This section contains contributions from the European Commission and the consultative BFUG members, describing their contribution to the development of the EHEA over the last two years.

BUSINESSEUROPE

Since the recognition of BUSINESSEUROPE (formerly UNICE) as a consultative member of the Bologna Process in 2005, BUSINESSEUROPE has broadened its activities within this Process, both through an active involvement in the Bologna Follow Up structures and activities as well as by informing member institutions and business in general about the ongoing process and its key activities, encouraging them also to take an active role.

Employer involvement in quality assurance in higher education:

Quality assurance has been one of the main topics for BUSINESSEUROPE since the 2005 Bergen Ministerial conference. BUSINESSEUROPE supports employers in getting involved in national quality assurance processes and structures. Furthermore, BUSINESSEUROPE together with ENQA organised a common workshop for representatives of business, industry, quality assurance agencies and of higher education institutions, which took place in November 2005 in Berlin. The workshop analysed several European examples of employer involvement in quality assurance and identified best practice. The key for a broad involvement of employers in quality assurance in higher education is a close cooperation between the different stakeholder groups, particularly between higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies on the one hand and business on the other.

Employability

Employability represents another major focus of the employers' activities within the Bologna Process. BUSINESSEUROPE contributed to the Bologna Seminar "Enhancing European Employability" in July 2006 in Swansea. This was the kick off for a broad discussion among member organisations which has led to a recent BUSINESSEUROPE position paper on employability. At present, BUSINESSEUROPE is organising, together with the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research, a conference on employability: "Fit for the job?! How to better equip students for the labour market", which will take place in July 2007.

Cooperation with BFUG consultative members and other institutions

BUSINESSEUROPE has a close relationship with other BFUG consultative members, particularly with ESIB, ENQA and EURASHE and realises common activities within the process. BUSINESSEUROPE for example supported the EURASHE workshop on the involvement of stakeholders in the Lifelong Learning strategy in March 2007, collaborated with ENQA regarding the involvement of employers in quality assurance in higher education and is one of the partners of the ESIB project towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. BUSINESSEUROPE has recently been closely involved in a project initiated by the COIMBRA group which seeks to raise employers' awareness about the Bologna Process and to develop links between university career services and companies.

Bologna Promoters

BUSINESSEUROPE members are actively involved in national Bologna-Promoters networks. Their main activities within these networks are the information of business and single enterprises about the Bologna Process and its relevance for training and recruiting processes as well as the encouragement for an active involvement in for example the development of curricula for bachelor and master programmes, in teaching within these programmes and in quality assessments, all with the aim of enhancing the employability of graduates.

Julia Gocke, BUSINESSEUROPE

Council of Europe

The Council of Europe has continued to be one of the major contributors to the Bologna Process in the period between the Bergen and London conferences¹³.

Policy development

The Council of Europe has been a very active participant in the work of BFUG and the Board as well as in the working groups on the Bologna Process in a global context (“external dimension”) and on qualifications frameworks. Throughout, the Council of Europe has worked to promote the Bologna Process as a pan-European development of overarching policies to be further developed and implemented in the participating countries. We have argued in favour of a EHEA that looks beyond the immediate horizon of 2010 that takes account of the full range of purposes of higher education. This includes its economic and citizenship aspects as well as its role in the personal development of learners and in giving societies a broad, advanced knowledge base, and developing its key reforms within a broader vision of the role and importance of higher education in modern societies.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention remains the only internationally binding legal text of the Bologna Process. Ratification of the European Cultural Convention remains a key criterion for membership of the Bologna Process, along with a firm commitment to the goals and principles of the EHEA. The Bureau of the Convention Committee, the ENIC Bureau and the NARIC Advisory Board submitted the proposal for guidelines for National Action Plans for recognition, which was subsequently adopted by BFUG. The Council of Europe provided the Secretariat for this work.

To further policy development, the Council of Europe co-organised a Bologna seminar on “New Challenges in Recognition”¹⁴ with the Latvian authorities (Riga, January 2007) and collaborated in the Bologna seminar on “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of European Universities and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”¹⁵, organised by the Holy See in the Vatican City in March 2006.

The plenary sessions of the Council’s Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDES), which is the only pan-European forum for policy makers from both public authorities and institutions, provides a unique platform for considering higher education reform and has consistently considered developments in the Bologna Process. In this vein, the Council of Europe co-organised a conference on

13 For a more complete overview, see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/CoEPresent_en.asp

14 <http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007/> and http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Riga07/default_EN.asp#TopOfPage

15 <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=events.view&EventID=21&Archived=1&Month=1&Year=2007&QuickEventID=&StartRow=21>

the student contribution to the Bologna Process with the Russian authorities and the Russian University of Peoples' Friendship under the Russian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe (Moscow, November 2006)¹⁶.

The Committee of Ministers will consider a recommendation on the public responsibility for higher education and research in spring 2007, exploring the affirmations in the Prague and Berlin Communiqués that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility.

The Council of Europe Higher Education Fora¹⁷ has considered higher education governance (September 2005), the responsibility of higher education for democratic culture (June 2006, with US higher education organisations) and the legitimacy of quality assurance (September 2006).

The Council of Europe Higher Education Series¹⁸ has published books on the public responsibility for higher education and research, the Lisbon Recognition Convention, higher education governance, recognition policy and practice in the Bologna Process and the heritage of European universities (second edition). Volumes on quality assurance, democratic culture and the concept of qualifications are being prepared.

In June 2006, the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly adopted Recommendation 1762 (2006) on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy¹⁹, which is a unique statement by a pan-European parliamentary body in strong support of one of the fundamental values of the EHEA.

Developing the Bologna Process in newer member countries

Within the Bologna Process, the Council of Europe has assumed a particular responsibility for providing assistance and advice to countries that acceded to the Bologna Process in recent years²⁰. In this context, the Council provided support for the participation of newer member states in the regional workshops on qualifications frameworks organised by the Bologna Working Group.

In autumn 2006, the Council of Europe organised two informal Ministerial conferences – for the Western Balkans²¹ and for the countries that acceded to the Bologna Process in 2005²² – with a view to preparing for the London conference.

During 2005 and 2006, the Council of Europe has provided advice on the development of a Master Plan for higher education in Albania, including advice on legislation as well as a major conference on main issues in higher education reform and thematic conferences on qualifications frameworks and quality assurance. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Europe has provided extensive advice on legislation and has run a joint project with the European Commission on the development of a qualifications framework, on quality assurance and on the recognition of qualifications. Since 2002, the Council of Europe has also co-chaired and funded the Higher Education Working Group/Bologna Committee (HEWG) for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The HEWG convenes all major stakeholders in higher education every two months, rotating between public universities, and is a trusted body enabling all the main stakeholders in higher education to meet on a regular basis in order to share information and to

16 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Moskva06/MoskvaNov06_EN.asp#TopOfPage

17 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Forums/default_EN.asp

18 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Resources/HEseries_en.asp

19 <http://assembly.coe.int/main.asp?Link=/documents/adoptedtext/ta06/erec1762.htm>

20 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Default_en.asp

21 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Min.%20Conference%20W.Balkans/Default_EN.asp#TopOfPage

22 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Min.%20conference%20new%20Bologna%20countries/default_EN.asp#TopOfPage

assist in advancing the reform process. The Council has further organised thematic conferences in Armenia, Georgia and Moldova and provided advice on “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. The Council of Europe has also been involved in the development of higher education in Kosovo.

Sjur Bergan, Council of Europe

Education International

Since recognition of Education International’s (EI) Pan-European Structure as a consultative member of the Bologna Process, EI has endeavoured both to make a constructive contribution to the Process at European level, as well as to strengthen the position of its member unions in the ongoing implementation of the Process at the national level.

Involvement in the Bologna Follow Up Structures: Apart from attendance at all BFUG meetings held since May 2005, EI has been present at nearly all official Bologna seminars, and has made contributions at some of these. EI has also been a member of two of the working groups set up by BFUG, namely the External Dimension Working Group and the Social Dimension and Mobility Working Groups.

The HERSC (Higher Education and Research Standing Committee): The EI Pan-European Structure has held four meetings of its HERSC, in September 2005 (Brussels), February 2006 (Sesimbra), September 2006 (Oslo), and February 2007 (London). During these meetings, debates took place on the following issues: doctoral studies, research, mobility of staff and students, recognition of qualifications, the external dimension, and EU matters on higher education. The HERSC adopted the following statements: on the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment; on the EU Commission May 2006 Communication on “Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: Education, research and innovation”; on the EU Commission September 2006 Communication on “Efficiency and Equity in European Education and Training Systems”; on Academic Freedom; and on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions. Reports are available from: www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/documentation.php

The External Dimension: EI has used its global membership to explore the implications and perceptions of 'Bologna' elsewhere in the world. At the EI International Conference on Higher Education and Research in December 2005 (Melbourne, Australia) the Bologna Process and the EU Commission Recommendation for a European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, (in relation with the OECD project on “future scenarios for universities”) were included in the debates. EI has also been involved in an ongoing discussion with a number of non-European affiliates on the issue of the external dimension. The publication of the paper entitled “The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps” called for particular attention from EI and its Australian affiliate, NTEU (National Tertiary Education Union).

Mobility of Staff and Students: The primary focus of EI’s work on the Bologna Process during the past year has been the organisation of the official Bologna seminar: “Making Bologna a Reality – Mobility of Staff and Students” in collaboration with ESIB and UCU, which took place in London in February 2007. Two studies have been prepared and results presented to the seminar. The documents from the seminar are available from: www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/calendarshow.php?id=68&theme=highereducation. As a follow up to this work, EI is currently working with EUA on the possibility of producing a section on mobility of staff and students for the EUA Bologna Handbook.

Cooperation with other BFUG Consultative Members: EI has been collaborating closely with the other BFUG consultative members. There has been two-way cooperation in terms of attendance and contributions made by EI to conferences organised by other consultative members, and vice versa. In particular, EI has collaborated with ESIB, EUA and EURASHE on a number of issues, and has also co-organised training sessions for student and staff representatives with ESIB. EI is also looking to acquire observer status on the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research.

Information, Capacity Building and Publications: EI updated its Higher Education and Research webpage (www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/). This includes links and news on the Bologna Process. In preparation for the HERSC meetings of September 2006 and February 2007, EI compiled two readers on Bologna issues, which were also circulated to EI affiliates. Several EI affiliates (in Russia and Serbia particularly) have issued publications and held training sessions and conferences on the Bologna Process. EI also organised training on Bologna issues for teachers' unions in Albania in May 2006.

Other Activities and Ongoing Work: EI has also given a high profile to Bologna issues during other general events organised by EI. Recent activities include: the EI Central and Eastern European Round Table (Sofia, September 2006); the EI/ETUCE Pan-European Assembly (Luxembourg, December 2006); EI's ongoing work on the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) Negotiations (including ongoing publications issued thereon) as well as its extensive collaboration with UNESCO and the ILO have also contributed to enhance EI's contribution to Bologna issues.

Monique Fouilhoux, Education International

European Commission

EU policy in higher education – the need for reforms

The higher education policy of the European Commission aims at reforming higher education systems, making them more coherent, more flexible, and more responsive to the needs of society. Reforms are needed in order to face the challenges of globalisation and to train and retrain the European workforce. Reforms should enable universities to play their role in the Europe of Knowledge and make a strong contribution to the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs.

In May 2006, the Commission published a Communication identifying nine measures considered necessary to deliver the modernisation agenda for universities²³, ranging from curricular reform (Bologna) to governance reform and funding.

The Commission works with Member States and the higher education sector to help implement the modernisation agenda through what is called the Open Method of Coordination (involving dialogue among clusters of policy makers and experts, peer-learning activities, indicators, benchmarks, reports and analyses), by taking special initiatives (Quality Assurance, ECTS, EQF, EIT etc.) and by supporting the initiatives of others (pilot projects, associations, networks, conferences etc.).

Commission supported initiatives on higher education reform

The Commission sponsors key Bologna activities such as the Stocktaking exercise, the Eurydice Focus Survey, the EUA Trends report, the ESIB Student Survey, the ENQA Association, the Register of European

23 "Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation" COM(2006)208 final, of 10.5.2006 - http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/comuniv2006_en.pdf

Quality Assurance Agencies, the EUA Convention in Lisbon and the London Ministerial Conference as well as pilot activities on topics such as ranking, classification, quality labels and Tuning Educational Structures in Europe. The Commission participates as a full member in BFUG and the Bologna Board.

Grant support was provided through Socrates programme and will in future be provided through the new Lifelong Learning Programme (Erasmus actions), the 7th EU Framework Programme for Research and the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, as well as the Structural Funds and EIB loans. Most support goes to reforms in countries outside the EU, through programmes such as Cards, Meda and Tacis for the neighbouring countries. Relations with other continents are supported through a series of bilateral cooperation programmes: EU-USA/Canada, Asia-Link, Edu-Link, ALFA and ALBAN for Latin America and the new Nyerere Programme for Africa. An overview of Commission supported initiatives on higher education reform is provided in the document "From Bergen to London", The contribution of the European Commission to the Bologna Process".²⁴

Peter van der Hijden, European Commission

ENQA

E4 Group

ENQA has participated actively in the work of the E4 Group (ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE). The nine E4 meetings since May 2005 have concentrated on developing the practicalities of implementation of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and on the organisation of the European Quality Forums 2006 and 2007. ENQA has briefed BFUG and the Board regularly on the E4 activities and submitted a final report on the European Register to BFUG in March 2007.

Organisational change and external reviews of the ENQA member agencies

ENQA has gone through a considerable organisational change over the past two years. It has become an independent membership association and developed its membership criteria to correspond to the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*.

Consequently, starting from 2005, ENQA members are required to undergo an external review on a five-yearly basis. The reviews examine whether the agencies meet the ENQA membership criteria and, thereby, the ESG. The reviews are normally organised through national arrangements but, if this is not possible or the agency so requests, they can also be co-ordinated by ENQA. ENQA has published a set of *National Review Guidelines*, which provide guidance on the characteristics of national reviews that will be necessary for acceptance by ENQA for its membership purposes. Three agencies have so far had their ENQA membership reconfirmed on the basis of their national reviews. The decisions are taken by the ENQA Board on the basis of a rigorous examination of the review reports. Approximately ten member agencies are expected to undergo an external review in 2007. ENQA has also created two non-membership categories of association – Associates and Affiliates – to ensure that non-member organisations can gain access to, and participate in, ENQA's developmental and enhancement-focused work.

²⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/report06.pdf>

Bologna-related activities

Since the Bergen summit, the following ENQA workshops and seminars contributing to the goals of the EHEA have taken place:

- *After the Bergen Ministerial meeting - results and stocktaking on subsidiarity and convergence*, Paris, 9-10 June 2005
- *Employer involvement in quality assurance*, Berlin, November 2005
- *Improvement and Development of Evaluation Methodologies*, Birmingham, 8-9 December 2005
- *Language of European Quality Assurance*, University of Warwick, 29-30 June 2006
- *Student involvement in external quality assurance*, Madrid, 19-20 October 2006
- *Implementation of Part 3 of the European Standards and Guidelines*, Vienna, 4-5 December 2006 (with contributions from the CEEN network)
- In 2006 ENQA conducted a review of the present accreditation and quality assurance practices in Portuguese higher education, resulting in a final report *Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Portugal – An Assessment of the Existing System and Recommendations for a Future System* as well as the Quality Convergence Study II, concentrating on terminology and epistemology of quality assurance.
- The Transnational European Evaluation Project II (TEEP II) was concluded in August 2006 with the publication of a *Methodological report*.
- In 2006 ENQA also published two reports from the European regional networks, both dealing with the ESG: *Mapping External Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe* by CEEN and *European Standards and Guidelines in a Nordic Perspective* by NOQA.
- Other recent publications include: *Student involvement in external quality assurance* and *Terminology of quality assurance*.

Peter Williams, ENQA

ESIB

ESIB organised a training seminar on the Bologna Process and other developments in European higher education in September 2006. A wide range of topics, such as employability, equality, qualifications frameworks and quality improvement, were tackled. The training prepared European student organisations for meaningful input into the London summit and subsequent events.

ESIB organised the seminar "The Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area and the External Dimension of the Bologna Process" in Malta, April 2007. The seminar served as a platform for discussing this theme but also as a preparation for the London Ministerial summit.

European Students' Conventions

During each EU Presidency ESIB organised European Students' Conventions. In London (December 2005) the Convention focussed on research and doctoral studies. The EU Lisbon Strategy was discussed in Vienna (March 2006). In Helsinki (October 2006) a discussion on the future of higher education after 2010 was launched. In March 2007, ESIB organised, together with the National Union of Students in Germany, (FZS) the 13th European Students' Convention, "Students Taking Stock" in Berlin. Some 100 student representatives from 40 countries gathered to discuss their views on eight years of Bologna reforms in Europe. The Berlin Student Declaration outlines the key demands of students in Europe regarding the further shaping of the EHEA.

Bologna With Student Eyes

For the third time, ESIB developed and carried out a survey amongst student representatives on experiences, assessments and perspectives of the Bologna Process, with a particular focus on the impact of the Process on student affairs and student representation. The report "Bologna with Student Eyes" will be published in time for the London Summit.

European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning Project

Together with five partners, ESIB initiated the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning Stakeholder Project. It aims at exchanging the experience of national stakeholders with the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL) and the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks in their countries. The five partners will organise national dialogues, involving all stakeholders in their country.

Information and capacity building of national student unions

ESIB provided its members and candidate members regularly with up-to-date information on current developments within the Bologna Process. A set of information papers provides a deeper analysis and explanation on certain topics. ESIB has carried out training and taken part in numerous conferences on the Bologna Process organised by its members.

ESIB cooperated with EI and local student unions in the organisation of a series of training seminars for student unions in Albania and Ukraine. The seminars aimed at increasing the capacity of student unions in dealing with the implementation of Bologna reforms. The seminars were carried out in May (Albania) and November (Ukraine) 2006. In total about 180 student representatives took part. ESIB has supported its candidate member in Georgia through taking part in a seminar organised by the Students League of Georgia.

Participation in the Bologna Follow Up structure

ESIB has participated in all official Bologna Follow Up seminars. ESIB has contributed actively to most of the seminars through speeches and papers or by acting as working group rapporteurs. ESIB representatives have also taken part in other Bologna-related seminars. ESIB have also contributed to the work in a number of BFUG working groups, the EUA project on Doctoral Studies and the E4 Group together with ENQA, EUA and EURASHE. ESIB co-organised the seminar on Mobility of Staff and Students together with EI in London, February 2007.

ESIB took active part on the Advisory Board of the Bologna Information Project coordinated by the EUA and spread information about the Process to student Bologna Promoters.

ESIB also took active part in organising the Quality Assurance Forum held by EUA in Munich November 2006.

Nina Gustafsson Åberg, ESIB

EUA

The *Glasgow Declaration*, adopted in April 2005, sets the framework and priorities for universities' contribution to the Bologna Process 2005 – 2007, emphasising that as we move towards 2010 the Bologna reforms necessarily refocus more and more on implementation in higher education institutions and underlining universities willingness to accept their responsibility in driving forward the implementation process.

The *Trends V Report* analyses the present state of implementation of the Bologna Process and reports on the main challenges faced by institutions. *Trends V* is conceived of as a necessary complement to the governmental stocktaking exercise, and thus constitutes one of EUA's main contributions to the Process. For the first time it has been possible to underpin the analysis through the use of comparable data as over 900 institutions provided answers to the same questions asked in 2002. The data analysis has been supplemented by information gathered through site visits and the incorporation of views expressed in numerous focus-group discussions.

The Bologna Handbook, published together with Raabe Academic Publishers, represents a further major contribution of the association to the Bologna Process. The Handbook seeks to offer academics and administrators at all levels a practically-oriented and flexible tool for understanding, introducing and implementing all aspects of the Bologna Process. The first edition of this reference publication, that includes four annual updates, appeared in mid 2006.

In support of the implementation of the process in institutions EUA, in cooperation with EURASHE, ESIB, the Tuning Project and the EAIE, coordinates the work of national Bologna Promoters across Europe. This work is carried out on behalf of the European Commission as part of the 'Information Project on Higher Education reform' and involves the organisation of training seminars and the preparation of relevant materials and case studies. While the EC funded project only includes Socrates countries EUA has taken the initiative to support the introduction of, and involve in this project, Bologna Promoters from all Bologna countries.

As a further demonstration of EUA's support to the more recent Bologna countries, and specifically as a continuation of ongoing work with universities in South Eastern Europe, a conference on higher education and research in the Western Balkans was organised in Vienna from 1-3 March 2006. The results of this meeting were later presented to European Ministers of Higher Education. In late 2006, a Bologna seminar was also organised in Tbilisi for the benefit of Georgian universities.

EUA also contributes to the work on specific Bologna Action Lines. Substantial energy has been put into participating actively in the different Bologna working groups on: the social dimension, data on mobility of staff and students, the qualifications framework follow up, the external dimension and stocktaking.

In the field of quality assurance, EUA continued its cooperation with the E4 partners in elaborating the conditions for the establishment of a European Register of Quality Agencies as well as taking the lead in launching the first of a series of E4 annual Quality Fora. The first European Quality Forum took place in Munich, in November 2006. EUA has also continued its project work with members on this key topic, looking in particular at enhancing creativity in universities and continuing its work on joint degrees through the publication in 2006 of European guidelines for ensuring the internal and external quality of joint degrees.

In relation to doctoral programmes EUA has, as requested by Ministers in the Bergen Communiqué, prepared a follow up report on doctoral programmes, taking forward the basic principles elaborated by the association in 2005. This work has been carried out with the support of the Austrian and French authorities and also involved ESIB and EURODOC. Activities have included the organisation of a series of seminars and of a major conference in Nice in December 2006 as well as carrying out a major survey on the funding of doctoral programmes and candidates across all Bologna countries that will be made available as a separate publication. This activity is closely linked to other EUA actions in this area, in particular in relation to career development and employability prospects for young scientists, both inside and outside academia.

The different elements of EUA's Bologna Process related activities from 2005-2007 were drawn together in discussions that took place at the Lisbon Convention (March 29-31 2007) when some 700 university leaders will meet to agree on university priorities for the development of the Bologna Process in the coming years. The results of Trends V were presented for the first time at the Convention, the outcomes of which were fed into the Lisbon Declaration, which was to be adopted formally by the EUA Council in April 2007, thus just in time for the London Ministerial meeting.

Lesley Wilson, EUA

EURASHE

The Working Agenda of EURASHE in relation to the BFUG Work Programme 2005-2007

EURASHE participated in the workings of the BFUG Work Programme by contributing to working groups, attending official and Bologna-related seminars, conferences and meetings organised by stakeholders and professional associations. We have continued our activities as a member of the E4 Group, have strengthened our ties with sister organisations in European and international higher education, and liaised more closely with representative sectoral and professional bodies relevant for professional higher education.

Activities of the Association

In the period between the two Ministerial meetings, EURASHE held two conferences for members and stakeholders in higher education (Dubrovnik, 2006 and Copenhagen 2007). Various committees/working groups met on a regular basis to work out policy documents and prepare contributions to the Bologna and Lisbon Processes: those of Quality Assurance, Lifelong Learning (formerly Short Cycle HE) and Sustainable Development are the most prominent ones. The Lifelong Learning Working Group organised two seminars, in Blois, France (February 2006) and in Stuttgart, Germany (March 2007), respectively on "The Intermediate Degree in the EHEA and Beyond" and on "The Involvement of Stakeholders (Employers) in the Lifelong Learning Strategy". The Working Group on Quality Assurance provided the

necessary feedback for our involvement in the E4 Group, and the Committee for Sustainable Development conducted surveys on entrepreneurial attitudes in professional higher education, including the non-profit sector.

Policy of the Association

EURASHE has also brought its policies in line with the evolution of higher education and reflecting societal tendencies. These policies bear on the implementation of internal and external quality assurance processes, the alignment of the Qualifications Framework of the Bologna Process to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning within the Lisbon strategy, and our communication with other regions of the world on the Bologna reform in a spirit of cooperation and competition, depending on the degree of social and economic development of the area. The stresses we are putting here are on the involvement of all stakeholders in higher education processes: quality assurance, governance and the content of education offered. The guiding principles are: fair access to and wider participation in higher education, institutional responsibility and accountability, employability of graduates in the two cycles, and lifelong learning.

Membership Issues

The membership of EURASHE has broadened to include professional tracks outside the professional higher education sector, non-state/private higher education institutions, and will further be broadened to include stakeholder organisations in the higher education reform process, thus reflecting the reality of the changing landscape of higher education, and the growing differentiation in higher education which is in line with the new demands of the labour market and the response to it by the jobseekers.

In an effort to build bridges with regions bordering on the EHEA, we are increasing our contacts and affiliations with partner countries of the European Union through projects and joint activities, such as the planned Eurasian conference on "Quality Assurance in a National and Transnational Context" to be held in Kazakhstan in October 2007.

Andreas Orphanides, EURASHE

UNESCO-CEPES

While the activities of UNESCO-CEPES are an integral part of UNESCO's global programme in the field of higher education, its thrust and focus are in close synergy with the vision of higher education in Europe that is being implemented within the Bologna Process. Having been a 'Consultative Member' of BFUG since 2003, the activities of UNESCO-CEPES have been on the one hand, oriented towards specific activities relevant to the Bologna Process in the context of global developments in higher education, and, on the other hand, on promotion of the Bologna Process as an example of a successful regional response for necessary transformations in higher education at the institutional, national and international levels.

In the context of its participation in the BFUG Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process, it was one of the principal partners of a seminar on the Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the EHEA, organised jointly with the Holy See, in collaboration with the Rectors' Conference of Pontifical Universities, the Pontifical Academies of Sciences, and the Council of Europe, 30 March – 1 April 2006, Vatican City. As a follow up UNESCO-CEPES

published the main texts of the meeting in a special issue of its quarterly review, Higher Education in Europe, vol. 31. no.4, 2006 [in English, and also in e-format in French and Russian available at <http://www.cep.es.ro>].

UNESCO-CEPES together with the Council of Europe, and in collaboration with the European Commission, assures the implementation of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region – the Lisbon Convention, which is an important, and, until now, the sole international legal framework for undertaking activities directly relevant to the Bologna Process, such as ECTS, accreditation, student and staff mobility. In close collaboration with the Council of Europe and the European Commission, UNESCO-CEPES has addressed in this context issues of regional and global relevance for the recognition of qualifications.

As an evolutionary and collective experience, the implementation of the Bologna Process has unfolded gradually and organically throughout the countries involved, while also bringing to the fore a daunting thematic range that is being echoed around the world. Through its pan-European mission and the backing of UNESCO's global vocation, UNESCO-CEPES is a unique institution in that it deals with a variety of issues in higher education in the Europe Region (the countries of Europe, North America, and Israel). Thus it is well positioned to contribute to the realisation of the goals integral to the Bologna Process, in particular those related to its external dimension. It is in this context that UNESCO-CEPES has undertaken analytical work and provided a forum for discussion, among other things, on the following issues:

- extensive information activities, both in traditional form of printed publications as well as those using ICTs dealing with specific issues of the Bologna Process (see list of publications on UNESCO-CEPES Website: <http://www.cep.es.ro>)
- an in depth comparative analyses of doctoral degrees and qualifications between Europe and North America in the context of the EHEA
- an extensive study of private higher education in Europe, seen as a particularly important component of higher education systems in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, taking into consideration the quality and accreditation considerations as a basis for closer involvement of private higher education institutions in the Bologna Process
- an assessment of the phenomenon of 'world-class universities' and university ranking/league tables which resulted in the adoption of the Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions in May 2006 (see:<http://www.cep.es.ro>).

Jan Sadlak, UNESCO-CEPES

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE UK SECRETARIAT

This has been an interesting, challenging, enjoyable and varied two years. We have worked with colleagues from across the EHEA, gaining an insight into a range of cultures as well as higher education systems. Working with Chairs of BFUG and Working Groups from some nine countries has enabled us to increase our knowledge and understanding of the culture of these countries, and develop a greater appreciation of the diversity within the EHEA.

