



London, 8-9 February 2007

**official
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MAKING BOLOGNA A REALITY
Mobility of staff and students

General Report: Recommendations & Conclusions

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We all agree:

Mobility of Students and Staff* is at the core of the Bologna Process,

since it was in the Bologna Declaration and also in *all* the Communiqués to follow.

But why then

- the feeling that much remains to be done, and
- our doubts about the real commitment?

*including administrative staff



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We do not even know the extent of Mobility!

The Work Group appointed by BFUG to collect data on Mobility of Staff & Students has not managed to present comparable and reliable data on mobility, just some on students, but not for *all* Bologna countries, and *none* on staff.

Why?

- Common definitions are missing
- National data collection are scarce



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Possible reasons for the lack:

The rationale for mobility has mainly been described from an *individual perspective*:

- personal growth,
- widening academic experiences,
- new language competences,
- a capacity for cultural understanding, etc.

So, most Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have *not* seen it as their responsibility:

- to help individual staff & students to be mobile in a systematic and well designed way, or
- to even register the number and the nature of their outgoing or incoming staff & students.

But, they *should* see it as their responsibility, in accordance with guidelines from the national levels and from the Bologna Process, since mobile staff & students will enhance the quality of higher education (*cf* research).



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Regard mobility as an institutional responsibility instead of an individual one!

But this does *not* imply that we can leave the individuals outside the process.

On the contrary,

Representatives of staff & students have to be involved at *all* levels of the process, at the European, national and institutional levels



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Recommendations: (*not* in priority order)

Data Collection on Staff & Students:

- Common definitions have to be developed
- Data – qualitative, quantitative and good practices – have to be collected on the institutional and national levels
- National data has to be compiled and analysed on the European level, as well as the national levels



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Recommendations (cont.)

Staff & Student Visas and Work Permits:

- Creating fast, efficient & free or cheap visas for staff & students
- Work Permits should go with the visas (*cf* the EU directive on Researchers from a third country)

Information:

- Better, more systematic information available to all staff & students
- Cooperation between Mobility Offices in HEIs



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Recommendations (cont.)

Improved Attractiveness of the Academic Profession:

The predicted future need for academic staff calls for actions at both *national* and *institutional* levels

- to compete with other universities worldwide, and
- to attract young people into the academic career.

Actions to be taken regarding mobility for staff, e.g.

- Mobility periods abroad scheduled ahead at regular intervals, but at the same time providing a secure employment position upon return
- Development of a charter for mobile university teachers (*cf* the EU Code and Charter for Researchers)



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Recommendations (cont.)

Recognition of Study and Work Periods Abroad:

Students:

- Set up the overarching Qualifications Frameworks, use the ECTS and the Quality Assurance system - The dissemination of these tools shall be brought to the labor market by involving employers in the process. *Note* the need to reconcile the two Qualification Frameworks!
- Ratify and/or *proper* implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Europass in all Bologna countries

Staff:

- Recognise work periods abroad, when recruiting and promoting academic staff



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Recommendations (cont.)

Portability of Loans & Grants and Social Benefits:

- National governments have to make social rights of individuals in the home country portable in order to facilitate mobility, e.g.
- Student loans and/or grants
- Pension schemes, sick leave, parental leave etc. for staff (and sometimes students)
- The Bologna process needs to ensure that countries move forward to a common agenda and similar entitlements.



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Recommendations (cont.)

Equal Access to Mobility (the social dimension):

To give equal opportunities for mobility for *all* staff & for *all* students

- Additional financial support is needed for students who are going to countries with higher living costs than in their home country – Fund financed jointly on a fair basis among the Bologna countries, *maybe* managed by the Council of Europe
- Special attention should be given to enhance mobility opportunities for staff & students with disabilities
- Staff & students with families, especially with children or other caring responsibilities, have special needs that have to be met



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Recommendations (cont.)

Actions to Avoid Brain Drain:

Existing regional and socio-economic inequalities and the threat of brain drain need to be acknowledged as problems at the European level, both *within* the Bologna area and *towards* the rest of the world.