At the same time, we have overseen a number of concrete achievements within the Bologna Process. As well as the delivery of the Work Programme – a not insignificant achievement in itself – we have seen the spirit of partnership and collaboration within the BFUG increase, as we move from policy development to capacity building within the EHEA. Areas where there has been particular progress include:

- the influence of the E4 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance as a driver for increasing the quality of higher education in the EHEA
- the increase in student involvement in quality assurance processes
- the continuing development of the spirit of partnership and mutual support, demonstrated in particular by the interest in taking part in the workshops organised by the Qualifications Framework Working Group
- the growing awareness of the interdependency of key elements within the Action Lines: quality assurance, recognition tools and national qualifications frameworks based on learning outcomes
- the constructive discussions about how the EHEA co-operates with other parts of the world
- the development of the stocktaking process, and the increasing synergy between the outcomes of stocktaking, Trends V and Bologna With Student Eyes
- the appreciation that we need to look ahead and consider what we might need to do to support the continuing development of the EHEA
- the awareness of the significant process we have made, while at the same time recognising that we still have much to do.

But it has not all been work. There has been lots of fun too. Amongst the many interesting places we have had the pleasure of visiting, we have been privileged to have dinner in the Vatican Museum, visited the Acropolis, celebrated a birthday in the Reichstag in Berlin, seen the frozen sea in Helsinki, and danced at a Viennese Ball. By travelling to different parts of the EHEA, we have had the opportunity to experience, at least in part, the rich cultural heritage, diversity and vibrancy that underpins the attractiveness of the EHEA.

We are confident that our Benelux colleagues will support the Bologna Process through the next stage of development and wish them well with that task.

Ann McVie

Louis Ripley

Yvonne Clarke

Bologna Secretariat, May 2007

ANNEX A

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM COUNTRY MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION

This Annex contains contributions from countries participating in the Bologna Process, describing actions that have been taken at the national level over the last two years. Contributions were voluntary and therefore not all countries are represented.

Albania

During the last two years Albania has made significant progress in the implementation of the Bologna Process. The Albanian BFUG is constituted and the Government is drafting the Master Plan of Higher Education and a new Law of Higher Education based on the strengthening of institutional autonomy and good governance of higher education institutions according to the Bologna Process. Seminars and workshops with European experts on curricula development and a national qualifications framework have also been organised.

The Ministry of Education and Science, in cooperation with the other governmental institutions, and Albanian higher education institutions has brought another climate in the reform process, leading the country to its main goal – real integration into the EHEA, particularly:

- The three-cycle system of studies has been implemented in all Albanian public universities and all private ones.
- From the academic year 2005-2006 all Albanian public universities have adopted the new curricula according to the Bologna Process and introduced ECTS.
- Efforts have been made to build up the internal and external quality assurance system and allow universities, both public and private, adopt structures and European experiences in the field. The Albanian Agency of Accreditation on Higher Education has been the promoter of several seminars and workshops in order to support and train those involved.
- Free and democratic elections for student governance bodies took place and opened the door to their real participation in the decision-making and governing bodies of Albanian higher education institutions.

- The deep reform in the admissions process into Albanian higher education institutions through “State Matura” has changed the image of the state procedures and put the candidates at the same starting point – a real guarantee of equal opportunities.

In Albania a deep institutional reform is going on in the area of higher education and research. Its main goal is to build up a contemporary system of science. The reform tends to integrate research institutions, existing under diverse Ministries or the Academy of Science, with the research units of the higher education institutions. The main goal of the reform is to create an Integrated Scientific System, in the heart of which will be the research based higher education institutions. The research will be performed only in accredited higher education institutions and will be funded on the basis of competitive grants, in the fields considered as a priority for the national strategy.

Anila Theodhori, Albania

Armenia

Since their submission of the National Report in December 2006, progress has been made with the adoption of readable and comparable degrees. The Diploma Supplement has been discussed with higher education institutions. The comments were integrated in the final version and it is planned that in 2007 master level students of several universities will get Diploma Supplements free of charge, both in Armenian and English.

Another important aspect is that more and more private universities are getting involved in the implementation of the Bologna principles.

As a newer member of the Bologna Process, the seminars have an important role to play in the smooth integration of Armenia into the EHEA. Each seminar that Armenia has participated in is an opportunity to share the knowledge and good practice in implementing the reforms, discuss the general problems and try jointly to come up with possible solutions, and meet the main shareholders of the process ENQA, ESIB, EUA and others. The documentation that is available on the websites www.enic-naric.net, www.enqa.eu, www.coe.int, www.ec.europa.eu, www.eua.be is used by the country during its work on Bologna reforms.

Armenia is not involved in any project or a member of any working group.

Gayane Harutyunyun, Armenia

Austria

Austria has been a driving force in the start-up phase of the Bologna Process and has remained fully committed to it ever since. We have already made great progress in implementing almost all of the Bologna objectives. Still, it is evident that the development of the EHEA will remain an on-going process beyond 2010 – Austria will continue to be an active partner for all stakeholders in keeping the momentum of the Bologna Process going.

Synergies between the EHEA and the European Research Area play a major role as the Austrian government is not only fully dedicated to the Bologna Process, but also to implementing the re-launched Lisbon strategy in the context of the European Union. A number of concrete measures to enhance human potential (e.g. support for doctoral schools and post docs for universities), to foster

excellence (e.g. funding of clusters of excellence for our universities), and to strengthen international cooperation in higher education and research (e.g. expanding scholarship programmes) has been included in its programme for the coming four years (2007 - 2010).

However, Austria also faces challenges, the main one being the question of access and admission to our universities for EU and international students, while maintaining high quality higher education equally accessible to all. This is something we will have to solve in the coming four years.

Barbara Weitgruber, Austria

Cyprus

Cyprus has initiated a major educational reform which was proposed by a group of seven academics and was inaugurated by the President of the Republic. Within this reform there are significant suggestions for the higher education sector, such as the substantial increase of the available university places, the upgrading of the private institutions of tertiary education into quality-based private universities and the enhancement of the quality of higher education with the introduction of the Cyprus Quality Assurance and Accreditation Board, in line with the agreed E4 Standards and Guidelines. These proposals are progressing well with the introduction of the Engineering School in the University of Cyprus, the establishment of the Open University of Cyprus in 2006 and of the Technological University of Cyprus in 2007. Also, the first private universities are expected to be operational by the next academic year.

A further challenge for the Cypriot educational system is the formulation of a systematic and comprehensive lifelong learning strategy and mechanisms for implementation, while the introduction of a national qualifications framework is under consideration. The government policies aim also at establishing Cyprus as a regional and international education and research centre and already the number of international students studying in Cyprus is about 20% of the total student population of the country.

As research activities in Cyprus are relatively low, at about 0.38% of GDP, and the major part (60%) of this research is being carried out at the University of Cyprus, the situation is expected to improve significantly with the establishment of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Cyprus and even more with the operation of the Cyprus University of Technology and the private universities. Furthermore, the Cyprus International Institute for Public Health in Association with the Harvard School of Public Health (USA) was set up in 2005. This is an educational and research institute aiming at important public health issues in Cyprus and the Middle East. Another institution of similar nature, the Cyprus Institute, is being established with the aim of dealing with, amongst other areas, the environmental and water problems in the region.

Efstathios Michael, Cyprus

Czech Republic

In the period 2005-2007, the Czech Republic has concentrated on improvements to the national higher/tertiary education system. To gain open evaluation of the system, we participated in the OECD Project Tertiary Review of Higher Education. This complex evaluation was also a good inspiration for implementation of the main priorities in the Bologna Process. The legislative base was the Amendment

to the Higher Education Act, which came into power on 1 January 2006, and which brought more support to fulfilling some particular goals. Thus since 2006, the Diploma Supplement next to the diploma serves as the document attesting to the completion of studies and the awarding of an academic degree. The Amendment further supported directly the development and recognition of "joint degrees".

Implementation needs the right instruments to motivate higher education institutions to turn Bologna into practice. We opted for a system which depends on congruence between the long-term plans of individual institutions and the long-term plan of the Ministry, which have been prepared for the period of 2006-10; and allocated 7-8% of the education part of the higher education budget for this purpose. The mechanism is based on the development programmes published by the Ministry annually. The programmes (projects of higher education institutions) have been reflecting innovation and development of new programmes towards the three level structure, based on extensive curriculum reform, future employability of graduates and education outcomes. Furthermore, we supported internal quality assurance, enlargement of mobility, development of joint degree programmes, ECTS implementation, delivery of Diploma Supplement in proper format etc. The experience so far has shown that the long-term plan of the Ministry and long-term plans of institutions have contributed to a greater openness in the state education policy, have been promoting its implementation and have made higher education institutions formulate their own goals more precisely.

Next to this was a systemic project on quality assurance carried out by the Centre for Higher Education Studies and supported by the Ministry. Its aim has been to develop complex methodology of quality evaluation of all activities of institutions, resulting in recommendations for continuous quality improvement. The methodology is compiled from standard phases: self-evaluation process, visit of external experts, final evaluation report presented to the institutional management and follow up stage. A recent phase was focused on self-evaluation, which is considered the key part of the developed methodology. The pilot higher education institutions assessed positively their participation in the project. The importance of the project is increased by the collaboration with the Accreditation Commission. It also uses the results for developing mechanisms of evaluation of its activities in accordance with the ENQA requirements. The project was positively evaluated internationally by the OECD teams in the framework of the Thematic Review of Tertiary Education project. The main project results and the proposal on the wide use of the developed methodology are expected in 2007.

Vera Stastna, Czech Republic

Georgia

Joining the Bologna Process in 2005 was the genesis of a new era in the higher education system of Georgia since it became possible to draw a distinctive line between higher education systems before and after the introduction of the Bologna reforms.

The Government had to transform the input-oriented, corrupt, authoritarian, non-accountable, non-responsive, centralised, incompatible system to a knowledge-based, output-oriented and learner-centred system via an increase in public expenditure, development of ICT in education, teacher training, modernised textbooks, refurbished buildings etc.

To achieve these goals the Government of Georgia committed itself to triple public expenditure on education by 2010. A number of radical legislative, institutional and administrative changes also occurred, including:

- a new law on higher education was adopted that envisaged all the Action Lines of the Bologna Process
- the National Education Accreditation Centre was established and institutional accreditation held in 2005 and 2006 resulting in a reduction of accredited higher education institutions in Georgia from 117 to 43
- a student-centred and grant-based financing model was introduced, called “money follows student”
- corruption in HE was eradicated and equitable access assured by holding the Unified National Admission in 2005 and 2006
- the Teacher Professional Development and Training Centre was established and new standards of the profession of teacher introduced
- elections of the new rectors and managerial bodies were held in all accredited HEIs
- research grants were allocated on the transparent and competitive basis by the newly established Georgian National Science Foundation
- social grants were introduced for socially and economically disadvantaged entrants and students
- a student loan system was introduced in close cooperation with the private banks of Georgia
- the Law of Georgia on Professional Education was adopted in March, 2007 envisaging the separation of vocational and higher professional education, introduction of a national qualifications framework and recognition of prior learning paths
- the national teams of Bologna supporters and Bologna Promoters were established and Ministerial Decrees on Diploma Supplements and ECTS issued
- all the major documents of the Bologna Process were translated, published and distributed among HEIs etc.
- Georgia was elected as a member of BFUG Board and involved in the work of the London Communiqué Drafting Group etc.

In 2006, Georgia was named the number one reforming country in the world by the Doing Business Report of the World Bank. Georgia was also named among the three most successful fighters against corruption in Eastern and Central Europe by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development.

One of the priorities for Georgia at present is to increase the attractiveness of the Georgian higher education system through strengthening the European dimension. The top of the reform agenda has been to promote international cooperation and adopt the best practices existing abroad.

Lela Maisuradze, Georgia

Germany

Germany holds the EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2007 and therefore also chairs BFUG during this period and, jointly with the British hosts, the Conference of Ministers in London. In this function, Germany supports, in particular, the continuation of the Bologna reforms in the signatory countries and the definition of further important steps for the coming years.

The Bologna Process is making good progress in Germany. The Federal Government and the Länder actively support the reform process and the related demand to increase student mobility and to improve the quality of European cooperation in the field of higher education. As the national report on the implementation of the reforms clearly shows, Germany has made considerable efforts over the past years and achieved visible progress with the introduction of the various elements of the Bologna Process.

Between the conference of Ministers in Bergen and the conference in London, a number of measures have been introduced in order to inform the national stakeholders and in particular the institutions of higher education about the Bologna Process and to support them with their reform efforts.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Standing Conference of Länder Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) organised a national Bologna Symposium in January 2007 with participation by more than 100 experts in the field of higher education.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) supports and advises German higher education institutions on their reform efforts jointly with the Bologna Promoters within the framework of the Promoting Bologna in Germany project, which was launched in 2005 and is funded by the EU and the BMBF.

In addition, the University Rectors' Conference (HRK) provides information and advice to higher education institutions through its Bologna Service Point. The service includes:

- provision of advice to institutions of higher education (also locally) on the central instruments of the Bologna Process: ECTS, DS and modularisation
- establishment of a network of Bologna co-ordinators
- organisation of workshops involving national and international experts
- organisation of workshops on changes in the administration of the institutions of higher education
- establishment of a comprehensive website on topics around the Bologna Process
- preparation of target group-specific information material for representatives of institutions of higher education, students and employers.

Peter Greisler and Birger Hendriks, Germany

Greece

Since 2004 various educational legislative reforms have taken place in Greece and higher education has been the focal point of most of these. The main focus and effort has been on the modernisation, the qualitative enhancement and the openness of the Greek higher education system. Moreover, the

Greek Ministry of Education has continued its reformative efforts and, after the completion of the established dialogue with the academic community, students and social partners, has submitted to the Parliament a new Higher Education Act for the full revision of the obsolete institutional framework established in 1982. The new Law 3549/2007 came into force in March 2007.

The most important innovations introduced with the new Law include among others:

- All higher education institutions have to compile an Internal Regulation in order to ensure their even operation and to enhance their autonomy.
- All higher education institutions have to compile a four-year academic-development programme, which will greatly contribute to the support and development of the educational functions and to the medium-term assurance of the financial independence. Within the planning framework, institutions will agree about the number of new teaching positions and the number of newly admitted students with the Ministry – up to now the latter was decided by the Ministry only.
- Institutional governance bodies are being nominated through the immediate and collective participation of the academic community groups in the election procedure.
- Social accountability of higher education institutions is being established through an annual report to the Parliament.
- Student support services are being enhanced and tutors assigned to students.
- Substantial support is being provided for students from weaker financial classes with compensative scholarships and interest free educational loans as well as connecting graduates with the social life.
- There are possibilities to organise study programmes in languages other than Greek.

However, more radical reforms are necessary and future challenges concern revising research policy and the legislative framework, developing new post graduate study programmes, as well as internationalising the Greek higher education system.

All these changes are taking place within the framework of the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy. Greece believes that higher education and research should be top priorities of the European agenda since they are the driving force behind development, social cohesion and prosperity, and contribute towards European Integration. For this reason, we must all work hard and do our best, so that the establishment of the EHEA will prove successful. Institutions, students and governments should cooperate and contribute to the enhancement of excellence and attractiveness of the EHEA.

Greece believes that, not only the image but also the future of Europe, depends on its education, its scientific achievements, its civilization and also on its ability to promote this image worldwide and become a world reference similar to the example of Greece during antiquity. Therefore, a strategy should be planned for the External dimension of the EHEA and Greece has offered to create an informative internet portal that will host this common effort.

Athanassios Kyriazis, Greece

Holy See

Besides some technical and structural questions, two major concerns marked the Holy See's work for the Bologna Process during the biennium 2005-2007. The first is concerned with the European identity and the general principles and values underlying the Bologna Process. The second one has to do with "international" collaboration of the Holy See with the educational systems within the different countries where its institutions are located.

Promoting discussion and further development of the themes of "The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University"

Within the framework set out by the Communiqués of the biennial summits of Ministers and specified by BFUG to broaden specific themes, the Holy See, through the Congregation for Catholic Education, hosted a conference on The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the EHEA 30 March – 1 April 2006. Requests by representatives of different countries and international organisations encouraged this endeavour to explore the main approaches that could enhance the attractiveness of the European university. Because of its own educational and cultural heritage, the Holy See also took this initiative to reaffirm its commitment and support of the Bologna Process.

International collaboration of the Holy See with educational systems in other countries

Most of the Ecclesiastical higher education institutions in Europe are located outside the territory of the Vatican City State. Therefore, in most of the countries the Holy See acts as a transnational provider of higher education. In some of them, Ecclesiastical higher education institutions are integrated into the local national systems or are part of public or private higher education institutions. The necessary collaboration between the two 'national' higher education systems is, in many cases, regulated by contracts of international law (Concordats). The experience of recent years shows that it is not always easy to deal with two ways of applying the common principles of the Bologna Process; therefore, this situation can be seen as a test case for the functioning of the Process in practice. It can help in avoiding illusions about an 'ideal Bologna Process', and offer worthwhile experience on how to settle problems arising at the grass-root level.

Fr. Friedrich Bechina, Holy See

Netherlands

In the Netherlands full implementation of Bologna principles continues. Some highlights of the past period are:

On mobility:

- preparation of the legislative proposal concerning portability of grants and loans from September 2007. The portability will be to the entire world. The Parliament has still to agree the proposal and recently showed willingness to go along with it. This will be developed in the next phase.
- streamlining of fellowships programme for foreign students and focus on quality.

On partnerships:

- agreements between social partners and higher education institutions on improvement of contacts between them and incentives to facilitate:
 - curricula being adapted to labour markets needs
 - vouchers for small and medium sized companies to use higher education institutions for their research questions

On recognition/frameworks/Diploma Supplements:

- action of Bologna Promoters to facilitate appropriate use of the (European) Diploma Supplement.

Marlies Leegwater, Netherlands

Poland

During the last two years Poland has made a significant progress in the field of the Bologna Process:

Developing the legislative basis for the implementation of Bologna reforms: This includes a new Act on higher education and the corresponding ordinances. These regulations meet the requirements for the three-cycle study system, ECTS credit accumulation and transfer system, Diploma Supplement, joint and double degrees.

Further development of the quality assurance system with new standards assuring the flexibility of studies and access to the next cycle. All the stakeholders are involved in the national quality assurance system. In the years 2002-2006 the State Accreditation Committee evaluated 1652 study programmes and assessed 2968 applications for the new study programmes. 90.7% of the public and 84.7% of non-public higher education institutions have now been assessed.

The process of elaboration of the national qualifications framework has started and is progressing well.

There has been an increase in inward and outward mobility of students and staff. In the academic year 2005/2006 the number of institutions implementing outward mobility was 163 (37% of the total). The number of outgoing students was 9,974, with 2,655 incoming students. In the same period there were 1,741 outgoing staff members.

A lot has been done and achieved in the promotion of the Bologna reforms among university staff and students. Information is well dispersed and there has been significant progress in the overall understanding of the Bologna reforms in the academic world. Staff responsible for the implementation of the new three-cycle programmes according to the Bologna model are prepared to develop programmes which are based on the learning outcomes and the ECTS credit accumulation and transfer system.

Future dynamic development is assured by the involvement and conviction of all the partners and stakeholders of the Bologna Process. Poland would especially like to increase cooperation between higher education institutions and social and business partners and better adapt higher education to the needs of the changing labour market by development of the entrepreneurship, skills and competencies necessary in the labour market.

It is also important for us to enhance the role of higher education institutions in the development of links between education, research and innovation by active participation in the creation of the European Institute of Technology.

Maria Boltruszko, Poland

Romania

Since Bergen, Romanian higher education has progressed in the fields of:

- **The three-cycle system** by continuing the gradual implementation of study programmes within the first two cycles and establishing a new legal framework for structured doctoral programmes.
- **The National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education** by developing the competency grids for qualifications for 22 domains of study while paying special attention to the harmonisation of the higher education qualifications with the corresponding VET qualifications (for 20 study programs from ten different domains of study in higher education).
- **Quality assurance** by establishing a new methodology for external evaluation of quality assurance in accordance with the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance which will be finalised after the testing phase in ten public higher education institutions till autumn 2007.
- **Cooperation and partnerships among higher education institutions across the EHEA** by implementing a new legal framework concerning the organisation of integrated university study programs by two or more universities, which leads to a joint degree for all three cycles of university studies (bachelor, master, doctorate).

Dumitru Miron, Romania

Serbia

The Law on Higher Education (LHE), which fully implements the Bologna Declaration, came into effect in September 2005.

In accordance with the Law, the National Council for Higher Education, the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, the Conference of Universities of Serbia and the Conference of Headmasters of Colleges were established (the latter will, in accordance with the LHE, be replaced by the Conference of the Academies of Professional Studies, once it is established).

The Minister of Education and Sport, as well as the above mentioned bodies, have enacted, within the due legal term, the accreditation standards and appropriate bylaws, thus securing all conditions for the beginning of the accreditation process.

In the academic year 2006/2007, 90% of faculties have introduced the three-cycle system of studies and ECTS as a tool for measuring students' workload.

The National Council for Higher Education, upon the proposal by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, has enacted the Standards for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes, as well as the Standards for Self-Assessment. The points of departure were the E4 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance adopted in Bergen.

The accreditation of colleges, bound by the Law to enter the accreditation process, started on 15 December 2006, while the faculties are given the deadline of June 2009 to submit the accreditation application.

The issue of the Diploma Supplement is planned for the beginning of academic year 2006-07.

The Minister of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia set up a commission, mandated to create a national qualifications framework by the end of 2007, which involves representatives from all the levels of education (elementary, secondary and high), representatives of the Employment Agency, Trade Unions, the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

The Law on Higher Education regulates lifelong learning by obliging higher education institutions to define by their statutes, if, and under what conditions, they would recognise previously achieved qualifications as a basis for enrolment or continuing education.

Ana Jakovljevic, Serbia

Slovak Republic

In 2006, the Government of the Slovak Republic developed the programme "National Scholarship Programme for Mobility Support of Students, Doctorates, University Teachers and Research Workers". For the academic year 2006-2007 the scholarships were granted not only to Slovak students of the second and third cycle of higher education study but also to foreign students, doctorates, university teachers and research workers from 23 countries of the world.

For promoting the attractiveness of the EHEA in the Slovak Republic, a new regulation was adopted and several activities of international significance were carried out. Based on the new legislation, the Slovak Republic recognises automatically (without reciprocity) the education of the third cycle (PhD) of citizens from countries of the European Economic Area and Switzerland, received at higher education institutions recognised by the State. The aim of the new regulation of 2005 is to increase the trust in the evaluation of results of higher education and at the same time to enable the increase and acceleration of mobility of young scientific workers in the European area.

In December 2005, an agreement was signed between the Slovak Rectors' Conference and the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic and EUA on international institutional evaluation of the Slovak higher education institutions based on the procedures and criteria – Institutional Evaluation Guidelines. Within the framework of the project the higher education institutions will prepare a self-evaluation report; the international evaluation teams of EUA will carry out visits to higher education institutions, while the EUA will prepare the self-evaluation report for each participating higher education institution. In December 2007, the EUA will present a summary report on external evaluation of Slovak higher education institutions. The results of international evaluation of the Slovak higher education institutions will be presented as information to the public.

The evaluation of quality control of universities and higher education institutions in the form of CAF 2002 and 2006 is being considered.

Peter Plavčan, Slovak Republic

Spain

In the next few months the efforts of the Spanish national education authorities will be directed to the completion of the legal framework that will allow them to finally define the Spanish university system. This legal framework consists of the recently approved Law modifying the 2001 Organic Law on Universities (LOU) and of several complementary rules on more concrete issues. This legislation package will be in force by the end of the first half of 2007 and will make it possible for individual institutions to implement degree programmes fully adapted to the principles established in the Bologna Process.

The recently approved Law modifying LOU regulates different questions and aspects included in the three main lines of action of the Bologna Process: a three-cycle degree structure, a system of quality assurance and issues on recognition of degrees and studies.

These rules would complete the new degree structure that was initially established at the beginning of 2005. The new degree programmes, many of which are already formulated in ECTS, will also allow access to master programmes. Many of the principles related to the EHEA have been already implemented. More than 1000 new master programmes have been introduced in Spain this academic year 2006-07 (based on ECTS and in full conformity with the principles relating to the EHEA). In 2007-08 approximately another 1000 master programmes will be added. The approval of the above legislation package referred to above will imply that these new degree programmes will be implemented on a general basis from 2008.

In the new legal framework, important aspects related to the other Action Lines are also included: a new redefinition with a stronger role for the National Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (ANECA), a register of universities, centres and programmes, degree recognition measures, rules on teaching and research staff, creation of a General Conference on University Policy and a Council of Universities and rules on the establishment of new centres and universities. Spain has also started the process of defining a Higher Education Qualifications Framework to be concluded during 2007, for subsequent Government approval.

Finally, and concerning the Lisbon Recognition Convention, all internal procedures have been concluded in the education sector for signing and ratifying the Convention and the matter is now expected to be approved shortly by our Council of Ministers. However, it should be mentioned that a number of steps have already been taken, through bilateral agreements with some countries, to facilitate recognition issues and also in national legislation. In particular the already approved Organic Law on Education, which is now in force, recognises access to Spanish universities to all European students fulfilling the requirements for access to universities in their countries of origin.

Felix Haering-Pérez, Spain

Switzerland

The implementation of the Bologna Process has made considerable progress in the last years. In autumn 2006, all new students (except for medicine) started their studies with a bachelor or master programme. The traditional single-tier study courses will be gradually discontinued over the next few years. In medicine, the two-cycle system has already started in some universities; the remaining universities will follow in 2007. As far as the implementation of the national qualifications framework is concerned, the

steering group is currently having discussions with all stakeholders on a preliminary draft in order to ensure general acceptance. Finally, the Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities (OAQ) has been granted full membership of ENQA.

Silvia Studinger, Switzerland

Turkey

In the period between 2005-2007, after the last Ministerial conference in Bergen in 2005, the following developments on the main Action Lines of the Bologna Process have taken place:

- The Diploma Supplement and ECTS have become mandatory for all higher education institutions since the end of 2005-2006 academic year.
- A national-level student council was established in December 2005 in accordance with the Regulation on Student Councils of Higher Education Institutions and the National Student Council of Higher Education Institutions dated 20 September 2005.
- An independent "Commission on Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education" was established in line with the "Regulations on Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at Higher Education Institutions" issued by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) on September 20 2005. The Regulation, that is fully compatible with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA, sets the rules and principles for evaluating and improving the quality of academic activities and administrative services at institutions, as well as approval and recognition of their level of quality through an independent external assessment. Internal assessment is compulsory and should be carried out annually. The first internal assessment reports of all universities have reached the Commission, which is expected to finalise the evaluation of these reports at national level before the London Ministerial conference in 2007. For the time being, external assessment is highly recommended but not compulsory. However, it will become compulsory when all the preparatory work is completed.
- CoHE formed a core committee on a national qualifications framework for higher education on 26 May, 2006. The calendar has been prepared and the deadline to realise the national qualifications on all programmes was set at the end of 2008.
- Turkey has deposited its instrument of ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention to the Council of Europe and the Council announced that it will enter into effect on 1 March 2007.
- Although there was no legal obstacle against the establishment of international joint and dual higher education programmes before, the "Regulation on Establishment of Joint and Dual Degree Programmes with Foreign Higher Education Institutions" issued by CoHE on 28 December 2006 encourages the establishment and provision of such programmes.
- The "Draft Report on Higher Education Strategy for Turkey" has been finalised and it will be made public by the end of February 2007.

Aybar Ertepinar, Turkey

United Kingdom

The UK continues to regard the Bologna process as extremely important. It has been responsible for the Bologna secretariat for the two years since the last Ministerial conference in 2005 in Bergen and hosted an official seminar on Enhancing European Employability at Swansea University in July 2006. It has thus shown that it remains fully committed to the process and strongly supports its aims, considering it to be a key means of making the EU the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy. But the process is not only an important mechanism for enabling the EU to achieve the Lisbon goals, it is also a strong driver for taking forward the modernisation of higher education more generally. The UK recognises that it is about enabling its universities and colleges to deal with the economic and social challenges posed by the increasingly rapid process of global change. It is about those institutions fulfilling their role of ensuring all learners are prepared for life in a global society and work in a global economy. That means tackling issues, such as institutional autonomy, the funding of higher education, the leadership of HE institutions, the employability of students, the links between institutions and business, and the need to make universities' activities relevant to the needs of citizens and society at large. That is why the UK is hoping the London conference will provoke more of a discussion about higher education reform in Europe beyond Bologna and in the context of the challenge of the internationalisation of higher education.

Keith Andrews, UK

BFUG work programme

The Work Programme for 2005-2007 was agreed by BFUG in October 2005. It was agreed that it would comprise 5 working groups; (a further Working Group, 'Portability of Grants and Loans' was approved by BFUG in April 2006); 8 seminars; 2 projects; discussions at BFUG; and a number of priorities to be taken forward at national level. Details of each strand of the Work Programme are given below.

Key dates in the BFUG work schedule are:

- BFUG7: 12-13 October 2005, Manchester, United Kingdom
- BFUGB11: 25 January 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUG8: 6-7 April 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUGB12 Board: 13 June 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUGB13 Board: 1 September 2006, Helsinki, Finland
- BFUG9: 12-13 October 2006, Helsinki, Finland
- BFUGB14 Board: 23 January 2007, Berlin, Germany
- BFUG10: 5-6 March 2007, Berlin, Germany
- BFUG11: 17-18 April 2007, Berlin, Germany
- MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE 16-18 May 2007, London, UK

Over and above the Work Programme, there will be a number of other events and activities that will contribute to the development of the European Higher Education Area. This includes EUA's Trends V and the surveys being planned by ESIB, EURASHE and EI Pan European Structure. Details of all events and activities will be promoted on the Bologna website at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/>

Working Groups

Subject	Lead	Other Members	Notes	Start
Stocktaking	Andrejs Rauhvargers Latvia	Belgium (Flemish Community) Estonia Germany Greece Norway Romania Slovenia Turkey Bologna Secretariat rep.	<p>Terms of Ref (BFUG7 9)</p> <p>In order to realise the objectives set by the Ministers, the Working Group shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the key issues to be addressed through the stocktaking exercise as well as the methodology to be used in this exercise; 2. Collaborate with partner and other organisations in order to maximise the use of data sources; 3. Define, where appropriate, the structure of a separate questionnaire to be used in the stocktaking should this be required; 4. Prepare a structure for the national contributions to the stocktaking to be submitted by member States; and 5. Prepare a report for approval by the BFUG in advance of the London Conference in 2007. <p>The Working Group will be supported in its task by the Secretariat, and shall draw on expertise as it considers appropriate.</p> <p>The Group shall submit reports to the BFUG, and shall make its draft reports and other relevant documents accessible for all BFUG members on the web.</p> <p>EUA shall participate in the work for stocktaking through delegating an expert.</p> <p>The Working Group can decide to select more organizations to participate as experts in its meetings</p>	<p>-Terms of Reference agreed by BFUG in October 2005.</p> <p>-First meeting of the Working Group – Riga, 9 December 2005.</p> <p>-Second meeting of the Working Group – Brussels, 27 February 2006.</p> <p>-Third meeting of the Working Group – Helsinki 11 October 2006.</p> <p>-Fourth meeting of the Working Group – Norway 12-13 February 2007.</p> <p>-Fifth meeting of the Working Group – Lisbon 26-27 March 2007.</p>

Working Groups continued

Subject	Lead	Other Members	Notes	Start
<p>Elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.</p>	<p>Toril Johansson, Norway</p>	<p>Denmark France Germany Greece Holy See Malta Portugal Presidency Spain Sweden Bologna Secretariat rep. Consultative members: EUA EU ESIB UNESCO-CEPES Council of Europe EI - Pan European Structure ACA</p>	<p>Terms of Reference (BFUG7 5d – revised)</p> <p>The Working Group is responsible for developing a strategy document on the external dimension of the Bologna Process. Three seminars will be arranged during 2006 in order to give significant input to their work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A seminar took place on 30 March – 1 April 2006 which focussed upon the attractiveness of the EHEA, based on European cultural and historical identity and academic values, hosted by the Holy See. 2. A seminar took place on 24-26 June 2006 which focussed upon information on how the Bologna process operates and what has been achieved so far, the links and interaction with other areas of the world, hosted by Greece 3. A seminar took place on 28-29 September 2006 which focussed on discussion of the draft report, with an emphasis on areas that had not been focused upon in the previous seminars, e.g. competitiveness and capacity building, hosted by the Nordic countries. <p>An expert will, in collaboration with the Working Group, prepare a report to the Nordic seminar in September. This report will be available to seminar participants and BFUG in August 2006 at the latest.</p> <p>Together with the outcomes from the three seminars, the report will found the basis for the strategy work of the Working Group.</p> <p>The Working Group will report regularly to BFUG. Before it finalises its work, a draft strategy document shall be discussed in a full BFUG-meeting.</p>	<p>-Terms of Reference agreed by BFUG in November 2005. -First meeting of the Working Group – Brussels, 9 February 2006. -Second meeting of the Working Group – Vienna, 7 April 2006. -Third meeting of the Working Group – Vienna, 12 June 2006. -Fourth meeting of the Working Group – Brussels, 4 September 2006. -Fifth meeting of the Working Group – Brussels, 7 November 2006.</p>

Working Groups continued

Subject	Lead	Other Members	Notes	Start
<p>Social dimension and data on the mobility of staff and students in participating countries; report on comparable data on mobility of staff and students as well as on the social and economic situation of students, as the basis for future stocktaking.</p>	<p>Annika Pontén, Sweden</p>	<p>Austria Bosnia Herzegovina Croatia France Ireland Luxembourg Russia UK Bologna Secretariat rep. Consultative members: EUA EI – Pan European Structure ESIB</p>	<p>Terms of Reference Mission statement: 1. To define the concept of social dimension based on the ministerial communiqués of the Bologna Process; 2. To present comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries; 3. To present comparable data on the mobility of staff and students; and 4. To prepare proposals as a basis for future stocktaking. The Working Group established a subgroup. The subgroup focused on the collection and exploration of data. The subgroup was chaired by Germain Dondelinger, Luxembourg.</p>	<p>-Terms of Reference agreed by BFUG in November 2005. -First meeting of the Working Group – Brussels, 14-15 December 2005. -Second meeting of the Working Group – Stockholm, 19 January 2006. -Third meeting of the Working Group – Brussels, 9 March 2006. -Fourth meeting of the Working Group – Vienna, 14 June 2006. -Fifth meeting of the Working Group – Stockholm, 11-12 September 2006. -Sixth meeting of the Working Group – Helsinki, 13 October 2006. -Seventh meeting of the Working Group – 19 December 2006.</p>
<p>London Communiqué drafting group</p>	<p>Presidency Germany</p>	<p>Finland Georgia Latvia Portugal UK</p>	<p>The Working Group will report back on its progress at BFUG and Board meetings leading up to the Ministerial Conference</p>	<p>- First meeting – Berlin, 10 November 2006. - Second meeting – London, 8 December 2006. - Third meeting – Berlin, 7 March 2007. - Fourth meeting – Berlin, 2-3 April 2007.</p>

Working Groups continued

Subject	Lead	Other Members	Notes	Start
Report on implementation and further development of overarching qualifications framework	Mogens Berg, Denmark	Hungary Netherlands Russia Spain "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" Chair of the WG on Stocktaking Bologna Presidency (UK-AT-FI-GER) Bologna Secretariat rep.	<p>Terms of Reference (BFUG7 5c - revised)</p> <p>In order to realise the objectives set by the Ministers, the Working Group shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider what further development of the framework may be required, particularly the linkage between national frameworks and the EHEA-framework; the Working Group may invite member countries to participate in pilot projects of self-certification of national frameworks; it may conduct a survey on how credit ranges and credits are defined in national legislation; 2. Support the Working Group on Stocktaking in the stocktaking exercise of implementation of national frameworks; 3. Monitor the development of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning with the aim of ensuring complementarity between that framework and the EHEA framework and advise BFUG on the matter; and 4. Provide assistance to member countries working to introduce national frameworks. <p>The Group will submit progress reports to BFUG and a final report of its findings to the London Conference through BFUG.</p>	<p>-Terms of Reference agreed by BFUG in October 2005</p> <p>-First meeting of the Working Group – Copenhagen, 21 November 2005.</p> <p>-Second meeting of the Working Group – Budapest, 26 February 2006</p> <p>Programme of 4 Regional Workshops in 2006:</p> <p>-NW: The Hague, 30 June</p> <p>-NE: Budapest, 4 Sept.</p> <p>-SE: Greece, 11-12 Sept.</p> <p>-SW: Madrid 18-19 Sept.</p> <p>-Third meeting of the Working Group – Madrid, 19 Sept-ember 2006.</p> <p>-Fourth meeting of the Working Group – Copenhagen, 15 December 2006.</p>

Working Groups continued

Subject	Lead	Other Members	Notes	Start
Portability of Grants and Loans	Aldrik In't Hout. The Netherlands	The working group consists of student support experts who are closely linked to their BFUG-colleagues. Albania Austria Belgium Croatia Denmark England ESIB European Commission Finland Germany Ireland Lithuania Norway Romania Scotland Sweden Switzerland The Netherlands Bologna Secretariat	<p>Proposed terms of reference (as itemised in the paper: BFUG8 5)</p> <p>To obtain a workable set of proposals including joint actions, it is important that realistic and achievable targets for practical outcomes are set for the Working Group. In this context the Working Group will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define the elements of this issue in more detail (e.g. what is understood by 'grants and loans'); ● Describe the obstacles that countries encounter in making grants and loans portable; ● Examine and provide information on relevant & applicable EU-law; ● Collect good practices; ● Provide a way to link the grant and/or loan authorities of different countries in order to exchange the necessary information; ● Develop a set of tools to guide countries in making their grant and/or loan system portable; ● Identify ways to facilitate each others portability systems (ranging from appropriate information about study programmes to the assistance in refunding the loans); ● Define levels/ways for exchanging relevant information. <p>In the elaboration, the Working Group is to be aware of the different positions of the Bologna countries (for example EU and non-EU) and will take these into account. It could include Bologna countries that do not have a student support system or that do not wish (at this point) to make their system portable. For countries that do wish to make their grant and/or loan system portable, it will be of help to have a forum where they can exchange necessary information with countries that do not themselves have portability or that have another (or no) student support system.</p> <p>It will be advantageous for this Group to maintain close contact with the 'Social dimension and data on mobility' Working Group in order to build on complementary activities and to benefit from each others findings.</p>	<p>-Further elaboration of the final Terms of Reference, organisation of work, time schedule, resources and the list of membership were discussed at the first meeting of the Group in The Hague on 16 June 2006.</p> <p>- Second meeting of the Working Group – Glasgow, 7-8 September 2006.</p> <p>-Third meeting of the Working Group – Berlin 15th January 2007.</p>

Seminars

Subject	Lead	Notes	Start
External dimension: Attractiveness of the EHEA	Holy See	Theme – the cultural heritage and academic values of European universities and the attractiveness of the EHEA. Aim – was to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension to strengthen the attractiveness of the EHEA. Outcomes – the clarification of the concept of the external dimension and the identification of the strategies necessary to strengthen it within the Bologna Process.	30 March – 1 April 2006 Rome, Italy
External dimension: Putting the European Higher Education Area on the Map: Developing Strategies for Attractiveness.	Greece	The seminar presented information about the Bologna Process to an external audience. It focussed on information about how the Bologna Process operates and what has been achieved so far in terms of the links and interaction with other areas of the world.	25 -26 June 2006 Athens, Greece
Preparing students for the labour market and lifelong learning – promoting employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?	United Kingdom / Wales	ESIB, EURASHE and UNICE contributed to the seminar.	12-14 July 2006 Swansea, Wales, UK
Joint degrees – a hallmark of EHEA	Germany	The seminar discussed recent developments as well as the future potential of joint degree programmes. It introduced findings of a study carried out in 2006; presented examples of good practice and discussed possible solutions for existing problems with practitioners and decision makers.	21-22 September 2006 Berlin, Germany
External dimension: competitiveness and capacity building	Norway	The Nordic seminar was opened by the Norwegian Minister of Education and Research and closed by the Swedish Minister of Education, Research and Culture. Emphasis was on areas not focused on in previous seminars eg competitiveness and capacity building.	28 - 29 September 2006 Oslo, Norway
Seminar on European doctoral studies in transition	EUA France with Austria	Part of work on 3rd cycle Further information about the EUA's Doctoral Programmes Project is available on: http://www.eua.be/eua/en/Doctoral_Programmes.jsp	7-9 December 2006. Nice. France

Seminars continued

Subject	Lead	Notes	Start
Recognition of prior learning and recognition of European degrees outside Europe	Latvia/CofE with ESIB	Poland, ESIB and Belgium (Flemish Community) interested in helping to organise. Link with event under consideration by the Netherlands.	25-26 January 2007, Riga, Latvia
Making Bologna a reality – staff mobility	EI Pan European Structure	EI Pan European Structure Higher Education and Research Standing Committee will finalise the project mid-March	8-9 February 2007, London, England, UK

Discussion at BFUG

Subject	Notes	Comments
Share expertise to build capacity at institutional and government level		Initial discussion at BFUG, October 2005; agreed Council of Europe and others would continue to offer support as appropriate.
Assisting the new participating countries to implement the goals of the Process		Initial discussion at BFUG, October 2005; Austria and Council of Europe organised an induction meeting for the new member countries in January 2006; report back was given at BFUG, April 2006.
Portability of grants and loans	Proposed by Netherlands	Initial discussion at BFUG 7, October 2005: it was agreed that the Netherlands, in conjunction with other interested parties, would prepare a proposal for further discussion. It was later agreed at BFUG 8 in April 2006 to form a Working Group.
Awarding professional and academic titles – using new three cycle degree system	Proposed by Slovenia	Following further reflection, Slovenia suggested discussion of this topic be deferred until a future date.
Future development of EHEA post 2010 – global and European competition/co-operation, academic mobility etc?	Proposed by UNESCO-CEPES	Link to initial discussion of BFUG October 2006: agreed to give further thought to description of EHEA and development beyond 2010 as part of the Communiqué Drafting Process.
Social dimension	Proposed by France & Germany	Link to discussion of proposals from Working Group on social dimension and data on the mobility of staff and students in participating countries.
European dimension (including joint degrees)	Proposed by France	Agreed at October 2006 BFUG that a discussion of the European Dimension, lead by France, would take place at the March 2007 BFUG.
Staff mobility	Proposed by EI - Pan European Structure	Link to discussion of proposals from Working Group on social dimension and data on the mobility of staff and students in participating countries.
Mobility	Proposed by ESIB and Germany	Link to discussion of proposals from Working Group on social dimension and data on the mobility of staff and students in participating countries.

Discussion at BFUG continued

Subject	Notes	Comments
Implementation of Quality Assurance standards and guidelines	Proposed by Germany	Link to update from ENQA on European Consultative Forum
Implementation of National Qualifications Frameworks	Proposed by Germany	Link to the report on implementation and further development of overarching qualifications framework.
Exploration of arrangements to support the Process in the future.	Proposed by UNESCO-CEPES	Link to initial discussion of BFUG October 2006: agreed to give further thought to description of EHEA and development beyond 2010 as part of the Communiqué Drafting Process.
External relations - feedback from international events	Proposed by Austria	Include on BFUG agendas as and when required

Projects

Subject	Lead	Notes	Start
<p>Report on practicalities of implementing a European register of quality assurance agencies – by ENQA in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB.</p>	<p>ENQA</p>	<p>Terms of Reference (BFUG7 5b)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. E4 group to develop the Register in accordance with the proposals contained in the ENQA Report and endorsed in the Bergen communiqué, subject to the outcome of further analysis by E4 into the purposes and value of the Register; 2. ENQA, on behalf of E4 Group, informed BFUG of the results and subsequent timetable at the April 2006 BFUG meeting. 	<p>Terms of Reference agreed by BFUG in October 2005.</p>
<p>Preparation of report on further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes – EUA, with other interested partners</p>	<p>EUA with Austria France ESIB EuroDoc</p>	<p>Terms of Reference (BFUG7 5a Annex B)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To prepare a report on the further development of the (agreed) basic principles for doctoral programmes to be presented to Ministers in 2007; 2. Thus to continue work on the basis of the 10 Salzburg Seminar Recommendations and taking specific account of the issues mentioned in the relevant S of the Bergen Communiqué; 3. Thereby taking account of the results achieved and the good practice identified by the 49 Universities participating in the EUA Doctorates Programme project that provided the input for the Salzburg Seminar; and 4. To prepare recommendations for the London Communiqué as an integral part of the report. 	<p>Terms of Reference agreed by BFUG in October 2005.</p>

National & Stocktaking Priorities

- Implement the degree system, quality assurance and the recognition of degrees and study periods (stocktaking)
- Implement the ENQA standards and guidelines for QA (stocktaking)
- Introduce peer review of quality assurance agencies
- Improve student participation and international cooperation in QA
- Elaborate national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching framework for qualifications of the EHEA (to be started by 2007) (stocktaking)
- Award and recognition of joint degrees, including at doctorate level (stocktaking)
- Ratify the Lisbon Recognition Convention, ensure full implementation of its principles and incorporate in national legislation as required
- Produce a national plan to improve the recognition of foreign qualifications (stocktaking)
- Create opportunities for flexible learning paths, including recognition of prior learning (non-formal and informal) (stocktaking)
- Remove any obstacles to access between cycles
- Make higher education equally accessible to all
- Ensure necessary institutional autonomy to implement reforms
- Improve synergy between HE and other research sectors
- Achieve an overall increase in the number of doctoral candidates taking up research careers
- Intensify cooperation with business and social partners
- Increase employability of graduates (stocktaking)
- Facilitate the portability of loans and grants
- Lift obstacles to mobility and make full use of mobility programmes, advocating full recognition of study periods aboard within such programmes

Bologna Secretariat

August 2006

ISBN: 978-1-84478-946-7

PPAPG/D16(7101)/0507

© Crown copyright 2007

www.dfes.gov.uk

Published by the Department for Education and Skills

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial research, education or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged.

75% recycled

This leaflet is printed
on 75% recycled paper



When you have finished with
this leaflet please recycle it

BOLOGNA WITH STUDENT EYES

2007 EDITION

ESIB - The National Unions of Students in Europe

IMPRINT

Editing: Bologna Process Committee 2005 - 2007 (Anne Mikkola, Bruno Carapinha, Colin Tück, Daithí Mac Síthigh, Nina Gustafsson Åberg, Sanja Brus)

Content: Bologna Process Committee 2005 - 2007

Layout & Design: Bea Uhart

Cover Illustration: Juliana Uhart

Printed in: London, UK, May 2007

This work is licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 License. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/be/>

CONTENT

Foreword

Executive Summary

Introduction

I – Social Dimension

II – Quality Assurance

III – Student Participation

IV – Mobility

V – Cycles and Credits

VI – Recognition of Prior Learning

VII – Qualifications Frameworks

VIII – Doctoral Studies

IX - European and External Dimension

Bibliography

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

Bologna With Student Eyes 2007 seems to bring good news: All European students are affected by the Bologna Process. Students are already studying in new degree structures, counting their workload in ECTS and becoming more active in quality assurance mechanisms. From a ministerial point of view, this means that essential steps have been taken. However, the question that has concerned this survey was to assess the effects of the reforms on different groups of students. How much has student life really changed through the Bologna reforms? What are the effects of reforms officially not part of the Bologna framework, but still affecting the Bologna aims? I believe that this perspective makes our survey unique: it sheds light on how the people studying in the system perceive the Bologna Process.

The survey addresses a major concern students have about the future of the Bologna Process. Often, structures are debated for the sake of structures, rather than facilitating the noble goals that were set out in 1999. It remains to be seen whether ECTS, the new degree structures and structures take the social dimension and mobility of students to a higher level. What is mentioned in our Berlin declaration seems to be confirmed: a future vision, a rekindling of the Bologna aims, is urgently needed.

I would also like to give particular importance to the results we have found regarding the situation of young researchers. This dimension, which was given great importance in Bergen, has led to a debate on the representation of doctoral students and the borders of ESIB membership. The survey clearly answers some of the existing open questions: more than half of our members actively represent doctoral students. By working continuously to improve the third cycle, ESIB can now claim to represent students at all levels, from the bachelor to doctorate.

For all their efforts, I would like to warmly thank Anne, Bruno, Colin, Daithí, Nina and Sanja, who have made this survey happen. Their greatest compliment is that 'Bologna With Student Eyes' itself shows that their work truly affects all students in Europe.



Koen Geven,
ESIB Chairperson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the third time, ESIB is presenting an analysis on the progress of the Bologna Process at European and national level to the Ministerial Summit. “Bologna With Student Eyes” portrays the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as seen by students and the involvement of students in shaping the EHEA. National unions of students from 36 countries have contributed to this survey with their views, policies and experiences. As compared to the 2005 edition of “Bologna With Student Eyes”, a couple of additional countries are covered in this report. However, some countries covered before could unfortunately not be included in this edition.

One of the key findings of “Bologna With Student Eyes” 2005 is still completely valid two years after. There is a worrying “à la carte” approach to implementing the Bologna Process in a significant amount of countries. Besides most Nordic countries, few others can claim satisfactory overall progress in all action lines. Looking at most parties to the Bologna Process the findings suggest that specific action lines are implemented with a higher motivation and passion than others. The Bologna Process is not a pick-and-choose supermarket, but a comprehensive package. Each action line is in some way interlinked with and builds upon several others. Ignoring this, the chances and opportunities of the Bologna Process will not be fully reached in the national implementation. Even more worrying, it seems that the social dimension is still the most neglected action line at national level.

Within the EHEA there seems to be a gap in pace emerging. Whereas some countries are already “reforming the reforms”, as for instance the debate about a reform of external quality assurance in some countries, others are still in the process of implementing the two-cycle Bachelor and Master structure. This might lead to more diverging views in the future, for instance in the Bologna follow-up structure, on what are the issues of utmost importance. Interestingly, this gap in pace is not (only) connected to “old” and “new” signatories. Countries being signatories since 1999 in some cases clearly lag behind as compared to countries that joined the process rather recently, in 2003 or 2005.

The survey further reveals that in many countries reforms are only implemented superficially. Quite often a look at the surface suggests that reforms have been done, and only a closer look discloses that many problems are still to be solved. The implementation of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a very prominent example of this phenomenon.

The Social Dimension has not yet received the same attention at national levels as at the European level. Only very few national unions of students reported that the social conditions of students have improved, and the vast majority reports that no progress has been made since 2005. Quite worrying, in a couple of countries the social situation of students has worsened due to a lack of adopting financial support schemes to cover increased living costs or due to the introduction of tuition fees.

Adequate data on the social and economic conditions of students is available only in some countries. Although some other countries are currently undertaking to establish such data, in a clear majority of countries no data exists. This underlines the urgent need for reliable data on social and economic conditions of students as a basis to identify problems and for better policy-making regarding the Social Dimension.

With regard to mobile students, financial obstacles are still the biggest hindrance to student mobility in Europe. The portability of loans and grants for studies abroad has improved since 2005, but mostly for short-term mobility for up to one year. When studying a complete cycle abroad, the portability of loans and grants still involves major obstacles in most countries, or is not possible at all in quite some countries. Furthermore, only in some cases, students are eligible for top-ups to cover higher living costs, travel expenses or (higher) tuition fees when studying abroad. Sometimes national grant and loan schemes are portable but simply not sufficient to meet the costs of studying abroad.

Foreign students are rarely treated equally to domestic students in their host countries, with the exception of EU citizens within the European Union. Often foreign students have to pay higher tuition fees than domestic students and experience significant problems in receiving residence and work permits. In a worryingly large group of countries that do not charge foreign students (higher) fees yet, such ideas are currently being debated.

Joint and double degree programmes are increasingly offered throughout the EHEA, but they are still targeting only a rather small proportion of students. It is obvious that such programmes are not a means to allow mobility for the masses, and often joint/double degree programmes bear the risk of being even more socially exclusive than traditional programmes, as far as additional fees and other top-up costs are concerned. The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance are a driver of reform of national quality assurance systems. They are broadly known amongst students' unions throughout Europe. However, there is still a need to further promote them and spread in-depth information about the guidelines. The European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies is widely supported by the national unions of students, as a means to create transparency and reliability in quality assurance.

Some progress has been made regarding the involvement of students in quality assurance during the past two years. Yet students are not involved in quality assurance activities at all levels in most countries of the EHEA, and they are not always recognised as full and equal partners.

Although there has been some progress regarding the student involvement in quality assurance, the participation of students in shaping the EHEA and in higher education governance in more general terms is still far from being sufficient and well-established in most Bologna countries. The findings reveal that since 2005 there has hardly been any improvement on the involvement of students. In some cases, the situation even worsened as compared to 2005. Management approaches to higher education governance are seen as a threat to student participation.

In terms of independence of students' unions the faculty level has proven to be rather problematic. More than that, in some countries student representatives are not regarded and treated as equal partners by governments, institutions and other stakeholders. Some actors even principally regard students as troublemakers, no matter what they actually say or do. Only in few countries, a sustainable partnership culture exists.

The Bologna three-cycle system is widely in place throughout Europe, if one just looks at the surface. Most countries have put in place the necessary legal provisions, and a significant amount of students is enrolled in Bachelor, Master or doctorate programmes. However, there is a substantial lack of real curricular reform throughout the EHEA. An alarming number of national unions of students report that the old, long programmes in their country have been simply "cut" into two, with the new first cycle qualification having an

unclear value to students and to the labour market.

In many countries, the accessibility of a Master programme for graduates holding a first-cycle qualification presents a major problem. Only in few countries, all Bachelor graduates who wish to study a Master programme have that opportunity. Often Bachelor graduates from the same institution are favoured regarding admission to Master programmes, putting students from other institutions or countries in a worse position. There seems to be a risk that limited access to Master programmes lead to increased gender inequality. At Master level, the proportion of women amongst students is significantly lower than at Bachelor level in most countries.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is formally in place in the vast majority of Bologna signatory countries. However, its key features are not properly implemented and used yet. No country uses ECTS for accumulation and transfer, with a full implementation of the learning outcomes approach and ECTS credits being linked to properly measured student workload. Few countries have only minor problems still to be solved, but the dominant majority of countries still have significant problems which need to be addressed.

The recognition of prior learning is a rather new concept in the Bologna Process, introduced at the Bergen summit 2005. It is fully and widely used only in a few countries. Most countries in the EHEA recognise prior learning for the purpose of credit within higher education and/or for access to higher education, but usually only in some institutions or in particular sectors, and not as a national policy or approach. Only in very few countries full awards are available through the recognition of prior learning. Some countries still do not recognise prior learning in any way.

National qualifications frameworks (NQF) have been setup in very few countries so far, and even fewer countries have implemented an overarching NQF that embraces not only higher education but also vocational education and training (VET), for instance. In most cases the national union of students has been involved, or is currently involved, in the implementation of a NQF for higher education, in line with the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA). However, with regard to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL) as proposed by the European Commission, students are hardly involved in setting up an overarching NQF. There is hardly any interlinkage of recognition of prior learning and the debates on qualifications frameworks, although this is commonly seen as a prerequisite for full success of qualifications frameworks.

Most of ESIB's members also represent doctoral students in their country and deal with the reform of the third cycle in their day-to-day work. However there remains a need for further capacity building on third-cycle reforms. The methods of organising the third cycle still vary strongly across Europe. Whereas some countries treat doctoral students the same way as other students, some regard them as somewhere in between a student and an employee. In yet other countries, doctoral students are always employed by the institution to carry out research. In the latter case their social status is rather secure and stable, whereas in other cases the social situation of doctoral students is often difficult.

The European dimension of higher education is mostly understood in a very narrow sense. Provision of language courses and offering study programmes in foreign languages (mostly English) are widely considered as the "European dimension", whereas the introduction of a European perspective into curricula is rarely on

any agenda.

The external dimension of the EHEA is often understood as an agenda for world-wide marketing of European higher education. The relation of European higher education to other parts of the world is seen from an economic rather than a cooperative perspective. This leads to the situation that the social and economic conditions of non-European students have not been improved so far. In some cases, for instance with regard to stricter visa regulations, conditions have even worsened. It seems that most countries want European higher education to be attractive only to a small share of students who can afford to study in Europe.

A brain drain to Europe (and mostly to Western Europe) is accepted and often even facilitated by many countries, ignoring the risks such a brain drain bears for less developed countries. Only two Nordic countries have put measures in place to actively counter-balance a brain drain from less developed countries through some financial incentives.