Some suggested actions:

- Prejudices concerning quality and recognition still have to be met by better information
- Language proficiency in less frequently spoken languages needs to be enhanced
- Cooperation between Eastern and Western Europe should be fostered, e.g. by establishing joint degree programmes, funded mobility exchange programmes (*cf* Tempus)



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Recommendations (cont.)

Intellectual Mobility:

The mobility of thoughts, ideas, methods, etc. is as important as physical mobility of staff & students (although no alternative for it).

Therefore academic staff must be guaranteed

- academic freedom, including the freedom to publish ideas and results, and
- the right to engage in public debate, especially concerning issues in higher education and research.

(*cf* the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel, 1997)



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Recommendations (cont.)

Non-Traditional Forms of Mobility:

HEIs should be encouraged to explore non- traditional forms of mobility, e.g.

- Setting up joint degree programmes
- The potential of virtual mobility, including use of the internet, e-libraries, databases and virtual conferencing – safeguard *all* forms of free and open publication
- Flexible curricula – to promote mobility internationally (but in fact also nationally)

It also should be noted that visiting teachers & students provide internationalisation in their host institution.



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Recommendations (cont.)

....and finally to speed up the Bologna Process

- The *true* involvement of students and staff is necessary at European, national, and HEI levels
- Institutional responsibility for mobility needs to be enhanced, and every HEI should be required to develop and implement a mobility policy consistent with the requirements of the Bologna Process – incentives for HEIs have to be introduced



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Suggestions for the Communiqué

- We are convinced that mobility will enhance the quality of higher education and that it is now high time to genuinely make mobility the key concern of the Bologna Process. A much greater effort is therefore needed to build coherent strategies, including action plans at all levels, to provide incentives for more balanced mobility and to remove obstacles. We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to give high priority to work on mobility, and to report back to ministers by 2009
- We require the Bologna Follow-up Group to invite the EI Pan European Structure and ESIB, with the participation of other relevant partners, to develop a European strategy on mobility of staff and students for consideration at the next ministerial meeting in 2009. The definition of appropriate data in collaboration with international data providers must be seen as a priority task to underpin the rest of the work. Stocktaking in certain well defined areas may be a potential tool to support this work. Any such strategy will call for the greater involvement of all partners at all relevant levels, especially higher education institutions as well as relevant ministries that deal with issues other than education.
- We have also agreed that - as a matter of urgency - visa regulations, work permits and social and financial conditions for mobility need to be addressed by the national authorities, with a view to the removal of obstacles to staff and students' mobility well before the ministerial meeting in 2009.



Bologna Process Follow-Up Seminar

New Challenges in Recognition: recognition of prior learning and recognition of European degrees outside

Riga, 25 – 26 January 2007

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Bologna Seminar *New Challenges in Recognition: recognition of prior learning and recognition between Europe and other parts of the world* (Riga, Latvia; 25 – 26 January 2007) was a well organised *European/international forum* as well as another opportunity to *share good practices* and *deepen understanding of new paradigms* in higher education.

The following conclusions and recommendations were summarized:

1. First of all, the seminar reaffirmed that *recognition of higher education qualifications, of periods of studies acquired abroad or of prior (experiential) learning are an integral part of the right to education and the promotion of the freedom of movement.*

Seminar also reaffirmed the *value aspects of higher education*. Recognition should not be understood in a narrow instrumental sense but *in relation to all fundamental objectives of the higher education*:

- *preparation for the labour market;*
- *preparation for life as active citizens in democratic society;*
- *personal development;*
- *development and maintenance an advanced knowledge base.*

2. Participants encourage all European HEIs, ENIC/NARIC centres and other competent recognition authorities *to assess qualifications from other areas of the world with the same open mind with which they would like European qualifications to be approached elsewhere*, and to assess qualifications from outside Europe according to the criteria and

procedures outlined in the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention and its subsidiary texts.

In view of the great variety of higher education systems and approaches worldwide this should include shifting the emphasis further *from input characteristics* of the qualifications *to the learning outcomes* achieved.