A birds-eye view across all action lines suggests that there is some correlation between student involvement and good progress in the national implementation. Those countries which in general have significant student participation in governance of higher education usually also show better progress in the implementation of most action lines. This correlation underlines the importance of the Bologna Process' partnership approach, one of its hallmarks. Only if this cooperative approach is taken seriously also at national level, a successful implementation and broad agreement on reforms might be reached.

INTRODUCTION

For the third time, ESIB has carried out a survey on the implementation of the Bologna Process. The first survey was in 2003 and the second was in 2005. Between the first two surveys the methodology developed substantially and this survey builds on the principles of the 2005 “Bologna With Student Eyes” report. This new report portrays the implementation of the Bologna Process from a student point of view. Through this, it is possible to get an understanding of how students, the main target group of the reforms in the framework of the Bologna Process, experience their situation. This view does not always seem to be a perspective taken into account in the reform process despite the declared rationale of being student-centred.

We are slowly approaching 2010 and there is a need for correct implementation of all action lines. In general, implementation is speeding up, (at least in certain areas), but at the same time, malimplementation is for students as harmful - or even more so - than no reforms at all. Hence, the aim of this report is to analyse how the implementation and the progress towards 2010 is proceeding. There is a great need for comparing promises made and actions decided upon at the European level with what happens in reality at the national and local level, and in particular how students understand and perceive these debates.

The report is divided into 9 chapters in which selected parts of Bologna Process reforms are discussed, also the transversal issue of the social dimension of the Bologna Process is discussed in detail in the 1st chapter.

The primary source of data is a detailed web-based questionnaire, which included a range of qualitative and quantitative questions. The questions were designed by ESIB (based on a thorough review of past surveys and a consideration of active action lines and projects within the Bologna Process), and subjected to a pilot process in 2006. Data collection took place from October 2006 and onwards. Respondents were the organisations (national unions of students) that are current members of ESIB, although in the case of Georgia, Moldova, Turkey and Ukraine, other organisations were invited to respond, as no national organisation was a member of ESIB. In a number of cases, questions reflected themes or results of the 2005 report, although a number of new themes were included in this survey. Significant information was gathered from follow-up interviews and written questioning, and clarification was sought on unclear or contradictory responses. Secondary sources of data included national reports (stocktaking), the Eurostudent report of 2005, information from ENQA and EUA, and other general resources on higher education in Europe. The report was written in March/April 2007 and reflects available information at that time.

36 countries have been surveyed and are covered in this report¹. Limited data is available from Denmark.

We hope that this report sheds some light on the situation regarding the process of implementing the agreed reforms as students are experiencing it every day. A further wish is that the results of the report can help in implementing the Bologna Process reforms in a coherent and qualitative way so that present and future students will benefit fully from this pan-European reform process.

Enjoy the reading and welcome to reality!

ESIB’s Bologna Process Committee 2005-2007

¹ The countries covered in this survey are: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Srpska), Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia (not including Kosovo), Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the UK (not including Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales).

I. SOCIAL DIMENSION

Social dimension was introduced into the Bologna Process in Prague 2001. Nowadays social dimension is considered a transversal action line that has an impact on all other action lines. The impacts of the reform should be considered also from a socio-economical point of view. Higher Education and the reforms should help to create more social cohesion. This means that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of European societies and that all students should have the possibility to study in Higher Education no matter what their background is. In Bergen in 2005 the ministers charged the Bologna Follow-Up Group with presenting comparable data on mobility of students and staff and on social and economic situation of students in the participating countries to serve as a basis for future stocktaking.

The survey was designed considering the transversal nature of social dimension as an action line. Therefore, most of the data gathered on social dimension has been reported in other chapters, such as *Student participation* and *Recognition of prior learning*. This chapter deals with changes in Higher Education legislation, funding or policies that have improved life and study conditions of students, the level of national discussions on social dimension as part of the Bologna Process, the availability of data on students' socio-economic situation and on the composition of the student body.

Conclusions

According to the data collected, the debates at the national level don't highlight the importance of social dimension as it is done at the European level. Only a few national unions of students reported improvements in the financial situation of students. However, most often any positive changes focused primarily in the development of student loans, rather than on the improvement of grants available. At the same time the expenses of living and studying have increased, especially in the countries that have introduced tuition fees. Only a few countries such as Czech Republic, Georgia, Slovenia and the UK report having introduced special funding schemes for students from less privileged background.

The social dimension of the Bologna Process has not been discussed at the national level. More than half of the countries reported that there is less discussion on the social dimension than on other Bologna action lines. *Bologna With Student Eyes 2005* presented very similar results, meaning that developments at the national level are still missing.

There is a need for adequate data on the social conditions of students, the composition of the student body and the level of participation in higher education. Seventeen countries report that there is inadequate data and ten state that there are efforts to collect adequate data. Many improvements on data collection are still required to move further in social dimension inside the Bologna countries.

Recommendations

- Discussion on the social dimension in the Bologna Process at the national level should be enhanced and include the stakeholders
- Assessment on the socio-economical impacts of the Bologna Process reform must be carried out

- Efforts for the collection of adequate data on the socio-economic composition of the student body and on students' financial situation should be made at the national level
- Governments should provide for financial incentives to widen access to Higher Education from socially disadvantaged groups
- The student financing system should be balanced and must always cater for all the expenses related to Higher Education
- Students' grants and loans must be available and its amount must cover the expenses of studying

1.1 - Progress in the Social Dimension

The map on the following page (fig.1) illustrates progress made in social dimension as reported by the national unions of students. Only 8 countries (Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Moldova, Poland, Portugal and Serbia) have improved the situation for students by measures such as improving the financial situation of the students and introducing anti-discriminative legislation for HE. In the majority of the countries (26), there was been no change in the social dimension or the changes have been contradicting. In 3 countries (Germany, Hungary and the United Kingdom) social conditions of students have actually worsened by measures such as the introduction of tuition fees or increasing the level of tuition fees.

In the UK the government introduced a so called top-up fee policy, which meant the substitution of state regulation on tuition fees by the simple definition of limits. Higher education institutions themselves can now decide the amount of tuition fees to charge students with, being the maximum limited to 3.000 pounds per academic year. This new policy only affects students enrolled for the first time in 2006-2007. However, before this change, tuition fees varied from nothing and up to 1.250 pounds per academic year being indexed to household income. Currently, the majority of the universities charge the maximum fee per academic year. Scotland, although not having tuition fees for full-time undergraduate programmes, also introduced them for non-Scottish UK students because of the top-up fee policy.

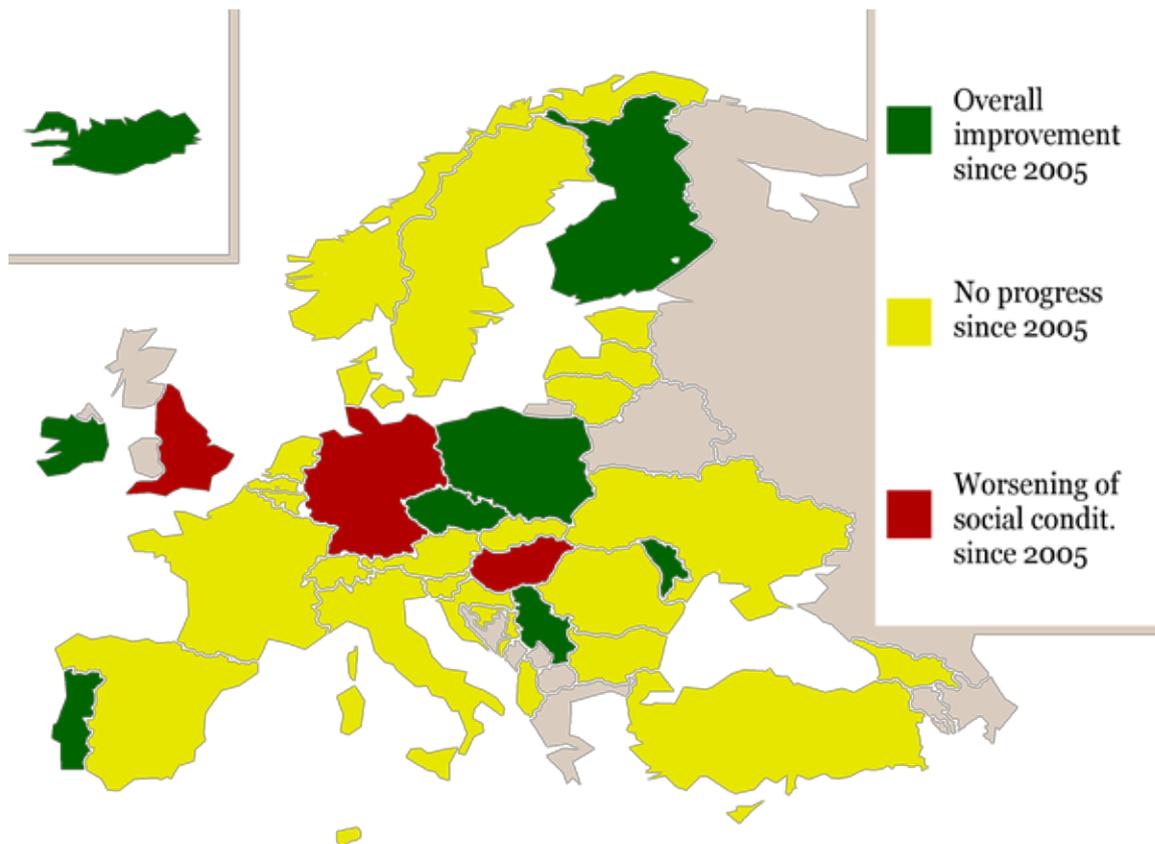
1.1.1 – Financial Situation of the Students

The financial situation of the students has a great impact on the student's ability to study. Student loans and grants systems ensure possibilities for those who come from lower income families. The level of loans and grants also affect the possibilities to study. Few countries improved the financial situation of the students such as Finland and Iceland raising the amount of student loans. In Finland the amount of student housing grant was also raised. In the Czech Republic the government introduced social scholarship to students who come from the lowest family income groups. In Latvia some higher education institutions have organised grants for students who come from disadvantaged background. The money for the grants is provided by the private sector. Some countries have been able to increase the number of government funded, tuition-free study places, such as Ukraine and Moldova. A number of countries have been introducing student funding schemes, such as Portugal, where the grant system has been expanded so that master level students can apply.

In a number of countries the financial situation has been worsened due to the introduction of tuition fees or raising the amounts without increasing the availability of loans and grants. In Germany, legislation allows now to introduce tuition fees in Higher Education and seven federal states have already done it. In the UK, due to the introduction of the so called top-up fee legislation, tuition fees raised since most of the

universities charge now the maximum fee of 3,000 pounds per academic year. Also, Hungary has introduced tuition fees.

Fig.1: Improvement on the Social Dimension



Some countries have significant problems in their student financing system. In Italy, every year around 30% of students who are legally entitled to a government grant will not get it because of State budget problems. In Belgium (Flemish community) even the students below poverty line do not get the full student grant, because the income limits have not been checked for years. In a number of countries, student loans and grants don't cover all the expenses. For example, in Latvia loans available for tuition fees are smaller than the actual tuition fee.

1.1.2 – Access to HE

Initiatives regarding widening access to Higher Education are very limited. Although there are some campaigns or projects to promote access for underrepresented groups, only a few countries have introduced legislative or funding incentives to improve the composition of the student body. In Belgium (Flemish community) there is a Government proposal to provide higher education institutions with targeted funding for special groups, such as students from low income family background and students with disabilities. In Ireland, all higher education institutions publicly funded are employing disability officers. In Serbia the Law on Higher education was adopted in 2005, which prohibits all kind of discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, national or social background, language, religion, political or other viewpoint, disability or financial background. These examples are good examples of policy change.

1.1.3 – National Unions of Students' Campaigns

In many of the answers, the national student unions reported on campaigns on issues related to social dimension. For example in Belgium (French community) students' unions have been promoting gender law in Higher Education and in Spain students proposed a Student Charter to Government. Some of the campaigns are against official policies, such as in Slovenia, where the Government proposed a package of reforms that have a negative effect in students' wellbeing (introduction of tuition fees, limitation of the students' right to work and decreasing access to student meals). After Slovenian students' campaigns, the proposals on tuition fees and access to student meals were taken out of the package of reforms. These are some of the examples of the commitment of students to social dimension and how active the student unions are when it comes to this issue.

1.2 – Is Social Dimension an issue in the Bologna reforms?

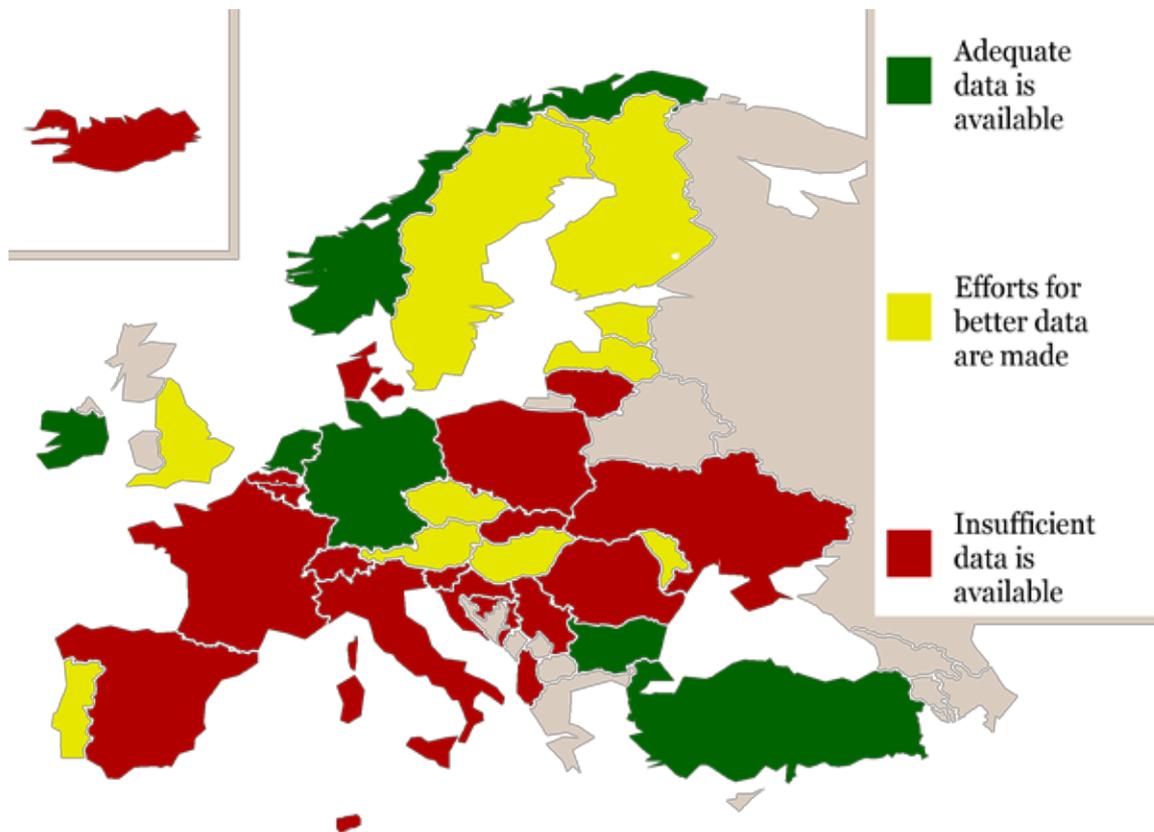
The level of discussion about the social dimension in the national debate concerning the Bologna Process is very limited. Only Slovenia and Bulgaria reported to have more discussion on social dimension than on other Bologna issues. A part of the countries surveyed feel that there is as much discussion on social dimension as on other subjects (Albania, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Romania, Sweden and Turkey). Nevertheless, in the majority of the countries (21) there is less discussion on social dimension than on other topics related to Bologna Process.

The data provided by the respondents show that even though social dimension has been part of the Bologna Process for quite some time now, it hasn't been tackled on the national level as much as other issues in the Bologna Process. As social dimension is a transversal action line, in the sense that every action line in Bologna Process should consider its social implications, this area needs urgent visibility and importance of the issue must be underlined in the national debate.

1.3 – Data on Students

One of the key elements when it comes to the recognition of the problems and also when measuring the impact of reforms is collecting data on the situation of students. Only 6 countries say that there is adequate data available on the social conditions of students and on the participation of the different groups in Higher Education. An additional group of 10 respondents report that efforts to collect adequate data are being made. Still, again a majority of 17 national unions of students reported that there's insufficient data without any plan to improve the collection of data in their countries. Therefore, lack of adequate data on social dimension in EHEA is still an issue needing to be tackled.

Fig. 2: Available data on students



II. QUALITY ASSURANCE

During the past two years, quality assurance of higher education has gained importance in both European and national debates and reforms under the umbrella of the Bologna Process. Although being mentioned in the official declarations and communiqués of the Process since its beginning in 1999, only since the Berlin Summit quality assurance has developed into a central action line of the process.

Conclusions

The findings of the survey suggest that there have been significant changes and developments of quality assurance systems across Europe, including steps forward with regard to the involvement of students in quality assurance activities. However, the involvement of students is still far from being broadly well established throughout the whole EHEA.

Whilst many countries have a coherent system of external quality assurance in place, there seems to be a lack of coherent frameworks for internal quality assurance mechanisms, which are often completely left in the responsibility of institution.

The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance have had a significant impact on the implementation and design of national quality assurance systems. They are known amongst student unions in Europe. There is, however, a lack of in-depth knowledge of them.

In some countries, fundamental changes to the existing quality assurance systems are discussed. Student unions are unanimously critical towards the idea of replacing programme-level external quality assurance by a mere institutional approach, as they fear a lack of sound quality assurance if too much responsibility is left with the institutions themselves.

The concept of a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies has broad support amongst student unions throughout Europe. National student unions expect an increase of transparency and trust in quality assurance from a Register which lists those agencies who comply with the European Standards and Guidelines.

Recommendations

In the area of quality assurance, the following recommendations and necessities for further action arise from the findings:

- The involvement of students in quality assurance activities requires more attention. In particular, involvement needs to be ensured at all levels of quality assurance, and there is a need to clearly define the students' role as equal partners in quality assurance.
- There is a need for further discussion on how external quality assurance can both effectively and reliably ensure the quality of each study programme and, at the same time, can be efficient and prevent unnecessary bureaucracy.
- The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance need to be further promoted at the national level. Measures should be taken to raise the awareness of European student unions about the Standards and Guidelines.

- The European Register for Quality Assurance should promote more transparency and trust in quality assurance. During the phase of implementation, more and better information on the European Register is necessary to improve knowledge and raise awareness about it.

2.1 – Trends and changes in quality assurance of higher education

Whilst some countries in the European Higher Education Area have sound and developed quality assurance mechanisms in place at national and institutional level, others have only recently setup or are just establishing systematic procedures for quality assurance of higher education. A lot of countries reported significant changes in their national quality assurance setups during the past two years, namely Finland, France, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia. These changes range from fine-tuning existing quality assurance systems to establishing (systematic) quality assurance for the first time.

Whilst most countries have a coherent system for external quality assurance in place, the findings suggest that internal quality assurance is sometimes left up to individual institutions, without a coherent overarching framework. Although internal quality assurance is commonly considered to be the responsibility of individual higher education institutions, this might lead to a lack of a clear picture on the state of internal quality assurance.

In a couple of countries which already have a well-developed system of external quality assurance in place, namely Belgium (Flemish community), Germany and the Netherlands, first discussions about a fundamental reform of the external quality assurance system are emerging. Those three countries have in common that external quality assurance takes place at the programme level at present, which is sometimes considered to be a too extensive process and a too high burden, in particular by institutions.

National student unions in these countries are unanimously critical towards a shift to institutional approaches to external quality assurance. They are primarily concerned that from the students' point of view, the quality of single study programmes is much more crucial than the quality of the institution as a whole. Furthermore, it is pointed out by student unions that sound internal quality assurance procedures will not cost less than the present system of external quality assurance at programme level. Student unions are currently exploring the possibility of making programme-level quality assurance more light-weight through an additional institutional evaluation or accreditation, rather than to replace it completely.

2.2 – European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance

At their last summit in Bergen 2005, European ministers adopted the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance¹ as prepared by ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE (E4 Group) jointly. Two years after their adoption, it can be concluded that they had a significant impact on the design of national quality assurance systems. From some countries, namely Estonia, Germany, Portugal and Sweden, it has been reported that their national systems for quality assurance have been reviewed during the past two years with particular regard on compliance with the European Standards and Guidelines.

¹ ENQA: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Helsinki, 2005, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050221_ENQA_report.pdf [2007-04-05]

Amongst the respondents to the survey, about one third states that they are aware about the European Standards and Guidelines in detail. Whilst only one respondent states that it is not aware of them at all, the remaining 63% of respondents state that they are aware of them a little. Asked for their support of the principles laid down in the Standards and Guidelines, more than half of the respondents express their support (35%) or strong support (19%). Another 38% state that they have a neutral opinion. Some 8% express their opposition to them, whereas no respondent expressed strong opposition. Those figures suggest that the Standards and Guidelines are broadly known and supported by student unions in Europe. However, there seems to be a need for better information and promotion amongst student unions, suggested by the low extent of detailed awareness and the high amount of neutral opinions.

It has been surveyed whether national student unions have the perception that the implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines is taken seriously by national authorities, higher education institutions and quality assurance bodies. It can be concluded that the vast majority of respondents have the perception that the Standards and Guidelines are taken seriously. However, the responses suggest that quality assurance bodies take them most seriously, whilst institutions take them less seriously. Furthermore, only few respondents state that they are taken very seriously by all actors.

2.3 – Student participation in quality assurance

The participation of students in quality assurance activities has always been a key concern and demand both of ESIB and national student unions. The findings (outlined in the map on the following page, fig.3) suggest that there has been significant improvement in the participation of students in quality assurance. However, students still do not participate in quality assurance at all levels throughout the European Higher Education Area.

An overview of the situation across Europe is given by Fig.3. In 15 surveyed countries, students participate in quality assurance activities at national, institutional and faculty/programme/departmental level. In 3 countries, students participate at only 2 levels and in 12 countries student participation is in place at only one level, respectively. Yet, in 4 countries there is no participation of students in quality assurance activities at all. There is no clear tendency which level is the most problematic one.

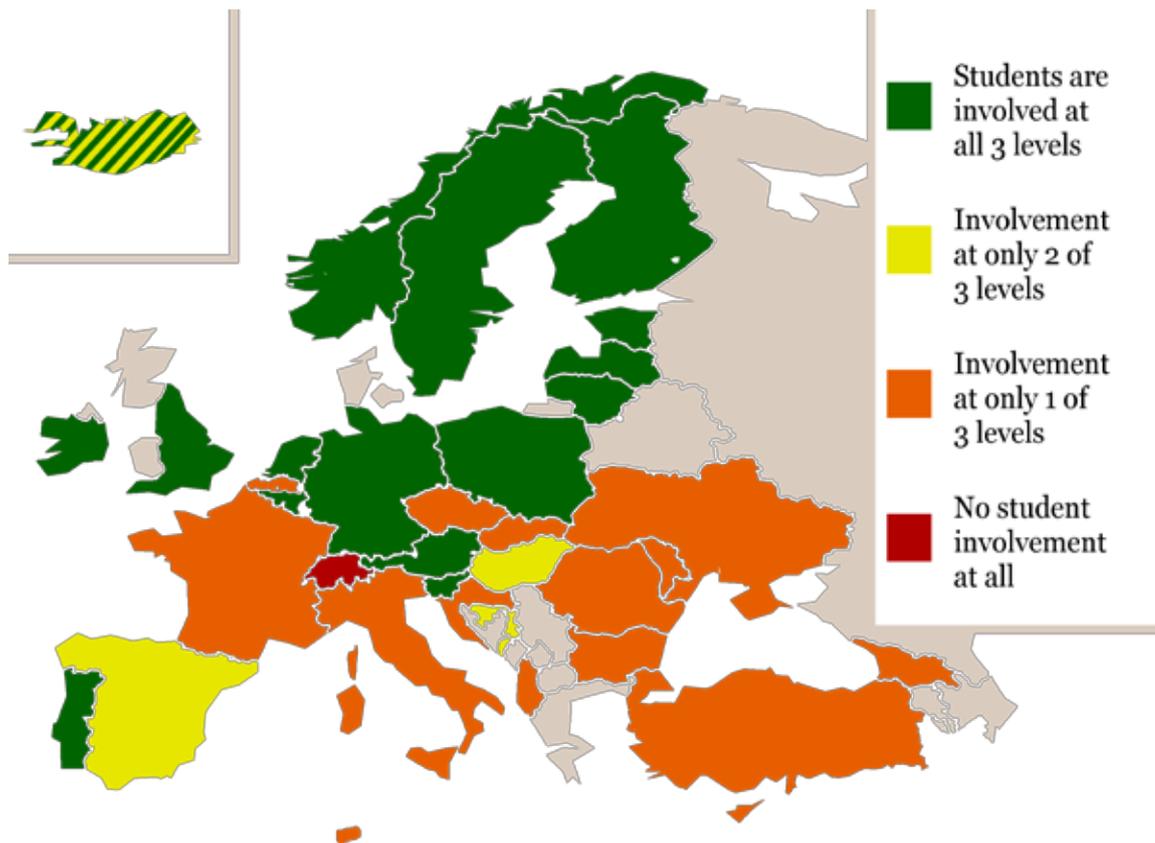
The analysis at which levels students participate in quality assurance activities gives only a broad overview, however. There are several different ways, roles and modes in which students are participating in quality assurance throughout Europe. At the programme level, involvement of students takes place only through student questionnaires for all students and by the involvement of student representatives in respective bodies, committees or internal review teams. However, not in all cases both ways of student involvement are in place. Regarding student questionnaires, there have been quite some reports that students often do not see that those have any impact or value. This happens in cases where those questionnaires are not properly and systematically followed up.

Drawing on the results of a survey² recently carried out and published by ENQA allows some further conclusions regarding student involvement in external quality assurance. In line with the findings of this survey, ENQA's report suggests an overall improvement of student involvement: 27 out of the 31 surveyed agencies (87%) reported that students are in some ways involved in their quality assurance processes³.

2 Hanna Alaniska, Esteve Arboix Codina, Janet Bohrer, Rachel Dearlove, Sivi Eriksson, Emmi Helle, Lene Karin Wiberg: Student involvement in the processes of quality assurance agencies, ENQA, Helsinki, 2006, <http://www.enqa.eu/files/Student%20involvement.pdf> [2007-04-05]

3 ENQA 2006, page 32, Table 1

Fig.3: map student participation in QA



Almost half of the agencies surveyed state that students are involved in evaluation or accreditation teams (expert panels) which carry out site-visits. However, a significant number of agencies states that students are involved in other forms, which might (only) refer to interviews of (local) students during site-visits or a rather consultative involvement⁴. These findings suggest that the involvement of students as full members of external review teams is not “state of the art” yet in all countries. Regarding the decision-making bodies of quality assurance agencies, only 17 (55%) of the agencies surveyed by ENQA state that students are involved in those⁵.

Regarding the selection procedures of students as review team members, the ENQA survey concludes that most agencies either draw students from a pool of students, usually established by the national student union and other actors jointly, or rely upon individual nomination either by the national student union or student members of an agency’s board or decision-making body⁶. Good examples of well-established recruiting procedures for student members of review teams have been presented at the first European Forum for Quality Assurance, covering both a student pool (Germany) and a individual selection approach (Belgium – Flemish Community)⁷. From Switzerland it has been reported that the setup of a student pool has been dealt with as an integral part of the debate on establishing student involvement in quality assurance.

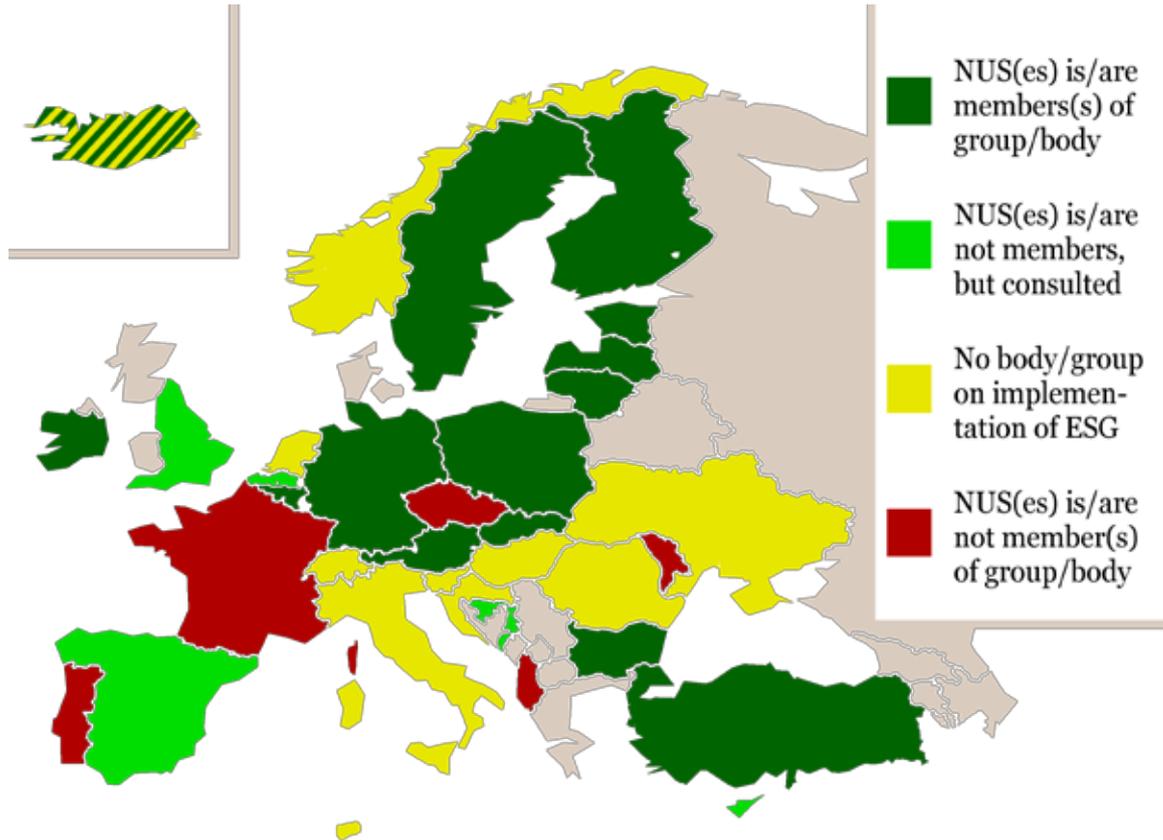
4 ENQA 2006, page 33, Table 2

5 ENQA 2006, page 37, Table 7

6 ENQA 2006, pages 33-34

7 Student participation in QA: strengths and challenges, by Sanja Brus, Janja Komljenovič, Daithí Mac Sithigh, Geert Noope and Colin Tück, in: Embedding Quality Culture in Higher Education. A selection of papers from the 1st European Forum for Quality Assurance, EUA, Brussels, 2007, http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/EUA_QA_Forum_publication.pdf [2007-04-05]

Fig.4: involvement in ESG implementation



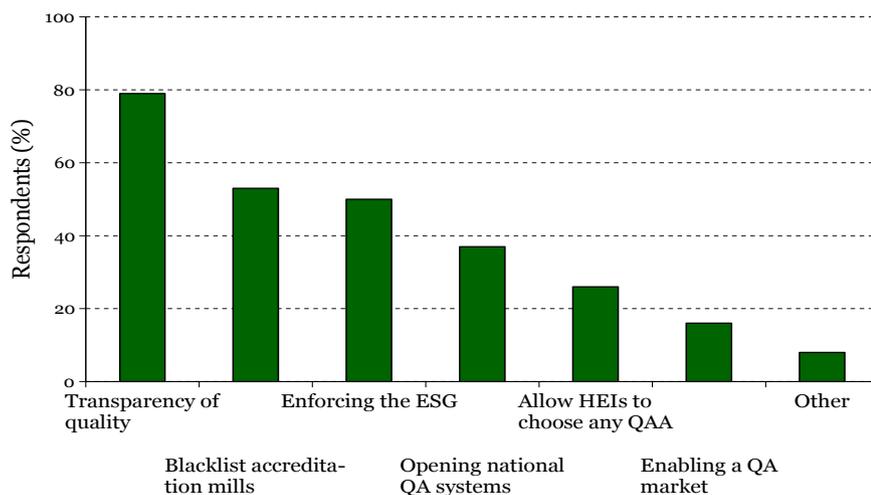
The reports given by national student unions suggest that in a lot of countries, a designated body or committee has been setup to oversee the implementation of the European Standards and Guidelines at national level or to evaluate compliance with them, respectively. However, not in all countries where such a committee has been established, the national student union(s) is/are represented or consulted in the work. Fig.4 gives an overview on the level of involvement of student unions in such activities.

2.4 – Towards a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies

The Bergen Communiqué welcomed “the principle of a European register of quality assurance agencies based on national review”⁸ and asked the E4 Group to elaborate on the practicalities of its implementation. The E4 Group convened several times since to discuss those practicalities and regularly reported back to the signatory countries through the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

The findings of the survey clearly show that the broad majority of national student unions in Europe support the concept of a European Register. It has been indicated by 41% of the respondents that they fully agree with the European Register, with additional 25% stating that they support it partly or with some concerns. Just 5% expressed opposition to a European Register, whereas the remaining 29% does not hold any opinion or a neutral view on the matter. This figure indicates a need for additional clear information on the concept of the European Register and its rationale. The concerns express include the fear that a freedom of choice for higher education institutions on which agency to choose might undermine national quality standards or the fear of the establishment of a quality assurance market leading to lower standards due to competition between quality assurance agencies.

Fig.5: Possible impacts of a European Register



8

The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, May 2005, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf [2006-04-05]

The most widely anticipated impacts of a European Register are “Transparency of quality of higher education for students” (79% of respondents), “Blacklist accreditation mills (illegitimate agencies)” (53% of respondents) and “Enforcing the European Standards and Guidelines” (50% of respondents). Fig.5 gives an overview over all anticipated impacts of a European Register.

III. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The importance of student participation has been continuously underlined by the ministers in the Bologna Process since the Prague Ministerial Summit. The need for student participation in order to successfully implement the Bologna Process was readily recognised and, on the European level, turned into practice by ESIB taking part in the Bologna Follow-up group, its working groups and many Bologna Seminars. Most governments and the other consultative members support and try to facilitate for ESIB to be an active partner in the Process. This chapter is rather about how student participation is functioning at the national and institutional level, where the implementation of the Bologna Process actually takes place and where the majority of the students have their daily activities. The picture emerging from the national and institutional levels is more diverse and less positive than that from the European level.

Conclusions

There seems to be no real improvement of the overall situation regarding student participation since 2005. There is a small group of countries that reported a fairly good situation already in 2005, mainly the Baltic countries, Finland, France, Norway and Sweden, but at the same time there are countries where the situation seem to get worse, as in Austria and Denmark, and a large group of countries where nothing much seems to happen in this regard as in Croatia, Hungary, Italy or Spain. This lack in substantial improvement is true regarding everything, apart from the student participation in quality Assurance procedures; in this area there is improvement in student participation. This is discussed more extensively in the chapter on Quality Assurance, similarly, student participation in the work with Qualifications Frameworks is discussed in the chapter on qualifications frameworks.

In general students want to increase the participation at the level or in the groups they understand as most important for the student body. In which groups or at which level this need for improvement is the greatest, varies across the countries. In general it seems as if the students are best represented at the highest level in the HEI, with less possibilities both at the national level and the programme, course or faculty level. Furthermore national student unions express that student representatives are most independent on the national level and least independent on the faculty, programme or course level. At the level of the HEI there is a clear East-West-divide, where the Eastern European national student unions report less independence on the HEI level than the Western European unions.

Furthermore the issues concerning legislation and attitudes of other stakeholders, teachers and administrative staff in the HEIs, reported on already in 2005, should have been overcome by now. Student participation has been a topic in the Bologna Process since 2001; it is not acceptable that we see problems with legislation and the attitude of governments and professors toward student participation still in the year 2007.

Due to the above reported state of the art the recommendations in this area are very similar to the once from 2005.

Recommendations:

- The lack of legal regulations for real student participation needs to be overcome.
- Student involvement in informal bodies that prepare decisions needs to be improved.
- Students must be allowed to take part also in topics related to finances, hiring of staff and working conditions.
- The mentality of other stakeholders, who are not used or willing to consider students as equal partners whose opinions do not count or even principally see them as troublemakers, has to change.
- Governments and/or HEIs must value the opinion of students even if they are different from their own.
- The lack of financial and human resources of student unions and representatives needs to be solved.
- The used “management models” of HEI governance bear the risk to endanger a proper involvement of academic staff and students and should therefore not be introduced.

3.1 – Student participation on the national level

A large number of unions state that they are consulted or involved in processes at the national level in some way or the other. But they are in most cases not full members of the groups and boards they are in. An exception can be seen in the Baltic states, Finland, France, Ireland, Norway and Sweden, where students are members of almost all committees, working groups and boards that exist on national level, within the ministry of education or in bodies like the QA agency.

In some other European countries the student unions are only full members in some of the decision making bodies, but still consulted in most other bodies working with HE. This is the situation in Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Croatia, Czech Republic, Switzerland and Turkey.

There is an important difference between formal involvement of students and true influence and equal participation. This can be clearly seen in the chapter on qualifications frameworks, where it has been surveyed how the student unions took part in the consultation on the matter. Clearly formal involvement does not always guarantee student participation and this is something that is reported on from many of the national student unions. This problem needs to be addressed and the HEI and governments need to take their responsibility in realising true student participation.

At the same time the situation in many European countries is still that that involvement of students on the national level is limited to a solely consultative role. This is the case in for example Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Serbia and the Netherlands. Some national unions report that even the consultative role is very limited or that they are not consulted at all, as is the case in Albania and Spain. In addition to this a couple of unions also points out the importance of being consulted in the preparatory phase of decision making and asks for more involvement in the early stages of discussions.

When introducing a reform of the HE system, it is important to also make sure that good features from the old system are kept. The Bologna Process should not worsen the possibilities for true and efficient student participation. In Germany the national student union is worried about that the change of the study programmes into a three-cycle system leads to more rigid programmes which gives less possibility for student participation. This kind of development should be avoided, at the same time as the Bologna three-

cycle system is implemented.

In 7 countries (Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Norway Slovenia and Sweden) the national student union or other students (for example Bologna Promoters) have been asked to contribute to the National Report sent to Bologna Follow-up group before the London summit. For the national report to be national in the usual sense of the Bologna Process, it is important that all the partners in the process had a chance to contribute to the report. In some cases (Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland), it seems as if the rectors conference has gotten the possibility to comment on the report, but the students not.

3.2 – Student participation within the HEIs

Most European countries have some kind of student representation at the highest level of the HEI. It varies if the students are full members of bodies, how many and which bodies they are part of and if it is regulated by law that students have to be represented or not.

At the department/faculty/programme level the situation for student representation is more difficult. It seems to be the case in several countries that students have to be represented at the highest level of the HEI, but not at the lower levels in the HEI, Austria and Hungary are examples of this.

There are some differences in representation according to the matter discussed. In several cases, students are not allowed to take part in decisions concerning staff or budget matters, or the students can only take part on issues concerning student matters in a very limited sense. In some countries the representation is different according to type of institution (public/private, university/polytechnic), but there are also examples of difference according to regions in some countries. In Iceland and Portugal, students are represented differently according to if the university is private or public and the representation in the public sector is significantly better than in the private one. Moreover in Germany the representation differs according to state, in Switzerland universities and polytechnics have different rules for student participation, and this is also the case in Finland and Iceland, even if the differences in these countries are becoming smaller and smaller.

3.3 – Perception of students by other stakeholders in higher education

The perception of students by other stakeholders in higher education is important since this will determine how the students participating in working groups, senates, seminars and other activities will be judged and treated.

Some countries (Cyprus, Finland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Sweden, and Norway) report that they do not have any big problems with the perception of the other stakeholders. They report being treated with respect and do not feel questioned in their competence or as representatives for the student body. In the “Bologna with Student Eyes” from 2005, Finland, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden, reported the same situation as this time. This could indicate that the partnership approach in higher education is consolidated in these countries.

In Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, and the rest of the Baltic countries there seem to be no big problems with legislation regarding student participation, but the attitude of the rest of the academic and administrative community in the HEI makes it difficult to have true student influence in these countries. This, once again, underlines the importance of the perception of students by other stakeholder as

a prerequisite for true student participation. The description given by a respondent from the Netherlands illustrates this problem very nicely: “... *At some institutions, the student councils play an important role, since the institutions consider their opinions as valuable. Other institutions however really keep everything at the letter of the law and they only listen to students because they have to.*”

In addition there are also reports of students being treated as observers, clients or customers. In one case (Latvia) they are even reported as being treated as minors or as obstacles.

3.4 – Independence of student unions/representatives

For genuine student involvement in all parts of HEI and in issues regarding students on the national level, it is a prerequisite that student representatives can work independent of the state, the HEI, political parties and other policy makers. In most countries in the EHEA student representatives can work independently at the national level, but it is more difficult at the level of the HEI and even more so at faculty or programme level, the maps also indicate this. One reason for this could be that at the lower levels (programme, course, and faculty) students are working in the same academic community in which they are pursuing their studies. This means that students are working with the academic staff that has direct influence over their studies. In 2005 we got reports about students facing pressure and in some cases even blackmail from professors and administrative staff. Due to the way the questionnaire was built for this report we do not have any records of practices like this time. This should however not lead to the conclusion that practices of pressurising students are eliminated by now.

Fig.6: National level

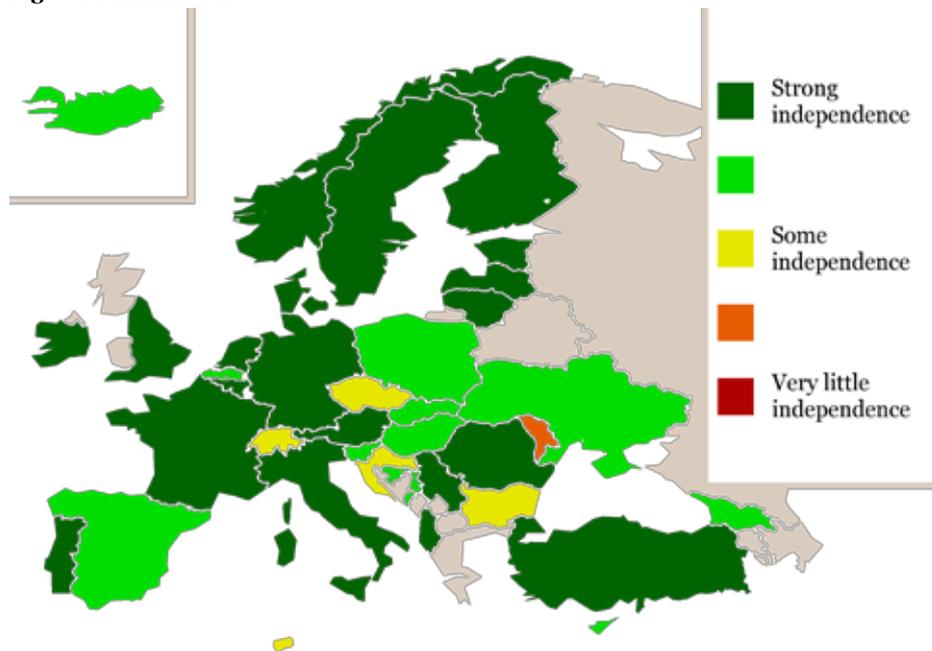
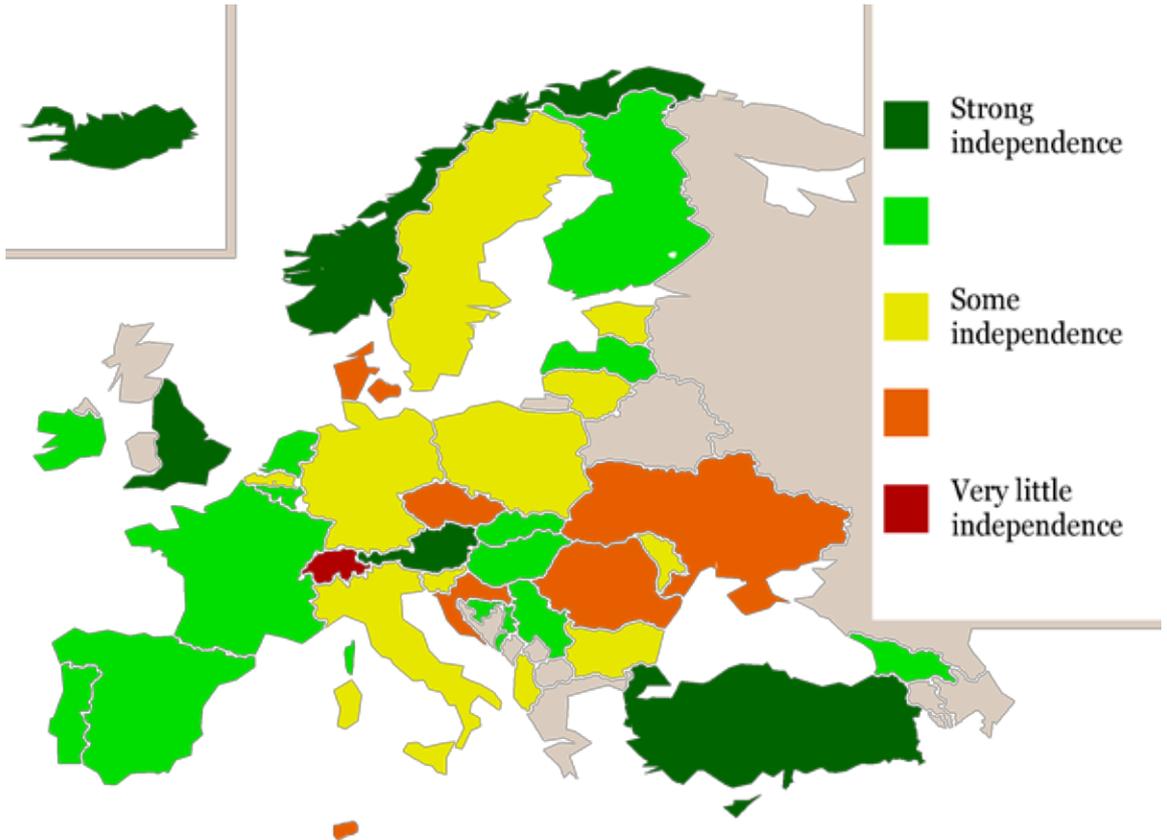


Fig.8: Faculty level

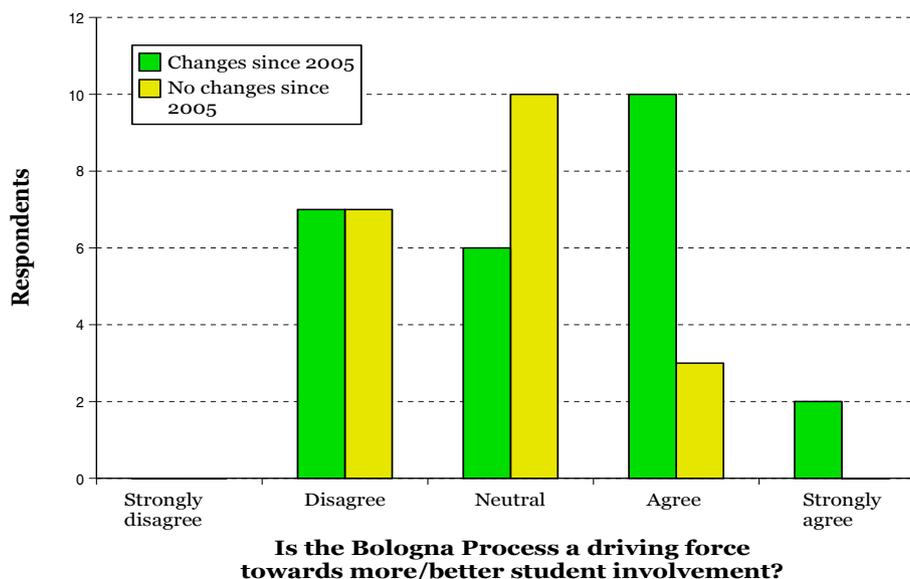


3.5 – Changes in student participation

25 unions state that there have been changes in the student participation since 2005 and 20 unions state that there have been no changes. 7 of the unions who states that there have been changes also states that the Bologna Process is not a driving force towards more or better student involvement in their country, this is the case in Albania, Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Romania and the United Kingdom. This number is worrying since it might imply that the changes that occurred are negative and caused by the Bologna Process. On the other hand 12 unions stated that the Bologna Process is a strong or very strong driving force towards more or better student involvement in their country. This is especially positive in cases like Georgia, Serbia and Turkey. Also SAMOK (Finland) and BÍSN (Iceland) stated that there have been changes and they see the Bologna Process as a driving force towards more or better student involvement. This is positive since Finland and Iceland are countries where possibilities for student participation have been different according to type of HEI. Both SAMOK and BÍSN represent students from Polytechnics and this might point towards an improved situation for these students.

Most unions who stated that there have been no changes in the student participation, also indicate that they see the Bologna Process as a neutral force in this matter, it is neither a force towards more or better participation nor in the opposite direction. But at the same time there are 7 unions who say that they disagree with the statement that the Bologna Process is a driving force towards more/better student involvement. In the cases of Denmark and Switzerland this could be explained with that they saw a worsening situation already before 2005, and no great improvements since. In other cases, as in Croatia, Hungary or Ukraine it could indicate that the students want to see changes but this has not happened yet.

Fig.9: Changes since 2005



The situation was already before 2005 getting worse in Austria and Denmark and from these countries there are still no changes to the better. The “management model” that is used to steer higher education institutions in these countries makes it very difficult to have student participation. This model seems to be difficult to combine with democratically governed HEI and should not be looked at as a good model for HE governance.

From the Czech Republic there are also reports about a worsened situation for student participation. Due to a modification in the Higher Education Act that came into force in January 2006, students have lost much of their possibilities to influence the wording of the study and examination rules at each faculty. In the Academic Senates the rules changed so that the senates can only approve internal regulations in case they are presented by the rector or the dean. This also diminished the possibilities for students to influence the study and examination rules. On top of this there are calls for strengthening the power of the rectors and the deans even more and the students face pressure from individual rectors to seriously limit student participation in the Academic Senate.

From the Czech Republic and Portugal there are indications that recommendations from the OECD has lead to, or might lead to, less student participation. This is a worrying development and governments should take care that HEIs continues to be governed in a democratic spirit.

The picture is very diverse all over Europe with no clear indication of where the problems are the greatest, but what becomes clear is that the Bologna Process is not everywhere seen as a good process for the sake of student participation and this is alarming since student participation has been at the heart of the process since 2001.

IV. MOBILITY

Mobility is stated as one of the core issues of the Bologna Process and is seen as a cornerstone for establishing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Although mobility is one of the key issues of the Bologna Process it is still far from being accessible to all students and staff. In Bergen (2005) the ministers confirmed their commitment to facilitate the portability of loans and grants. Furthermore facilitation of visa and work permits and full recognition of study periods abroad was emphasised as one of the basic prerequisite for mobility. As financial and administrative problems are the major obstacle to mobility in the EHEA presently, this chapter particularly focuses on the portability of loans and grants, other financial support for mobile students and on the removal of administrative obstacles for student mobility.

Conclusions

From the results of the survey we can conclude that the situation in the EHEA is changing slowly. Although a lot of time and effort has been put into discussion on overcoming the obstacles, little action has been taken. Despite the fact that portability of loans and grants was identified as a goal in 2003 in the Berlin communiqué, there are still countries in the EHEA in which portability of loans and grants is not possible and in the cases where it is possible student unions report numerous obstacles.

Portability of loans and grants has not only proven to still be a problematic issue but it also in many cases does not meet the costs of living in host countries. It reduces the financial burden mobile students have to cope with when studying abroad, but it only presents a very limited support which mainly benefits western and northern European students. Portability of loans and grants, although being valuable financial support system, is however not solving the problem of financial obstacles mobile students face. Additional financial support such as European Mobility Fund or different financial support system similar to CEEPUS system is necessary for dealing with the financial issue comprehensively. In mean time some countries are taking the initiative and offering additional financial support to mobile students for covering travel costs, (higher) tuition fees and other extra costs (such as differences in living standards). However when available, there are often restrictions either regarding to the amount of money available or it is restricted to only a certain group of students.

Mobile students, in the majority of cases, face different treatment from home students and find themselves in situations where living and studying is more difficult than in their home country. In addition, they don't receive the support students living in the host country receive. From the survey it is also clear that in the majority of countries this situation will not improve but will more likely get even worse.

Despite the fact that mobility is considered to be one of the core goals of the Bologna Process it is still far from being reached. Too often politicians and stakeholders bring discussions only to a declarative level while consensus on concrete action is rarely made and action is taken even more rarely.

Recommendations

In order to overcome the discussed obstacles following issues need special attention:

- full portability of loans and grants to all EHEA countries for short periods of study and for full degrees
- additional financial support to cover the difference in living standards between home and host country. ESIB proposes to use either a system similar to CEEPUS or to create a European Mobility Fund.
- mobile students must not to be treated differently from other students in the host country

4.1 – Portability of loans and grants

Despite the fact that Ministers responsible for higher education made a clear commitment to facilitate the portability of grants and loans in the Berlin communiqué in 2003 and confirmed their commitment in the Bergen communiqué in 2005, there are still many restrictions to the portability of loans and grants. The results of the survey show that loans and grants are not portable to all EU countries and in the cases where there is portability there are more restrictions for portability of loans and grants to non-EU and to non-Bologna countries than within EU countries. Even when there are no obstacles to portability of loans and grants, it is more difficult to receive them for a full cycle than for a shorter study period (see Fig.10 & 11 on the following pages). Despite the constant commitments and the expressed will to increase the number of mobile students significantly, only in Finland, Iceland and Norway the grants/loans are now fully portable without any obstacles. On the other hand, in a number of countries, there are major obstacles for portability of loans and grants. The situation is particularly concerning in Romania and Croatia where loans and grants are not available to anyone and in Albania, Georgia and Serbia where portability is not possible at all.

Although portability of loans and grants is a very welcome support to mobile students, it often does not suffice. This is particularly true in countries where loans and grants are not high, compared to other EHEA countries. In these cases, despite having a loan or a grant fully portable it does not cover the living costs in the host country. It is clear that other measures need to be taken to remove one of the biggest obstacles to mobility. According to the Eurostudent 2005 study only around 5% of the student population is mobile, with the majority of them being so called free movers, i.e. students not taking part in an organised mobility programme or any kind of agreements between institutions and therefore not receiving any financial support.

In order to achieve the goal of accessible mobility to all students and staff, more financial support is required. ESIB has been proposing a couple possible solutions. A system similar to the CEEPUS could be established. CEEPUS is a system where funds are not transferred; instead an internal currency of “1 scholarship month” is used. Each country pays its incoming students and teachers and has to pledge at least 100 scholarship months per academic year. The CEEPUS agreement specifies that these grants are comprehensive grants linked to the local cost of living. Experience so far has shown that this system works very well.

Another proposal is to create a European Mobility Fund where all Bologna countries would support mobility. Grants from the Mobility Fund would differ between host countries and would be linked to the living costs in the country. The proposal has become well-known and is gaining support from more and more stakeholders.

Fig.10: Portability of Loans and Grants for up to a Year

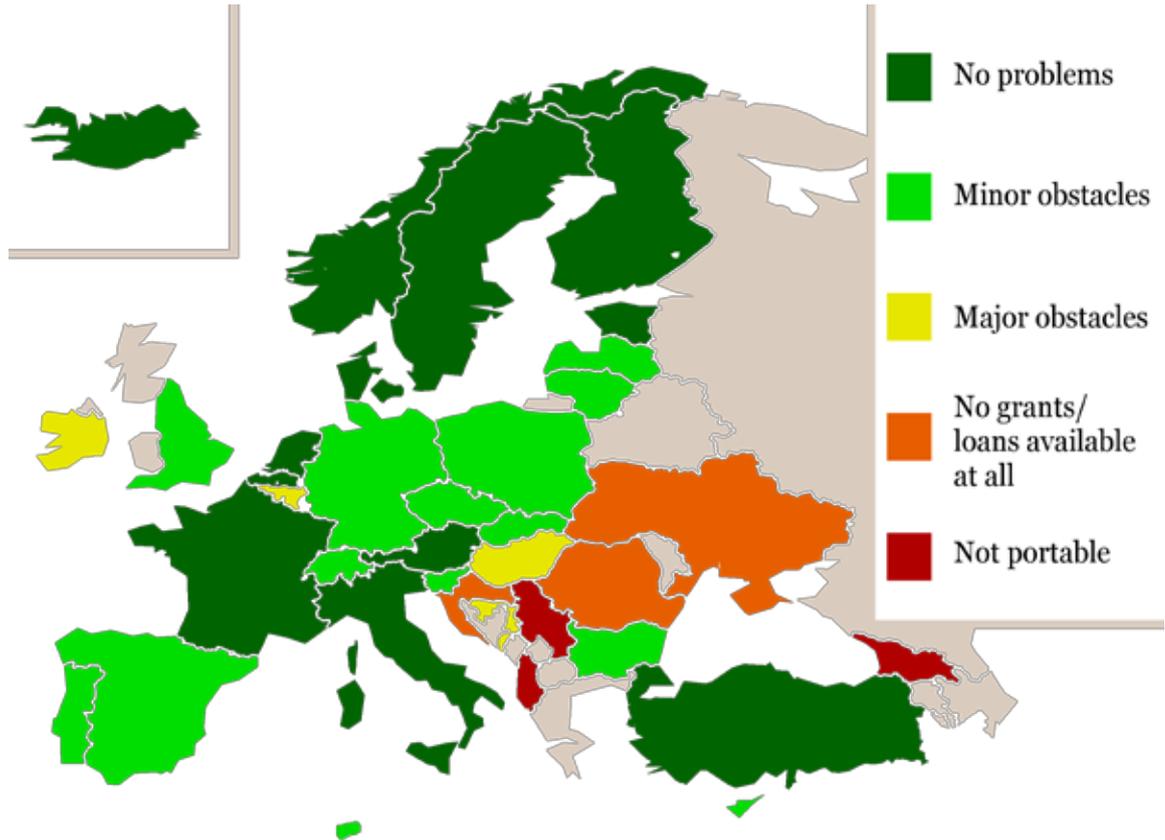
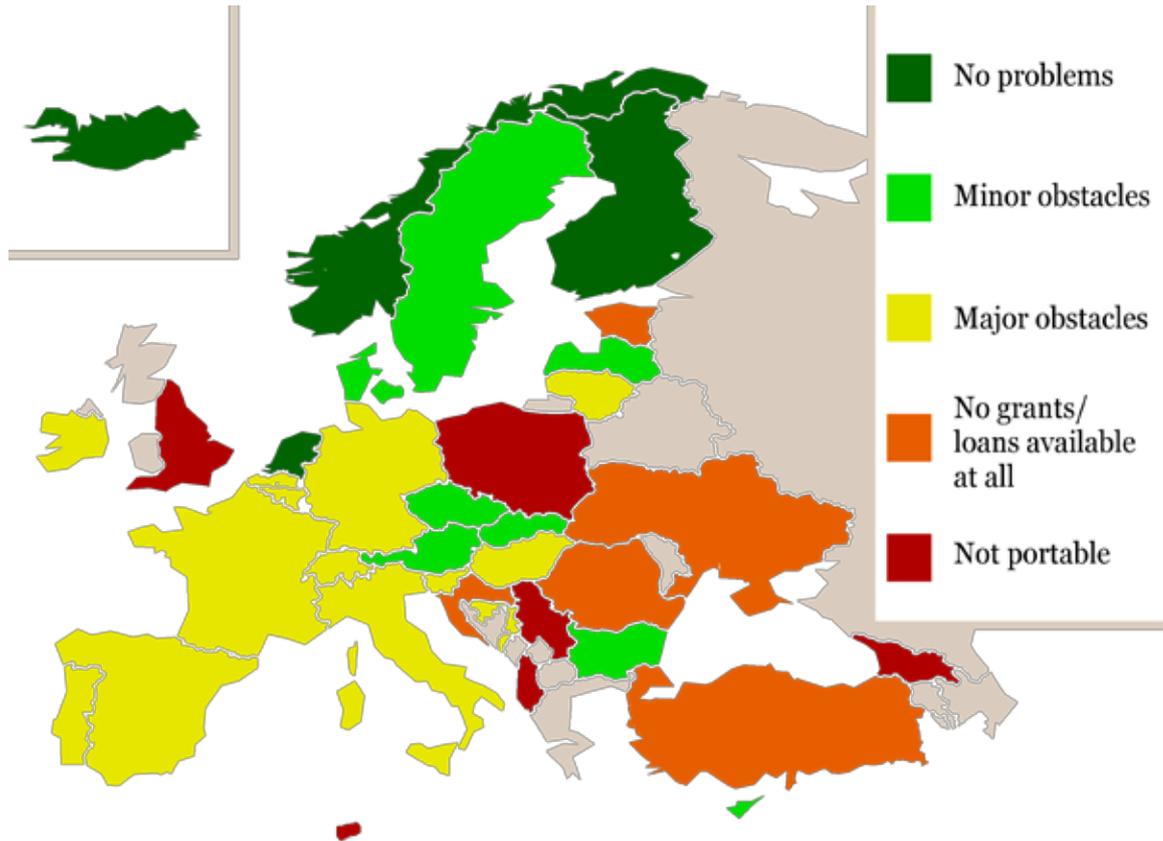


Fig.11: Portability of Loans and Grants for a Full Cycle

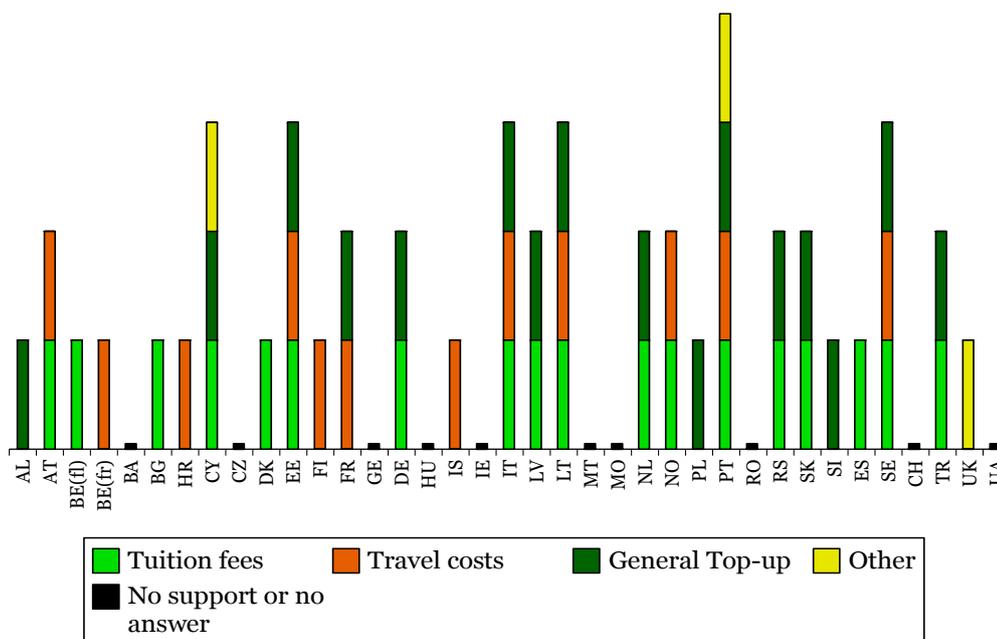


4.2 – Additional financial support for mobile students

Even when loans and grants are portable they rarely suffice to cover all the costs a student is faced with during the mobility period. Students may be faced with a tuition fee which does not exist in their country or is higher than in the home country, unless they are exempted from paying fees through arrangements such as the ERASMUS programmes. Every mobile student faces travelling costs and one must keep in mind the difference of living standards between the Bologna countries. This is especially relevant for students from Eastern and South-Eastern European countries studying in Western and Northern European countries, as the deviation between living standards is especially great among these countries.

The results of the survey show that only Estonia, Italy, Lithuania and Sweden provide the possibility for financial support to mobile students on all of the above mentioned issues (tuition fees, travel costs, higher living costs). In Switzerland all the financial support that exists is available almost only for Erasmus students who are entitled to a grant up to a maximum total amount of 120 Euro per month. Additional financial support is available almost only for students in mobility programmes in Lithuania, Finland and Italy. Serbia is a similar case where students may receive only specific scholarships based on bilateral agreements. In Iceland, for instance, additional financial support is available only to master and doctorate students, but not to bachelor students. This decreases the possibilities for students to be mobile while being in the first cycle of studies.

Fig.12: Types of additional support for mobile students



Mobility has many positive effects on the mobile individual, higher education institutions and on society. It brings a valuable experience of academic, cultural and social diversity, it eases networking and cooperation between higher education institutions necessary for development of the quality higher education and research and it contributes to development and maintenance of a democratic culture. Restrictions which make the financial support available only to certain groups of students greatly reduce the positive effects of mobility especially on institutions and on society.

Most students' unions point out that despite the portability of loans and grants and some additional financial support there is still not enough money to cover the expenses of a mobility period abroad. Some students' unions report that students need to work, sometimes even illegally, in order to support themselves while abroad.

However there are some efforts made in some countries to make mobility throughout Europe available to their students. In Cyprus it is possible to obtain financial support for learning a foreign language. Proficiency of a foreign language strongly influences one's decision to be mobile and which country to go to.

4.3 – Discrimination of students

In the survey we looked at how mobile students are treated in their host countries. We asked whether students coming to study in a country are treated the same as the local students regarding paying tuition fees, receiving financial support, rights to work, social benefits and to housing. The results were discouraging; only in Albania, Slovakia and Turkey incoming students are treated equally with local students. On the other hand students coming to Germany, Hungary or Poland are treated differently in all 5 areas asked about in the survey. However when interpreting this data one must again keep in mind different living standards between countries. In countries where home students do not receive any support from the government it is not surprising that foreign students are treated the same way as domestic students. Discrimination is possible only in countries where systems of support are available to students. From the results it is still clear that in all countries, with only a few exceptions, foreign students are treated differently in regards to at least 2 out of the 5 issues and are therefore discriminated. This is yet another obstacle to mobility that should be addressed in a coherent manner.

It was also surveyed how the above mentioned situation will most likely change in the future. The current situation and discussions regarding implementation of (higher) tuition fees for incoming students were analysed. Again the results are revealing change for the worse despite all the discussions going on European level in order to reduce obstacles to mobility. In Albania, Belgium (Flemish Community), Germany, Hungary, Moldova, the Netherlands, Romania and Turkey fees for foreign students already exist and increases are being proposed independently from the general fee debate.

V. CYCLES AND CREDITS

Although the three cycle system and the implementation of ECTS are among the earliest action lines agreed upon in the Bologna Process, our findings reveal that these two areas require particular attention, in order to ensure satisfactory implementation. In both cases, the findings reveal that these actions are implemented in a superficial fashion thus far, but huge problems are observed if one looks at the details.

Conclusions

Access to second cycle (Master) programmes for first cycle (Bachelor) graduates remains a major problem in many countries, with consequent unclear employment opportunities for Bachelor graduates. A particular problem is positive discrimination by institutions in favour of Bachelor graduates coming from the same institution. Enrolment statistics also suggest that the three cycle structure risks increasing gender disparities between women and men: female participation in second and third cycle studies appears to be low, indicating significant gender inequality. However, respective data is not available yet for the whole EHEA.

In many countries, no real curricular reform is taking place while the three-cycle structure is being introduced. This causes doubts regarding the employability of Bachelor graduates, placing them in a difficult position with unclear perspectives. Furthermore, the fitness of study programmes to cater for personal development of students and to enable students to become active and critical citizens is not proven.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is far from being properly implemented in all institutions throughout the EHEA. A correct measuring of student workload, being a core principle of ECTS, has proven to be the most significant problem in the implementation of ECTS.

Although the Diploma Supplement is widely in place throughout Europe, there seems to be an enormous lack of awareness about this instrument, in particular amongst employers and even more amongst the wider public.

Recommendations

The following are among the most important issues requiring future attention:

- Positive discrimination in favour of Bachelor graduates from the same institution in admissions to Master programmes needs to be avoided.
- The low participation of women in the second and third cycles, as compared to the first cycle, requires particular attention. Detailed data on enrolment by gender and cycle is needed throughout the EHEA.
- The need for curricular reform, leading to meaningful qualifications, requires increased attention.
- The coexistence of 'old' and 'new' structure degrees in many countries requires closer attention. Smoother opportunities for transition of individual students need to be put in place.
- The correct measuring of student workload in the implementation of ECTS needs more attention. The principle of student workload must not be neglected.

- Further promote the Diploma Supplement and its benefits amongst students, employers and the general public.

5.1 – The three cycle system

The reform of the degree system towards the agreed three cycles, as described in the Bologna communiquéés and the Qualifications Framework for the EHEA, continues to be one of the major aspects of reforms at national level. The vast majority of survey respondents state that the reform of the degree structure is an important part of the national debate (65%); however, very few regard it as the most important one. Only 12% of respondents state that a change of the degree system is not an issue at all.

It can further be concluded that the three cycle degree system has been formally implemented in most countries. More than half of the respondents report that all three cycles have been reformed accordingly, with an additional 22% reporting that at least first and second cycle reform has been concluded. However, also 22% report that the first and second cycle reform is still underway.

Those numbers seem to suggest the overwhelming success of degree structure reforms. A closer analysis reveals that this is not the case: out of the 56% of respondents reporting three cycles to be fully in place, more than half report that major problems are still to be solved. The following qualitative findings reveal that in many cases degree structure reforms have only taken place formally on the surface, but not in a sound way, leading to meaningful study programmes and more opportunities for students.

5.1.1 – Lack of curricular reform and employability

Most countries in the EHEA which are now implementing a three cycle system traditionally had a system consisting of a long first cycle and an optional doctorate degree. Within these systems, the Bachelor is a genuinely new award, often not directly comparable with any existing award in the country. It presents a major challenge to create Bachelor degrees which are relevant to the labour market and relevant for students as meaningful qualifications.

However, the findings of the survey reveal that real curricular reform, leading to a meaningful Bachelor qualification, often does not take place. Rather than that, old 'long' first cycles are often simply 'cut' into two degrees, Bachelor and Master. This leads to significant problems in terms of the value of the Bachelor qualification, its relevance and recognition in the labour market and its ability to allow students to become active and critical citizens, as well as catering for personal development. Such problems have been reported from Austria, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania and Slovenia. This also has to be seen in connection with the fact that both employers and employees are still very rarely involved in quality assurance activities, and hence there is rarely a systematic dialogue between the labour market and higher education.

5.1.2 – Obstacles in access between cycles

The lack of sound curricular reform turns into a major obstacle in connection with limited access to the second cycle. Whereas on the one hand there are widespread doubts about the employability of Bachelor graduates in many countries, there is on the other hand no free access to Master study programmes for them. Hence, there is a lack of attractive perspectives for Bachelor students after graduation.

As “access” is referred to herein, it refers not only to the right of being considered for admission, but rather to the real opportunity of students to be admitted and enrolled in a study programme. From a huge number of countries, namely Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland⁹, France¹⁰, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland¹¹, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Turkey, it has been reported that the accessibility of a Master programme is a major obstacle for students. Also in countries where Master programmes have not yet been established, such as in Sweden, there are concerns that the accessibility might turn into a major problem for students.

The ways in which access to the Master level is limited are manifold: In some countries, higher education institutions may impose a *numerus clausus*, entrance exams or interviews for Master programmes (for instance in Germany). In other cases, state funding is not available to the extent that a sufficient amount of study places at Master level to meet the demand can be financed (for instance in Serbia). In addition, governments are abusing the Bologna degree structure to impose fees only on Master students or to impose higher fees on them in comparison to Bachelor students (for instance in Romania).

A further worrying development is that many respondents report positive discrimination by institutions in favour of Bachelor graduates from the same institutions in access to Master programmes. This has been reported from Belgium (Flemish community), Hungary, Italy, Latvia¹² and Poland. The survey has also revealed that studying a Master programme in another discipline than the Bachelor degree is quite rare and often connected to further obstacles. In particular it has been reported from Belgium (Flemish community), Estonia, Latvia and Switzerland that access to Master programmes is straightforward only in the same field of study.

5.1.3 – Negative impact on gender equality

As laid out in the 2005 edition of this report, evidence suggests that the Bologna three cycle structure has a negative impact on the participation of women in higher education, and thus bears the risk of threatening gender equality. Enrolment figures (see fig.14 on the following page) analysed by gender from various countries suggest that at Master level there is frequently a significantly lower proportion of women enrolled, as expressed in terms of the total number of students.

There is an urgent need for closer exploration of this issue both at national and European level. To be able to better identify the reasons behind those figures, and to be able to have respective figures available in all EHEA countries, more efforts on data collection and comparable data are crucial.

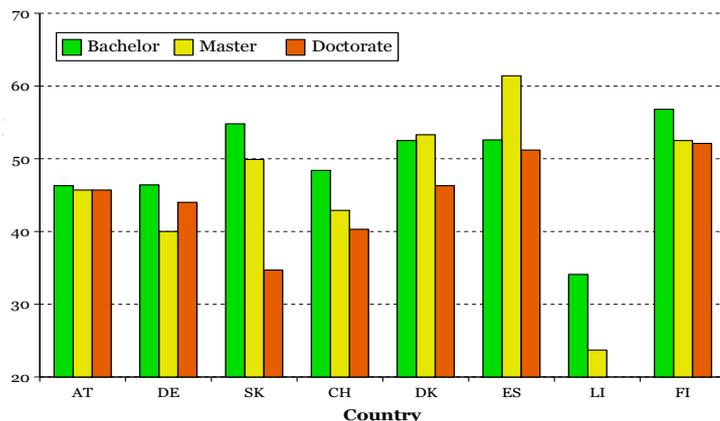
9 The problems in access to Master programmes applies only to the Finnish polytechnic sector.

10 Although there is no official access limitation for Master programmes, a de facto limitation takes place through a selection after the 1st year of study in a Master programme.

11 Problems reported from Iceland concerning access to the second cycle concern the university sector.

12 In Latvia, such problems primarily exist for short-cycle graduates wishing to continue a Bachelor programme..

Fig.14: Students by Gender



However, those who either want to change into the new structure, or those who do not succeed in finishing their studies within the granted timeframe for whatever reason, often experience major obstacles in getting their achievements recognised in a “new” programme. This has been reported in particular from Belgium (Flemish community) and Hungary.

Furthermore, even if no admissions take place anymore for “old” degree programmes, “old” degrees will still exist for a long time in every country. In some countries the officially described relation of “old” degrees with the new degrees are seen very critically by the national students’ union. For instance, old (long-cycle) qualifications in Serbia are sometimes only considered as being equivalent to a Bachelor degree, but less in value than a Master degree. Hence, graduates experience problems in accessing programmes leading to a Doctorate degree, which traditionally was much easier for them.

5.2 – ECTS – In place on the surface

The use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) has been agreed upon since the early days of the Bologna Process. As long as one looks on the surface (cf. Fig.15 on following page), the implementation of ECTS appears to be a success story: About two thirds of the survey respondents state that ECTS has been implemented in their country, with additional 27% reporting that a national credit system is in place, which is compatible with ECTS. Only 7% report having a non-ECTS-compatible national credit system.

Although those figures appear promising, they do not guarantee that ECTS is in fact applied and fully used in every single study programme. Moreover, a closer look at ECTS implementation throughout Europe reveals that several principles of ECTS are not taken seriously. In Fig.16 (ECTS-Ground), the countries covered by

this report are rated according to their use of ECTS core features: those countries having implemented a learning outcomes approach fully, properly measuring student workload and basing ECTS credits on it and using ECTS not only for transfer, but also for accumulation, are marked green. Those complying at least with one of the three criteria fully and with the two remaining to some extent are highlighted in light green. Yellow colour has been assigned to countries complying with one criterion fully and with another at least to some extent. Orange has been assigned to those complying to only one criterion fully or complying to two at least partly. The remaining countries are displayed in red.

Fig. 15: ECTS implementation in the surface

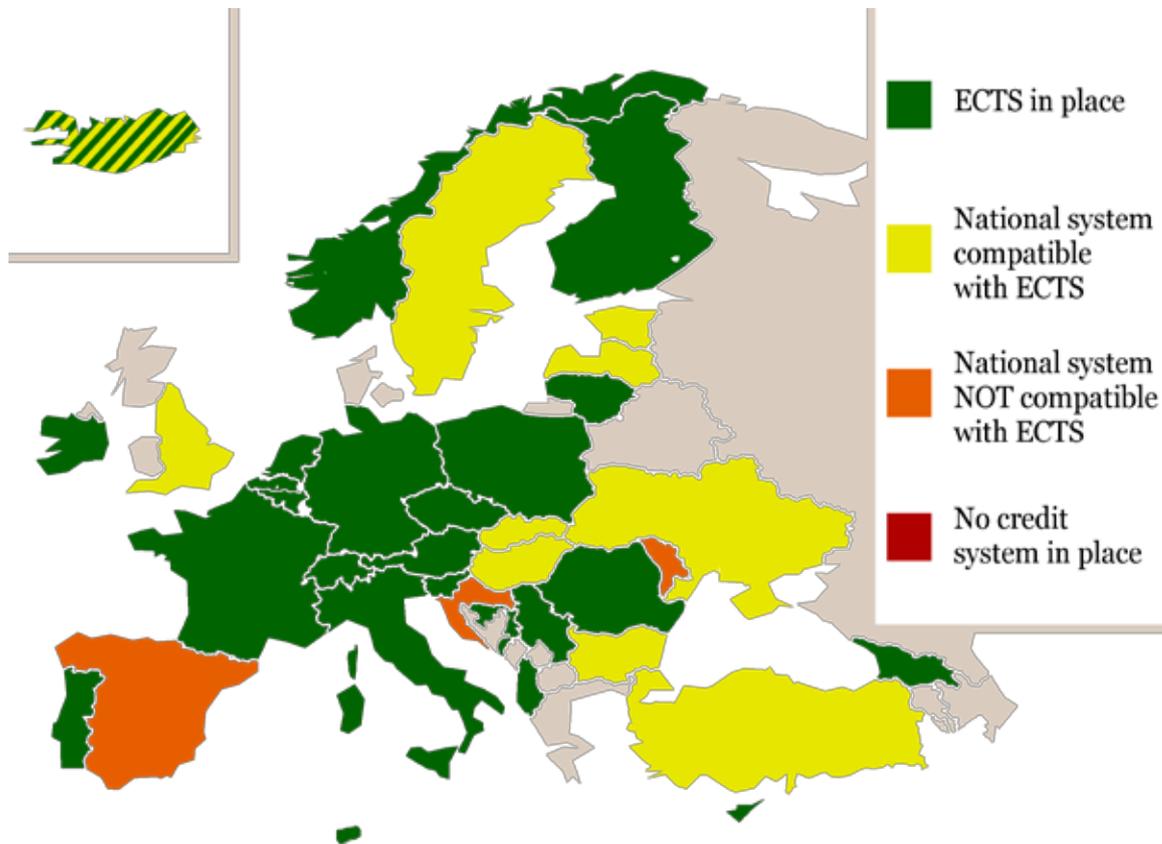
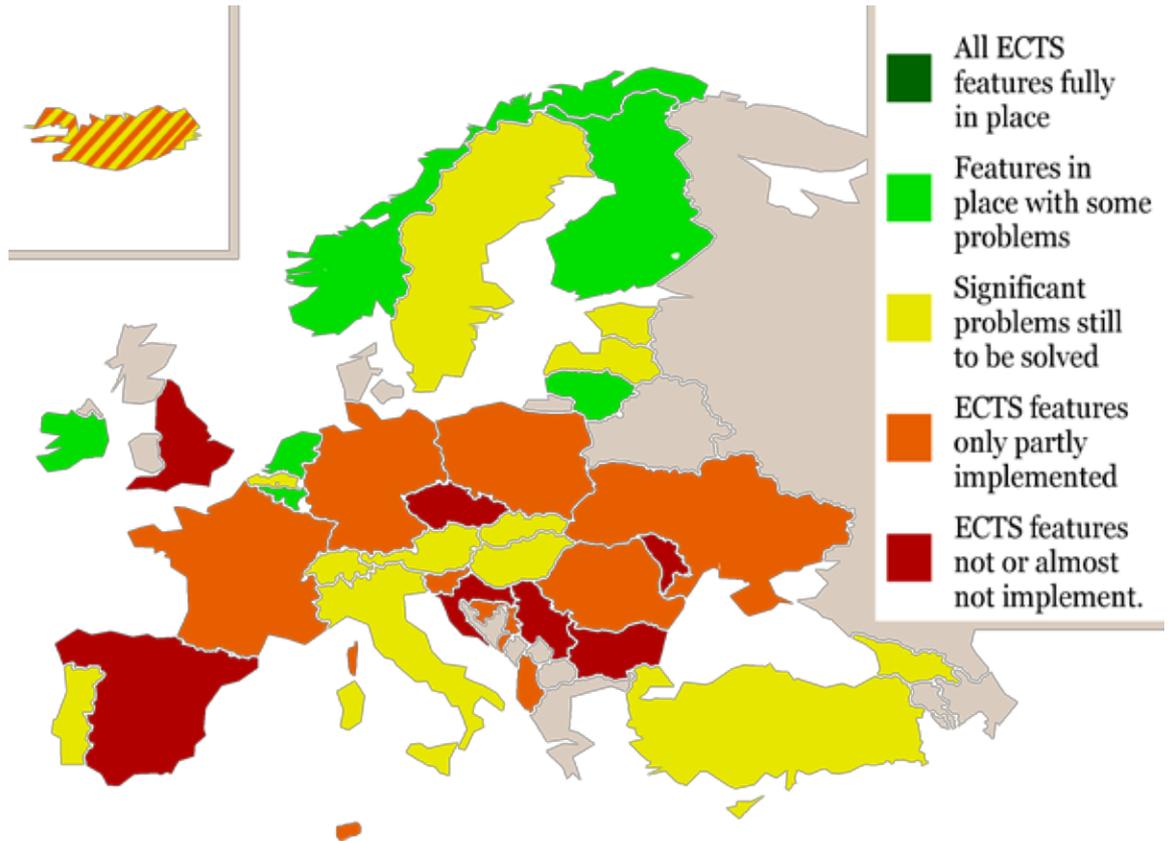


Fig.16: ECTS implementation in the ground



The map “ECTS on the ground” shows a significantly different picture of Europe and underlines the need for much more attention to full and proper implementation of ECTS. Also the findings of the survey reveal clearly that the issue of student workload is the most neglected principle of ECTS. From only three countries it has been reported that student workload is properly measured and credits are adequately linked to student workload. In all other countries, workload is either measured but not properly linked to credit, not adequately or not at all measured.

5.3 – The Diploma Supplement

In the Bologna Joint Declaration (1999) it has been firstly stated that the Diploma Supplement should be used to make degrees easily readable and comparable in the emerging EHEA. In their Berlin Communiqué (2003), European ministers of higher education set the goal that every student graduating from 2005 should receive a Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge.

Whereas few national unions of students report that the Diploma Supplement is not yet introduced in their country yet or is currently in the phase of implementation, in the clear majority of countries the Diploma Supplement is issued automatically. However, in a significant number of countries the Diploma Supplement is not issued automatically to all students, but only in certain groups of institutions or for certain programmes. Sometimes, for instance, a Diploma Supplement is only issued to graduates of Bologna-type degrees, but not to graduates of traditional national study programmes.

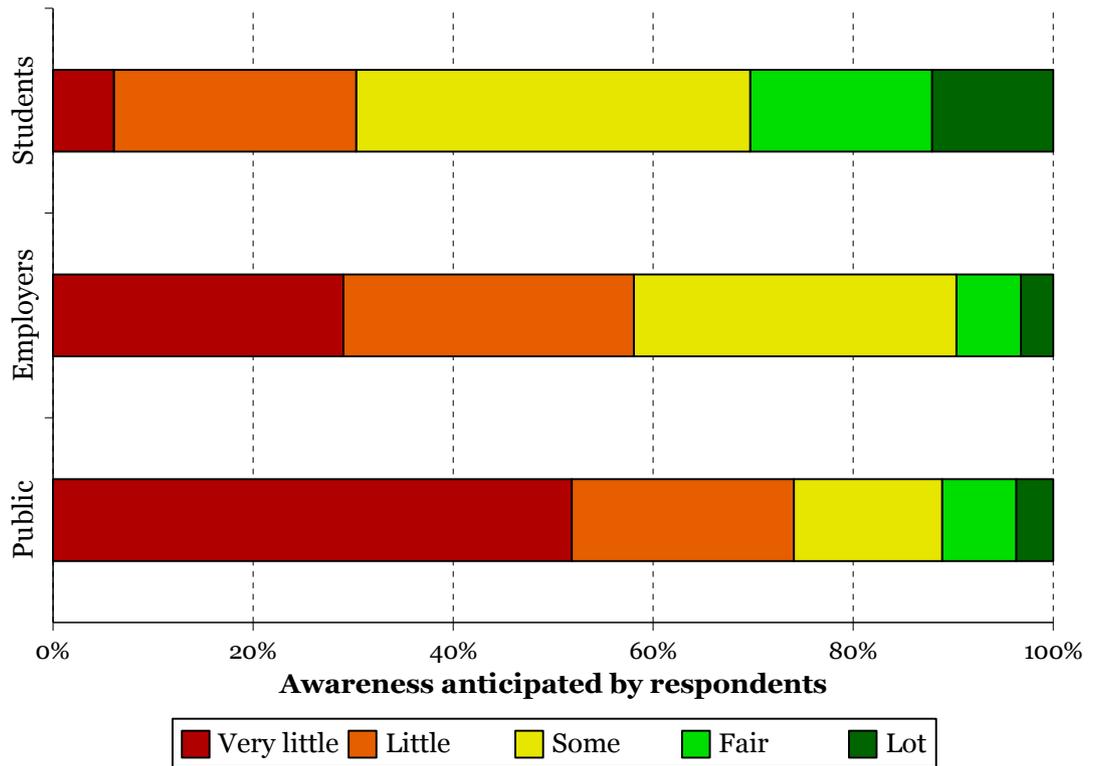
Normally the Diploma Supplement is issued free of charge. However, in Croatia, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia and Slovakia students are sometimes charged a fee for issuing a Diploma Supplement. In almost every country the Diploma Supplement is issued in a widely-spoken European language, which is English in most cases and French in a few others. Only in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Srpska), Turkey and Ukraine¹³ the Diploma Supplement is only issued in the local language.

The awareness of different groups about the Diploma Supplement seems to be a major problem in all countries, as one can see from Figure 17. Whereas the national unions of students usually anticipate that amongst students there is at least some awareness about the Diploma Supplement, a clear majority of respondents anticipate that the general public is almost not aware at all about the Diploma Supplement. The awareness of employers is usually seen a bit higher as compared to the general public. However, it is seen much lower than the awareness of students and most respondents see only little or some awareness of employers.

13

Ukrainian students going abroad can receive an English translation upon request.

Fig. 17: Awareness about the Diploma Supplement as anticipated by NUSes



VI. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) made its first official entry into the Bologna Process in the Berlin Declaration, as an instrument to further promote the concept of lifelong learning. However, it was only in 2005, in the Bergen Declaration that recognition of prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning, became a priority subject to the stocktaking exercise and was linked to the development of qualifications frameworks. Although a late priority in the Bologna Process, procedures for some kind of recognition of prior learning have already been developed in some countries and in some sectors for a number of years, specifically in the cases of formal and some non-formal education and training. However, the challenges set forth by the Bologna Process in this field require a much more determined and wide-ranging action from countries in order to fully ensure the implementation of accessible and comprehensible procedures for the validation and recognition of learning achieved in different settings.

Conclusions

The findings of the survey indicate that the situation regarding the availability of RPL is diverse. In the large majority of the countries surveyed, there are no national policies designed for all institutions. Even when there are provisions for RPL at the national level, national bodies are absent or almost irrelevant. Higher education institutions are considered the main holders of responsibility for the promotion of RPL, spreading information and carrying the necessary procedures. However, in the absence of a solid implementation of these mechanisms at national level, institutions develop their own initiatives and policies, operating without any given guidelines. Consequently, the purpose for RPL also differs from country to country and even within the countries. The most common use of RPL is for entering a study program, closely followed by the allocation of some credits within traditional higher education programmes. However, there is a clear predominance of recognition of formal (national and foreign) and non-formal education. Universities still seem reluctant to validate informal learning.

A regional area needing urgent development on procedures for the recognition of prior learning was found by the respondents' answers. The total lack of provision for RPL in countries from the Balkans to Eastern Europe is a matter of concern, and further action should be taken. A further concern is that among those countries with developed RPL systems, a number are charging additional fees. These fees quite often vary depending on the status of the applicants and the type of study program or institution (public or private). Furthermore, the amounts can also vary between different higher education institutions and regions.

Evidence gathered indicates that there is no clear link between recognition of prior learning and the introduction of qualifications frameworks in the majority of the countries. Moreover, RPL is far from being a well-known mechanism among the wider public for assessing knowledge, skills and competences. These two findings combined illustrate how superficial the discussion and implementation of recognition of prior learning still is in the European Higher Education Area. This is also a sign of the difficulties HEIs are facing when taking the great and sole responsibility for the promotion of RPL in many countries.

Recommendations

- European guidelines for the recognition of prior learning should be introduced. These

guidelines could assist countries in the establishment of their own national system

- Creation of a comprehensive national RPL system in all countries, ensuring and promoting the provision for RPL in the entire national higher education systems
- Promotion of an approach based on competences and learning outcomes at all levels of education
- Development of national qualifications frameworks that cater for flexible entry routes and learning paths
- Ensuring further support to HEIs in order to fully implement RPL procedures
- Involving students and stakeholders in the process of reform and introduction of RPL
- Removal of any financial barriers and constraints to the full use of RPL for the purpose of entry and credit within a programme

6.1 – Availability of Recognition of Prior Learning

Fig. 1 show a variety of national positions regarding the introduction of recognition of prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning. It is quite obvious that a number of countries were unable to implement national-based RPL systems, covering all regions, educational sectors and institutions. There is a significant group of countries where RPL is actually just a local policy, depending on the will of some of the institutions that took the initiative. That is clearly the status in Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Republika Srpska), Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Moldova, Slovakia and Switzerland. In some cases, this is due to a broader organisational framework that promotes some kind of decentralisation.

Sweden on the other hand is currently reforming an old system of recognition, while Estonia, although having national legislation, is facing problems at the institutional level with the actual implementation of RPL. Other countries have national provisions for RPL but are establishing restrictions on its use, such as limiting it to those aged over 23 years old in Malta or setting a limit of 60 credits for allocation at the Bachelor level in Italy. In spite of this, it is the Balkans and the East European areas that should raise greater concern, since this is a wide area where recognition of prior learning is so far completely unavailable.

The countries that have a functioning system for RPL practise very different types of recognition. In Estonia, for example, recognition is facilitated only to students who move to different study programmes but inside the same institution. This kind of institutional conservatism is not reported from any other country but we can identify a main trend in the universities to only recognise formal qualifications, obtained either in national or in foreign institutions.

Alternatively, recognition of non-formal learning is also expanding in some of the countries surveyed. This trend is, however, bound to an existing formal link between the education and the training systems, or dependent on direct agreements between higher education institutions and entities operating in the broad training system (post secondary education, language courses, etc.) or providing for professional training in the context of the workplace (continuous labour training such as ICT courses designed for specific tasks, trainings delivered by professional associations, etc.). However, there is a growing number of countries that are actually debating or implementing systems for the validation of former professional and life experience for the purpose of credit within formal qualifications.

Fig.18: Availability of Recognition of Prior Learning

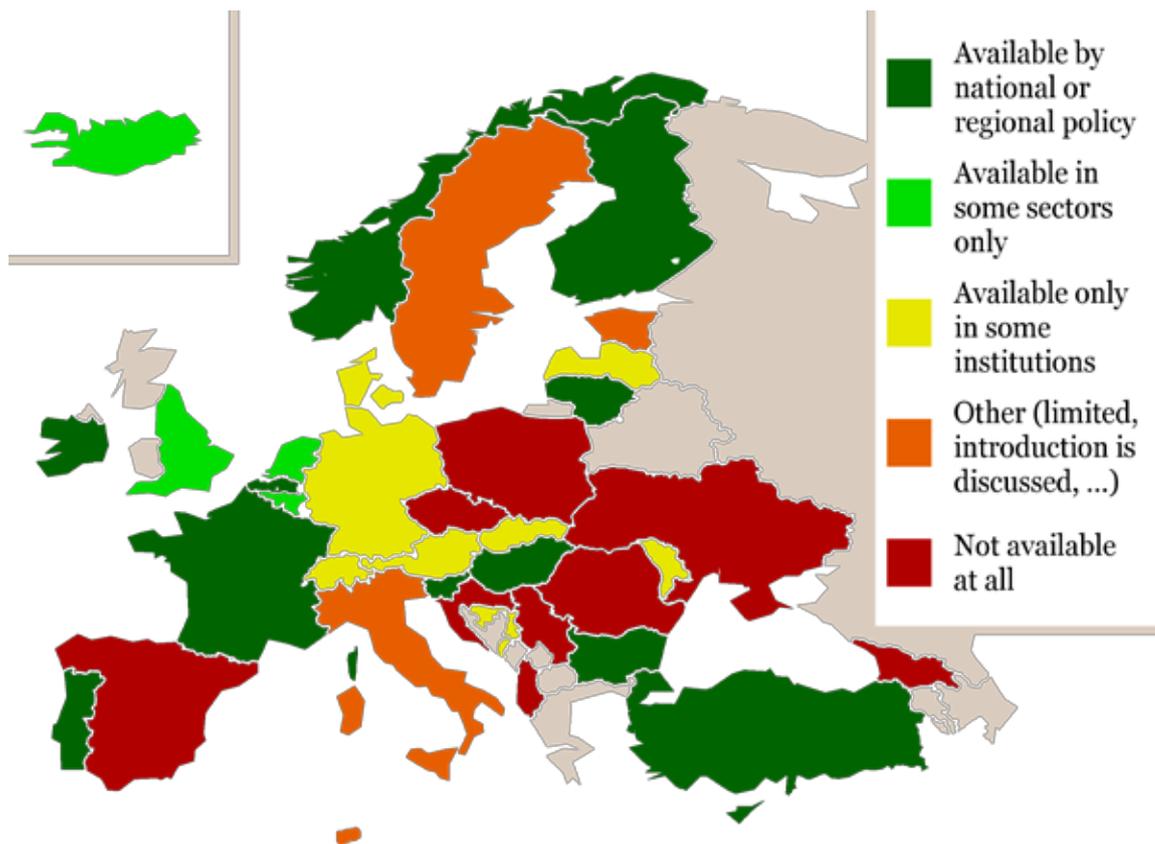
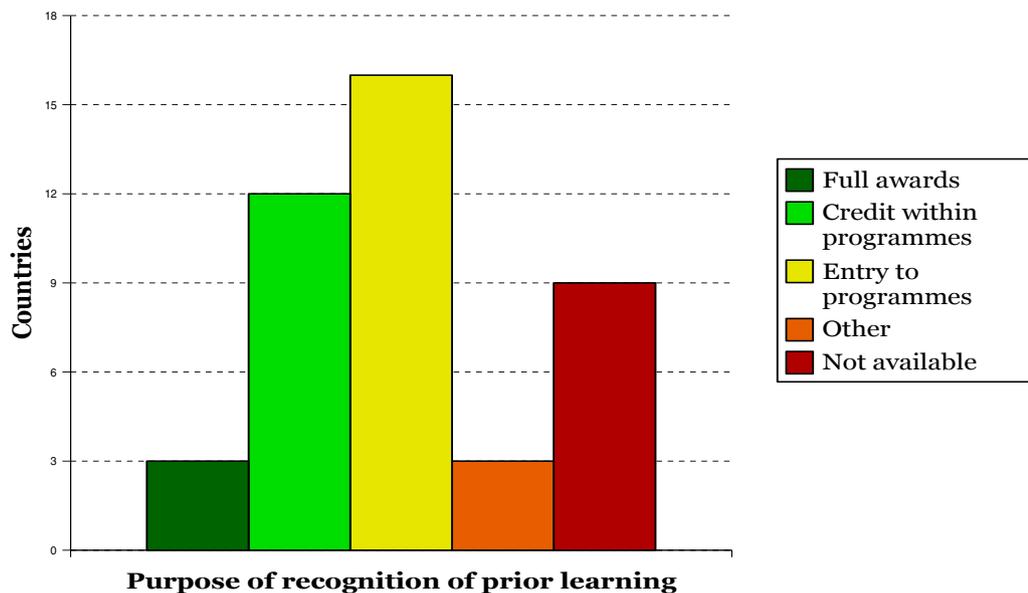


Fig.19: To what extent is RPL available?



RPL is available for very different purposes within the traditional higher education system. Whilst Belgium (French community), France and Ireland provide for full awards based on prior learning, the large majority of European countries set more modest aims for such a system, as we can see in Fig. 19. Most commonly, RPL is used as a means for widening access and substituting formal requirements (which are otherwise compulsory) for entry to a programme. Another common development is the use of RPL for credit within traditional higher education programmes, shortening study periods and releasing these students from traditional methods of formal, summative assessment. In some cases, there are references to the use of RPL both for the purposes of credit and entry. Switzerland and Estonia are again exceptions, since the system is highly dependent on institutional policy (and on canton provisions in the Swiss case).

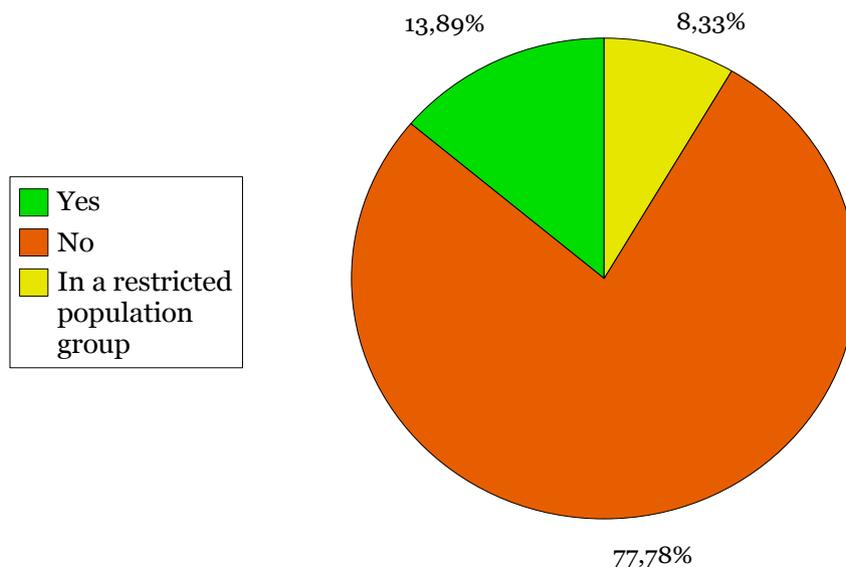
It is also possible to identify differences in the purpose given of RPL in binary systems, in which the professionally-oriented institutions make a more generous use of this instrument. RPL is not yet an issue viewed as a university duty by some of the most traditional sectors. In the absence of national provisions for the area, the differences of procedures and purposes given are even higher. It is quite obvious the need for national level guidelines to create a country coherent system. HEI also need support and assistance to develop their RPL procedures in such cases.

6.2 – Knowledge and involvement of stakeholders and the wider public

Regardless of having national provisions or not, higher education institutions play a very important role in the promotion of RPL. Even if there is any regional, sector or national organisation or centre devoted to the validation of knowledge, skills and competences achieved in different and alternative settings, 75% of the respondents state that HEIs hold the ultimate responsibility for the recognition of prior learning of their students and applicants under these procedures.

Some of these institutions are actually leading the introduction of these procedures and their work is not framed in any way by national discussion. That can explain the significant variety that one can find, especially when the country includes separate communities (linguistic, regional etc) or binary systems. It is also clear that many HEIs are facing some difficulties in establishing such a system, in many cases due to discussion, practice and expertise. That has also an impact on the knowledge that the wider society has about RPL.

Fig. 20: Is RPL well-known to the public?



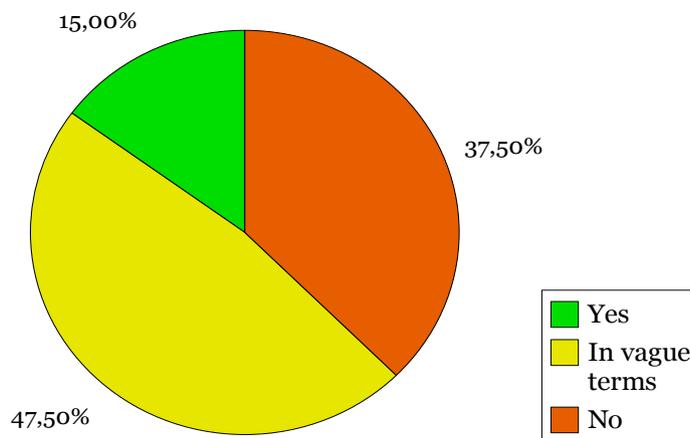
In fact, recognition of prior learning is not yet a common issue known by the public, even in the identified cases where recognition of formal and non-formal learning is present. The wider population outside the academic world is still unaware of the possibilities opened by RPL and ignores the procedures one must undertake to get its competences fully recognised. This has not become a topic of public discussion as of yet,

and even students are sometimes not conscious of this possibility. Institutions may have been given an area they are unable to cater for without greater assistance and involvement from public authorities.

It was possible to find some cases where RPL is known in a specific group of the population. Denmark points out that it is well-known in the area of teacher education and Latvia explains that students are informed by the HEI about this possibility. Signs of improvement in the knowledge about RPL are identified in Finland. Finally, Hungary, Iceland and Malta confirm that the existing procedures are quite well-known to the public.

National unions of students are also just entering into this debate, since only one third of the respondents declare that their organisation has a policy on the area of RPL. This is another indicator of the lack of discussion and awareness about this topic at the national level. These results reflect the fact that RPL has not yet become an issue or priority for the national HE system. The majority of the national unions of students that have policies are in favour of a large use of RPL in the traditional higher education system for the purpose of increasing the link between vocational and training systems with the traditional higher education system. RPL is also seen as an important element for the increase of social recognition of modes of learning achieved in other settings and also as a way to widen access and completion for students especially coming from non academic backgrounds.

Fig. 21: Is RPL part of the reform of qualifications frameworks?



Another interesting result relates to the link between RPL and the reform of qualifications frameworks (which are expected since 2005 in every member of the European Higher Education Area). A very large proportion of respondents do not see any significant integration of recognition of prior learning within the debate on qualifications frameworks. Such an overwhelming result can be explained on one hand by

the delay of the introduction of both reforms in many countries and even the lack of student involvement and consultation, namely for the national qualifications frameworks beyond the higher education levels and degrees (for further information, see chapter VII). On the other hand, this can also be looked at as a consequence of lack of public authorities' involvement in RPL (as previously identified) or the preference for an *a la carte* implementation of separate and unrelated reforms by Governments.

Regardless of what are the main causes for this, it is obvious that countries are either not progressing in their reforms; neither are they including students properly, nor addressing the public and promoting these reforms.

6.3 – Recognition of prior learning – available for whom?

The situation in many countries looks quite homogeneous with respect to awareness of students and the wider public about RPL and its link with the reforms on qualifications frameworks. But the map of Europe becomes again divided if we address the costs of RPL and who is charged with these. Many respondents did not answer this question, not being sure of the actual fee, since this is quite a new initiative lacking coherence, and provisions are hard to track. The fact that some universities establish their own system and charge as they see fit also makes it difficult to assess with accuracy the amount required to get the knowledge, skills and competences validated within the higher education system.

Nevertheless, it is possible to see that besides the Nordic and Baltic countries, only Austria, Hungary, Malta and Portugal do not establish in their national provisions any payment. Belgium (French community) and Estonia charge the same amount to every student, while Italy charges an amount per credit allocated which is much higher than the current tuition fees. The worst cases are Belgium (Flemish community), France, Ireland, the Netherlands and Switzerland, which charge for RPL differently according to the type and status of the institution, the type of study program and the status of the student or applicant.

VII. QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS

The Bologna Process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was primarily based on the development of a compatible and readable system of degree structures at the European level, able to facilitate mobility, transparency and recognition of higher education qualifications from country to country. The continuing discussion around this issue until Bergen led to the creation of an overarching European qualifications framework (the EHEA-QF) and to the commitment to the creation of compatible national qualifications frameworks for higher education by the Ministers.

Qualification frameworks (QF) have become more than a Bologna Process issue, since the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL) was also developed within the Lisbon Strategy of the European Union. The EQF-LLL covers all levels and areas of education and training systems, although some of its features do not show entire compatibility with the EHEA-QF. At the national level, the development of qualification frameworks, although facing different paces of implementation, is now producing the first results.

The reform of qualifications frameworks is a huge task, since these are not mere lists of degree structures. These are descriptors of the relationship between the degrees and between formal education and knowledge acquired in other learning settings. They also describe the aims of the degree and the competences it should provide, enhancing transparency for the learner, the society and the labour market.

Conclusions

The results of the survey clearly show very unbalanced implementation of qualifications frameworks, with a small number of countries having established national qualifications frameworks (whether for all levels, solely for higher education, or for other sectors of education but not yet for higher education). The large majority of countries are still currently discussing the shape of the reform to be undertaken.

A very good proportion of national unions of students were consulted regarding the implementation of EHEA-QF. However, students in a number of countries claim to be formally consulted but not taken seriously. Some unions point out the fact that also other stakeholders were not included or properly listen to and that the wider public is still excluded from the discussion taken so far.

A completely different attitude can be seen with regard to the alignment of the national qualifications frameworks with the EQF-LLL. The already identified deficit in the students' involvement and consultation in the European Union initiatives at the European level was further deepened at a national level, since many student unions were not consulted at all. Furthermore, back in 2005, a significant percentage of students' unions did not participate in the national consultations on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, simply because they were not informed or asked to.

When exploring the link between the EHEA-QF and the EQF-LLL, the majority of the respondents expressed their preference for the development of a single and compatible overarching qualification framework at the European level, and admit being concerned about the compatibility of both frameworks.

Some countries clearly prefer the framework developed within the Bologna Process specifically because it saw the involvement of students from the beginning.

Nevertheless, there is a common positive opinion about the general principle of establishing a qualifications framework, viewed as a valuable instrument for transparency, recognition, being able to provide for more opportunities for learners and enhancing access to higher education from vocational and other forms of education. Statements declaring that qualifications framework are a part of a privatisation agenda or a threat for national diversity and autonomy were not supported by the respondents.

Recommendations

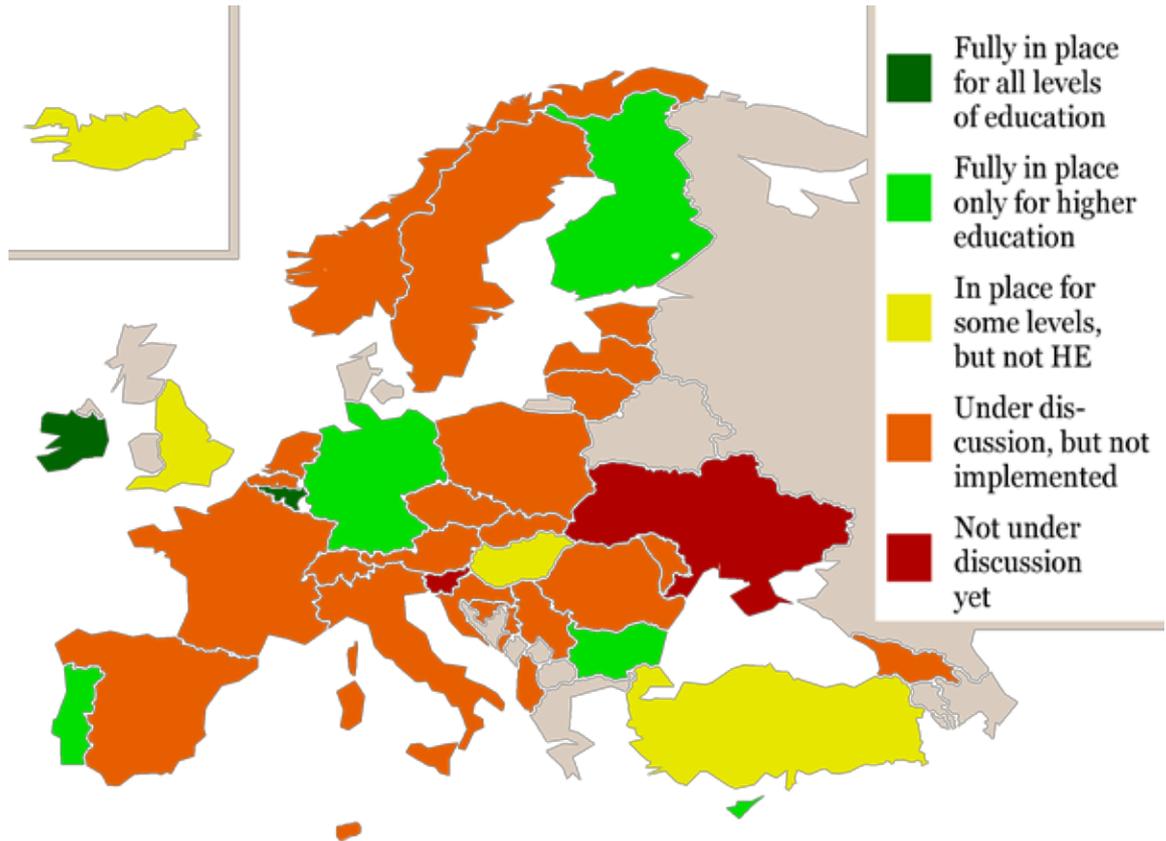
- Establishment of national working groups with the inclusion of relevant stakeholders providing for expertise and training about issues related to the design and concept of qualifications frameworks
- Development of national qualifications frameworks for all levels in close consultation with students, stakeholders and social partners
- Interlink the reform of qualifications frameworks with the introduction of national-based procedures and guidelines for recognition of prior learning
- Open the debates to the wider public
- Ensuring further support for HEIs during the transition period

7.1 – The status of development of a national qualifications framework

Fig. 21 (following page) pictures quite clearly the difficulties countries are still facing in the development and implementation of a national qualifications framework. Only eight countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Moldova, Portugal and Slovakia) and a sub-national structure (Belgium - French community) have already established some kind of qualifications framework that includes higher education degrees. However, the large majority of countries are still in the phase of studying and discussing a national model for their own QF.

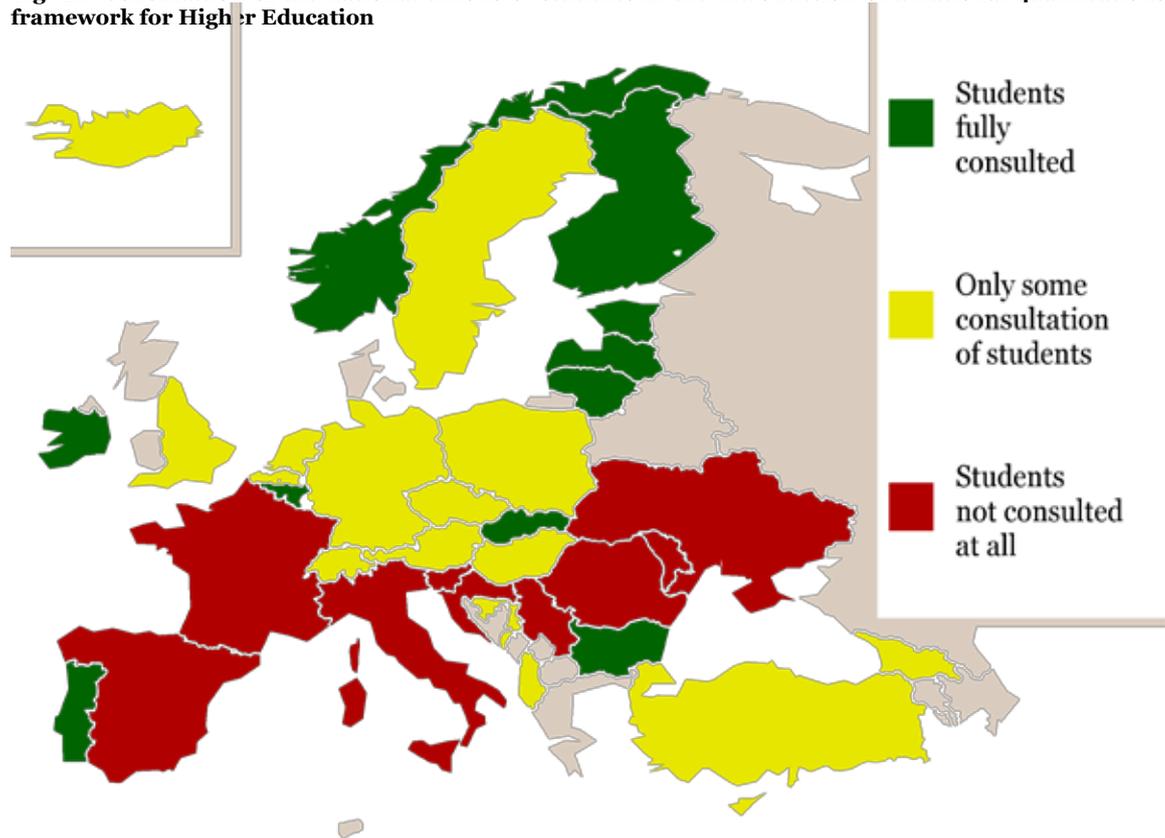
When asking for the biggest difficulties found in the implementation process, many student organisations say that there is not much to report about, since it's not being implemented yet. However, they also state that the delay in the process regards not only the implementation but also the actual discussion.

Fig.21: The status of development of a national qualifications framework



7.2 – Consultation and involvement of students

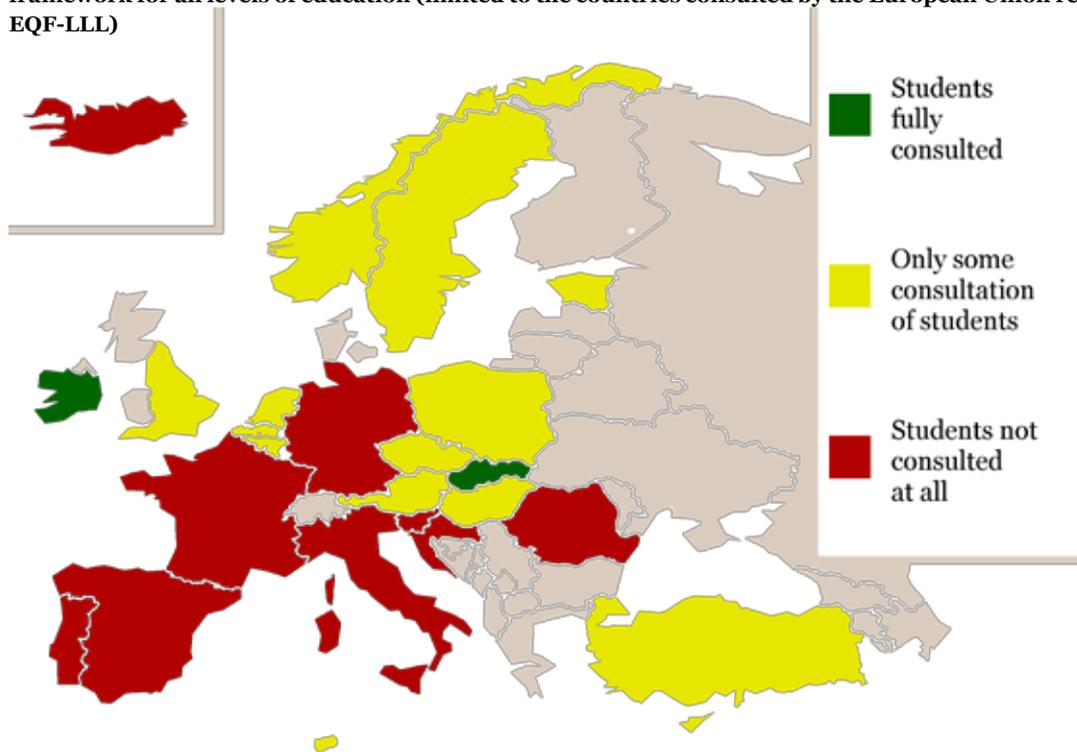
Fig. 22: Consultation of the national unions of students in the introduction of a national qualifications framework for Higher Education



As we look at Fig.22, we can see that a quite significant number of countries have consulted their national unions of students about the implementation of the national qualifications frameworks in what regards the level of higher education. However, in Croatia, France, Italy, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and Ukraine there has been no consultation at all. When considering the results of Fig. 21 and Fig. 22 we can wonder if this consultation has not taken place yet because the process leading to the establishment of a qualifications framework is still in a very preliminary stage of discussion. Nevertheless, it will be imperative to undertake such a consultation while actually taking into consideration the students' views and opening the debate to the wider public and relevant stakeholders.

In Romania, for example, the discussion never reached the wider public and the process for the creation of a national qualification framework is said not to be transparent and inclusive. The Netherlands, on the other hand, is a good example of a country which involved the students formally but did not take any of their proposals or concerns into consideration. In Slovenia, not only the students were opposing some of the changes in the national qualifications framework, but also higher education institutions, experts and even a national level consultative body for higher education.

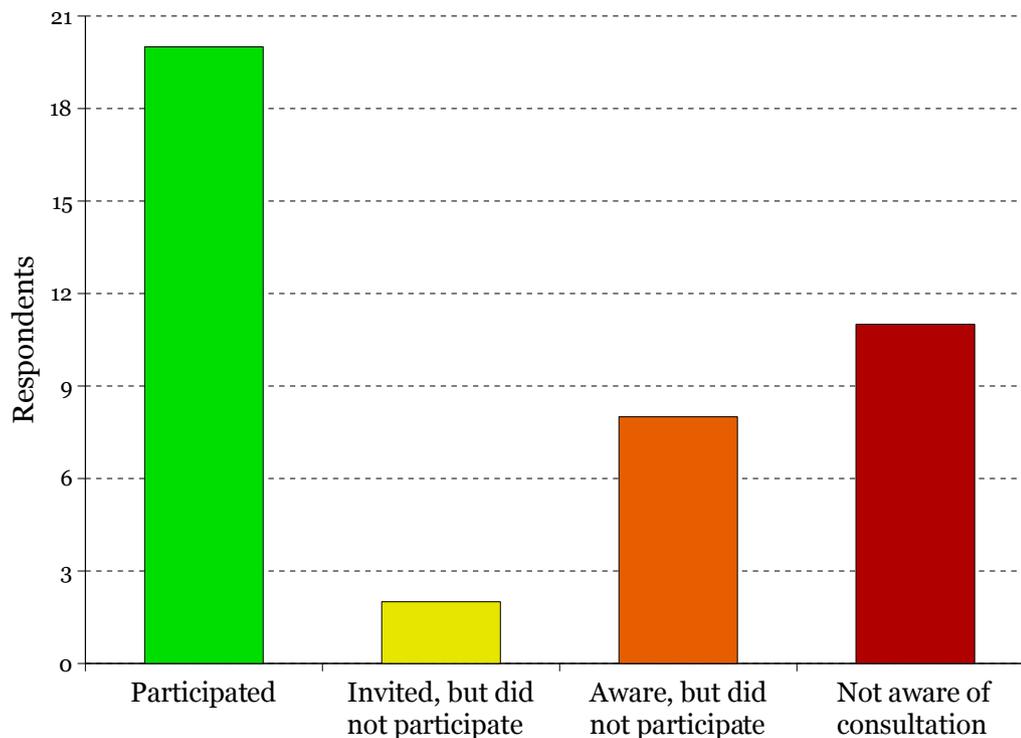
Fig. 23: Consultation of the national unions of students in the introduction of a national qualifications framework for all levels of education (limited to the countries consulted by the European Union regarding EQF-LLL)



When addressing the alignment of the national qualifications framework with the proposed European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning it is quite clear how students' participation is being neglected. This cannot be explained by the fact that it is in its early stages, since some of the fully consulted organisations regarding the level of higher education such as Portugal or were somehow involved, such as Germany, were now completely forgotten when it comes to the more comprehensive framework.

Another possible explanation of this phenomenon is the fact that Governments and stakeholders in countries that have already established national qualifications for the higher education level may consider the consultation of national unions of students enrolled only in higher education to be inappropriate because the EQF-LLL encompasses all levels and types of studies. In fact, a few national unions of students (three of which were fully consulted about the creation or alignment of the national qualifications frameworks for higher education) state that consultation was not applicable because the EQF-LLL is not yet being discussed, but none stated their acceptance of such a divide.

Fig. 24: Participation in the national consultation on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL) in 2005



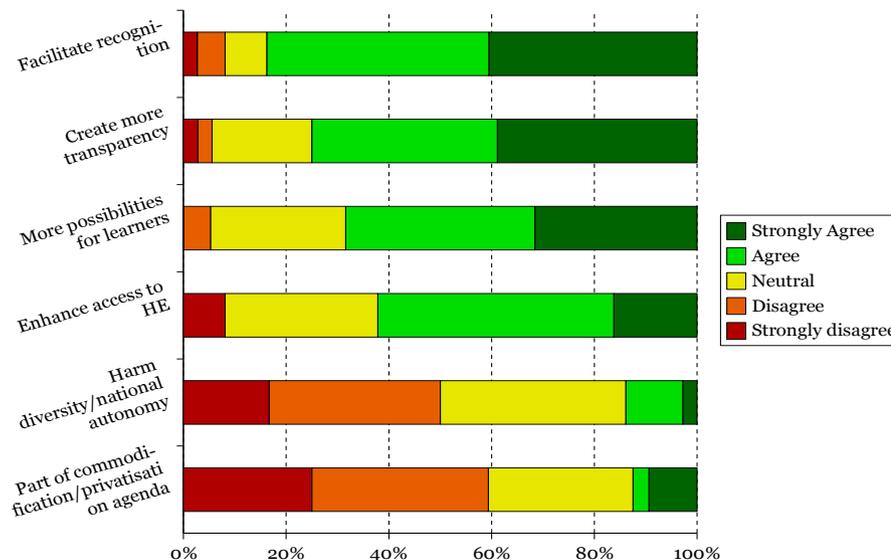
However, the lack of student involvement can be traced to 2005, when the national consultation on the EQF-LLL was carried out. Some national unions of students did not participate (while being aware of the existence of consultation processes) partially due to being unprepared by then to do so. However, eleven other unions were not asked to participate at all. This absence of student involvement regarding the broader qualification framework is unfortunately a continuing trend in some of the countries signalled in Fig. 23.

7.3 – Students’ Perceptions of Qualifications Frameworks

When asked about the relationship between the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the European Higher Education Area Qualifications Framework, about 40% of the respondents coming from countries consulted on EQF-LLL by the European Commission were able to state an opinion. In general, the positions issued supported the need for a better link between formal higher education levels and degrees and a parallel and integrated system of lifelong learning and continuing education. Other positions coming from Nordic countries like Norway and Sweden stated a preference for the qualification framework developed within the Bologna Process. In these remarks the fact that EHEA-QF had student participation and input right from the beginning was especially valuable.

Another point raised by the student organisations is the concern that the existence of the two qualifications frameworks at the European level may allow for some contradictions and overlaps between them. There is a clear preference in a significant number of answers for the development of a common framework or for a more clear integration of the two set so far.

Fig. 25: Student Perceptions of Qualifications Frameworks



The perceptions that student organisations have of qualifications frameworks are generally positive. When asking if a QF creates more transparency, a solid group of 27 respondents out of 36 answered they agree or strongly agree. The figures are even higher when replying if a qualifications framework can also facilitate recognition, reaching 31 positive answers. Regarding providing for more opportunities for learners, the enthusiasm is not so clear. Finally, the mood turns to a much more neutral one, when considering if a qualification framework enhances access from different forms of education. A concrete long-term experience of the absence of links and permeability between professional and academic sectors of post-secondary and higher education systems in some of the countries may help to explain the disbelief that a QF could alone overcome the many established barriers.

The national unions also do not think of a European qualification framework as part of a privatisation agenda for higher education. The same refusal we can observe when talking about the threat a European QF can hold for national autonomy and diversity. However, it is also clear when comparing the results that the amount of neutral responses to these questions is higher.

VIII. DOCTORAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The third cycle has been included in the Bologna Process since 2003. Intensive discussions about the third cycle have taken place since then. Between 2005 and 2007 the European University Association (EUA) carried out a project on doctoral programmes, examining how doctoral programmes are organised and analysing some of the features of the doctoral programmes existing. Although discussions have taken place, and there is an increasing awareness that also the third cycle is part of the Bologna Process, much work remains to be done. In this work, national and local students' unions around Europe should take part and be allowed to take part, even if they, in some cases, do not directly represent participants in the third cycle. Students' unions have knowledge and opinions that are valid and important for the development of the third cycle, as well as for the evolution of first and second cycle programmes. ESIB has taken an active part in the work lead by EUA since 2005, and intends to continue to do so. Additionally, national students' unions are, through a variety of ways, active on third cycle issues.

Conclusions

One of the outcomes of the answers from the national student unions is that ESIB and its members must add to the body of knowledge about the third cycle, and continue to build capacity to work with issues related to research, doctoral students and early stage researchers. However, the survey results also indicate that, governments and HEIs need to take guidance on these matters from national unions of students more seriously and invite the unions much more to the work in these areas.

The third cycle is still one of the areas in the Bologna Process in which confusion and uncertainty about how things should be done is the greatest. This needs to be seriously addressed by all actors in the EHEA in the lead-up to 2010. The connection between the first, second and, third cycles, and research needs to be enhanced and deepened; all levels of higher education need some measure of research.

The analysis also show that a large number of doctoral students still have an insecure social situation, and bear too large a burden for the costs of the doctoral programmes and research in the EHEA. This situation has to change if Europe wants to make a reality of the expressed will to increase the number of doctoral students and expand the research capacity in the area.

Recommendations

Based in our results ESIB recommends:

- Increased attention to research in the first and second cycles.
- Governments and HEI should include student unions in their work on the third cycle, as a general principle in accordance with the Bologna Process commitment to student representation.
- Improving the social situation for doctoral students through scholarships or grants.
- Making more use of the "Salzburg Principles", the "European Charter for Researchers" and the "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers".

8.1 – Representation of doctoral students

ESIB represents doctoral students: in a majority of those national unions surveyed (26) doctoral students are members, although in a number of those (6), doctoral students are not represented in the same way as other students or not very many doctoral students are represented. 14 of our unions do not represent any doctoral students and in 2 of these countries, Poland and Switzerland, the answers state that there is a different organisation dedicated to doctoral students. In Albania the third cycle is according to the union not implemented yet, and therefore they do not represent any third cycle students.

8.2 – Research elements in the first and second cycle

In the 2005 report, we asked our members about the amount of research there is in the first and second cycle of higher education. In all countries apart from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania and Slovakia there was research in the first and second cycle. In the first cycle it is typically part of thesis work and not included in other parts of curricula, but in the second cycle it is in some cases it forms part of other components of the curriculum. Research is mostly carried out as group work and can be both applied and fundamental research¹⁴.

In 2007 17 unions state that there has been very little change regarding research in the first and second cycle, the exceptions are Portugal, Slovakia and Moldova. In Portugal the amount of research in some of the new master programmes has increased. This is due to the fact that these master programmes are inter-linked with the doctoral programmes in a way that increases the amount of research in those programmes. Master students are involved in research projects in different ways, which was not previously the case. This reform is newly introduced, and further follow-up of which impact it will have on the general design of master programmes in Portugal is needed. In Austria, Germany and Hungary there has been very little change, which indicates that the situation regarding research in the first and second cycle is the same as in 2005. Hence the amount of research in the first and second cycle in these three countries is still very low.

8.3 – Funding and the structure of doctoral programmes

In the majority of the countries, there have been very small changes in the doctoral programmes, the funding for doctoral research and in the development and funding of postdoctoral positions. But at the same time a large number of our members indicate that they are not aware of any changes or are unsure about if changes have taken place; this might indicate that if changes have taken place they have not gotten a great amount of attention, or they have not been big enough to be able to attract attention.

In France and Slovakia there have been changes in the funding for doctoral research and in the development of postdoctoral positions. In order to increase the competitiveness of HEIs, clusters for higher education and research are being created in France. This process is just starting but is expected to have impact on the funding for doctoral research and the development of postdoctoral positions. In Bulgaria there has been radical changes in the doctoral programmes, which indicates intense work on the third cycle in this country.

8.4 – Status of doctoral students

The status of doctoral students differs a lot around Europe. In most countries doctoral students are in a

14

ESIB, 2005, "Bologna with student eyes", p. 54

position “between” being a student and an employee. Doctoral students are often employed if they carry out research, and also often have some paid work in the institution as teaching assistant or similar. The latter, is the case for example in Germany, Iceland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain and the UK. In the Netherlands doctoral students are always employed if carrying out research and this is always the case in Norway.

In Turkey, Sweden, Norway, Croatia and Spain, doctoral students have a special legal status as neither students nor employees. This underlines the role of the doctoral student as being between higher education and research.

8.5 – Social conditions

The social conditions of the doctoral students are very much dependent on how the individual is financing his or her studies. In general it seems as if doctoral students who get scholarships have significant problems with different kinds of social security; this is the case for example in Portugal and Sweden. Doctoral students or early stage researchers that are employed by the institution during their studies seem to have the most secure social situation; this is the case in the Netherlands and Norway for all doctoral students.

In some countries, doctoral students have the same social security conditions as other students but pay a higher tuition fee; this is the case in Malta, Ireland and Bulgaria. In this case, the financial burden on the doctoral students is higher than the financial burden on the other students, due to higher tuition fees.

8.6 – The Salzburg Principles and the European Charter and Code

At the Official Bologna Seminar on “Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society” in February 2005, a set of 10 basic principles for doctoral programmes were agreed upon¹⁵. In March 2005 the European Commission published the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”¹⁶. These documents all set down principles for research and doctoral programmes and are an important part of the discussion about research and doctoral programmes on the European level. On the national level, according to student’s unions, they seem to play a minor role (if any) in the discussions about doctoral programmes and the treatment of doctoral students and early stage researchers. 16 unions state that they are aware of the name and the content of the Charter, although only 11 and 8 unions know the name and content of the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers” and the “Salzburg Principles” respectively. In particular the “Salzburg Principles” seem not to be widely known at all; 18 unions state that they are not aware of the principles at all.

Only Austria reports that most universities have adopted the Charter. In other countries, the adoption of these documents does not seem to be underway or only very slowly becoming part of the general discussion. The national union of students in Bulgaria report that they have been taking an active part in work with these documents; Bulgaria seems to be a good example in this case. The national student union in Romania, on the other hand report that they are not even viewed as potential partners in the work with adopting or implementing the principles in these documents, which seems to be a bad example of how national unions are (not) involved in work with the third cycle.

15 Bologna Seminar on Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society, 2005, “CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS”, www.bologna-bergen2005.no

16 European Commission, 2005, the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”, http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/index_en.cfm?11=29&CFID=5063238&CFTOKEN=e90c1f0d82e3d998-2257FDED-CCA4-A800-D34270B74296CBFD

IX. EUROPEAN DIMENSION AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF EHEA

The European dimension has been part of the Bologna Process since its inception. Its goal is to promote European aspects of higher education especially within study modules and curricula more generally. The questions of mobility, language teaching and cooperation between HEI's within the EHEA are at the centre of the European dimension. One specific tool for promoting a European dimension is the development of joint and double degrees within the EHEA. The idea of an External dimension of the Bologna Process and a market-driven higher education has been gaining grounds in Europe. At the same time, a discussion about European values of HE has been taking place. The promotion of active citizenship, multiculturalism and higher education as a force for social cohesion are among the core values of the EHEA, and should therefore be reflected in discussions about the EHEA.

The idea of attracting Europeans and non-Europeans to study in the EHEA is included in what has been called the 'external dimension' of the Bologna Process. However, the concept of 'attractiveness' has been a part of the process since the beginning. In Bologna (1999), ministers decided on objectives which they considered to be "... of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide". The external dimension encompasses competitiveness. In Berlin (2003), ministers revisited the question of competition with the rest of the world, adding that "...the attractiveness and openness of the European higher education should be reinforced. They confirm their readiness to further develop scholarship programmes for students from third countries" and that "... transnational exchanges in higher education should be governed on the basis of academic quality and academic values, and agree to work in all appropriate fora to that end". In Bergen the idea of sustainable development, identifying partner regions and sharing of ideas and experiences was put in to the communiqué. The ministers also asked the Bologna Follow-Up Group "... to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension".

Conclusions

The responses from the national student unions indicate that the European dimension and joint degrees have not been an important issue in the national debates. European dimension is understood as promoting language studies, setting up programs and modules of study in English and the participation in the Bologna Process. Similar trends also emerged from the "Bologna with Student Eyes" (2005) report.

A broader understanding of the European dimension as including more than exchange programs and participation in the structural reforms should inform discussion on the national level. At the level of HEIs, there is an increasing interest in joining European networks. Joint and double degrees are not very well-known, because they usually have a very limited number of enrolments. Financial and administrative barriers exist, hindering students from participating in these programmes. The understanding of the attractiveness of the EHEA is closely linked to the idea of marketing of higher education, which is the same finding as in 2005.

In order to improve the attractiveness of the EHEA we need to tackle the immigration-related barriers, especially visa issues, the social dimension, and information about the EHEA. The national unions of students also expressed their concern regarding brain drain.

Recommendations

- The European dimension should be discussed more at a national level
- The HEIs should be encouraged to engage in European cooperation and to promote the European values such as multilingualism and multiculturalism
- Joint degrees should be available for a larger group of students and financial, administrative and legislative barriers should be removed
- Visa and other barriers of mobility need to be tackled in order to make the EHEA accessible for all
- Attractiveness and the external dimension should not be understood as only marketing the higher education to other parts of the world

9.1 – European Dimension

Ten of the surveyed organisations reported that there has not been much discussion of the European dimension, or that reforms have been implemented without discussions of European aspects. Only in Austria, Belgium (Flemish community), Norway and Poland are European topics mentioned in the curriculum as part of the European dimension. For example in Norway, StL has promoted the European dimension to be an integrated part of every study program.

The raising of awareness of internationalisation and European higher education policies is taking place in a number of countries. For example in Finland and Hungary, governments use European cooperation as a basis for argumentation for policies. In Spain the internationalisation argument is used also to promote commercialisation and marketing of universities. Finland, France and Portugal also mentioned the HEIs increased interest in cooperation with European universities and in joining European networks of institutions.

The idea of student and staff mobility and participation in exchange programs, such as Erasmus, were mentioned as a part of the European dimension in responses from Belgium (Flemish Community), Iceland, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Portugal and Turkey.

10 countries see that the European dimension is synonymous to taking part in the Bologna reforms. For example, students in the United Kingdom, Georgia, Italy and Slovenia feel that the Bologna Process itself is the European dimension. This indicates that the European dimension may have not been properly discussed or implemented on the national level. The 2005 findings of the “Bologna with Student Eyes” show the same vagueness in understanding and lack of discussion of the European dimension at the national level.

The point of languages was raised only in 8 answers, most often referring to the availability of courses, study modules and programs taught in English. Those countries were Germany, Finland, France, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Norway and Netherlands.

9.2 – Joint and Double Degrees

According to the answers received, joint and double degrees are not that familiar to the national students' unions. 10 of them were unable to answer the question about joint and double degrees. Most of the others reported that they did not know exactly how many joint or double degree programs are offered by their HEIs. National unions of students reported that the legal framework for joint and double degrees is in place or the implementation of such a framework is under discussion. Overall, it seems that interest by HEIs and governments in joint and double degrees is growing.

In those countries where the legal framework exists and joint or double degree programs are offered, criticisms was expressed that they are highly selective and not widely available. Many barriers persist. Financial barriers include the absence of additional funding schemes for students to cover the costs of living in different countries and the failure of the student grants and loans scheme of the home country to permit the use of the money for tuition fees abroad (as in Austria). There are also issues with regard to recognition of study periods and diplomas. From the Netherlands, it is reported that one of the obstacles for joint or double degree is the too rigid curriculum at home institutions and the lack of full recognition of studies undertaken in the partner institution.

Joint and double degrees are usually available at master's level, which is a disadvantage to those institutions that offer mostly first cycle degrees, such as polytechnics in Finland.

One of the driving forces behind joint degrees is the Erasmus Mundus program. For example in Belgium (Flemish Community) the tendency in joint degrees is to follow the Erasmus Mundus model. The criticism from students' unions that joint and double degrees are only available for a select few, and the financial barriers of participation in joint or double degree programs are similar to those recorded in the 2005 report.

9.3 – Attractiveness of EHEA

Student representatives from the new Bologna countries and from eastern European countries commented that attractiveness comes from the possibility to be part of the Bologna Process reform, of removing barriers of mobility (such as visa problems) and having real choices to do parts of studies in a different country. The main problems with visa handling occur when non-EU students are entering EU countries. Some countries have taken steps to remove these problems; a good example of this is Malta, where the national union of students reported that Malta has introduced a "student visa" for foreign students, which is more flexible than a normal visa.

Additionally, the availability of programs and courses taught in English, and offering basic language courses in the language of the destination country were mentioned. It seems that even though English is the most popular language used in the Master's programs that are focusing on the non-national students, the idea of teaching national languages for foreigners is also taking form.

Quite a lot of national students' unions reported on the increased interest in marketing higher education to non-European countries, especially in Asia. Some Mediterranean countries are also focused on attracting students from South America and Africa. In a number of answers from national unions of students concerns about brain drain from developing countries to Western Europe was mentioned. Some countries have set up programs, which are based on the idea of co-development rather than brain drain.

Norway has a program in their Aid Scheme, where students coming from developing countries get student grants and loans to study for a degree in Norway. For the students who go back to their home country, the loan turns into a grant, and for those who decided to stay in Norway they have to pay the money back as student loan. In Finland there is the NorthSouthSouth-exchange program that aims to create academic networks between Finland and developing countries in the Sub-Saharan countries. The program includes temporary mobility for both students and staff of the universities of the developing countries.

As the EHEA has become more attractive, side effects that require governmental action are apparent. In Norway, Chinese students are recruited to Norway by “agents”, to attend programmes that don’t give them higher education qualifications, despite the promises of the agent. The Norwegian government is taking steps to prevent this kind of action.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hanna Alaniska, Esteve Arboix Codina, Janet Bohrer, Rachel Dearlove, Suvi Eriksson, Emmi Helle, Lene Karin Wiberg, *Student involvement in the processes of quality assurance agencies*, ENQA, Helsinki, 2006, <http://www.enqa.eu/files/Student%20involvement.pdf> [2007-04-05]

Bologna Seminar on Doctoral Programmes for the European Knowledge Society. Conclusions and Recommendations, Salzburg, 2005, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/Bol_sem/Seminars/050203-05Salzburg/050203-05_Conclusions.pdf [2007-04-16]

Sanja Brus, Janja Komljenovič, Daithí Mac Síthigh, Geert Noope and Colin Tüek, *Student participation in QA: strengths and challenges*, in: EUA, *Embedding Quality Culture in Higher Education. A selection of papers from the 1st European Forum for Quality Assurance*, Brussels, 2007, http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Publications/EUA_QA_Forum_publication.pdf [2007-04-05]

ENQA, *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, Helsinki, 2005, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050221_ENQA_report.pdf [2007-04-05]

ESIB – The National Unions of Students in Europe, *Bologna with student eyes. ESIB's Bologna Analysis 2005*, Bergen, 2005

European Commission, *The European Charter for Researchers. The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*, Brussels, 2005, http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/index_en.cfm?l1=29&CFID=5063238&CFTOKEN=c90c1f0d82e3d998-2257FDED-CCA4-A800-D34270B74296CBFD [2007-04-16]

The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 2005, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf [2007-04-05]

Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education, Bologna, 1999, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/990719BOLOGNA_DECLARATION.PDF [2007-04-17]

Realising the European Higher Education Area. Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education, Berlin, 2003, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/030919Berlin_Communique.PDF [2007-04-17]



Socrates

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