The Convention and its principles should be observed in a spirit of openness to all potential partners and a revision of regional conventions in a mutual dialogue should be encouraged as well.

3. *Reliable, easily understandable and easily accessible information on education systems and qualifications frameworks is essential to promoting the fair recognition of qualifications from the EHEA in other parts of the world.*

To a large extent information on educational systems is already provided. Yet, there is a need to adapt this information for easier understanding by those from outside the EHEA who are not familiar with the specific terminology created through the Bologna Process. The information should be made available on the web together with other information on the Bologna Process.

4. Participants firmly support *the proposal to establish policy fora with partners from other areas of the world*, as a part of the Bologna Process in a global context.

They encourage the BFUG to make recognition the topic of one of these fora, building on the work undertaken in this area by ENIC/NARIC Networks and involving them closely in this work.

A promotion of cooperation between the ENIC/NARIC Networks and similar networks from other world regions, in particular with a view to the development of a common understanding of recognition criteria, procedures and practices as well as transnational higher education provision is highly recommended.

5. European HEIs rely today on a number of useful tools developed through the Bologna Process and these tools are often well accepted in other areas of the world. These tools should be kept update and efficient. Participants realize that the *Diploma Supplement was designed already in 1998* and that *afterwards European higher education systems have undergone substantial reforms*. The Diploma Supplement is still well suited but it is *recommended to amend and renew its Explanatory Report* (e.g. joint degrees, workload and credits, quality assurance systems, transnational higher education etc.). Since the Diploma Supplement is a joint instrument, amendments have to be adopted both in the framework of the Lisbon Convention Intergovernmental Committee and the European Commission.

6. Participants realize that *recognition of prior learning and credit allocation for competences acquired outside formal higher education (APL/APEL)* is well developed only in a relatively small part of the emerging EHEA. Therefore, it is essential that progress be made in this area in the next period and ministers in London should make a specific commitment in this regard. Existing and planned developments to create national

lifelong learning systems, including the “new style” qualification frameworks, should include systems to facilitate APL/APEL and recognition of prior learning should be used also for access to higher education. This will, *inter alia*, require that study programmes and individual courses of formal higher education be linked to *learning outcomes* and *competences*. ENIC/NARIC Networks can give information also about APL/APEL and similar strategies in various countries – in Europe and worldwide – and their educational systems.

7. The seminar proved that *recognition issues are substantially interlinked with quality assurance issues*. Therefore, participants encourage ENQA, in conjunction with E-4 partners and other appropriate bodies, to *explore the creation and implementation of good practice* (models, procedures and guidelines) *for recognition procedures in general*, including *APL/APEL*, consistent with their ‘Standards and Guidelines’ and in the context of lifelong learning.

8. National higher education authorities are encouraged to include *elements to facilitate APL/APEL in the national lifelong learning systems*, including the development of ‘new style’ qualifications frameworks. National authorities are also expected to introduce *operational guidelines and principles for APL/APEL fully integrated with national quality assurance processes* and to promote the widespread implementation and acceptance of APL/APEL and lifelong learning by academics, employers and students.

9. Similarly as in quality enhancement issues, main responsibility for improvement of recognition lies with institutions. All European HEIs are encouraged to *put in place clear processes and practices that transparently detail their internal APL/APEL systems and procedures for staff, students and employers*. They are also expected to adopt appropriate staff development strategies to overcome barriers to broader implementation of APL/APEL and to ensure that all processes are transparent, fair, rigorous and efficient.

Riga, 26 January 2007

Report from the Official Bologna Seminar on *Recognition issues in the Bologna Process*

With Conclusions and Recommendations

(Riga, Latvia, January 25-26, 2007)

Pavel Zgaga

The *recognition of qualifications* has always been one of the key priorities of the Bologna Process since it is a key element in facilitating *mobility* of students and graduates. In this regard, mobility should be understood as a free mobility of students, graduates and staff *within* the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) as well as with other parts of the world (mobility *to* and *from* the EHEA).

1. The context of a new seminar on recognition issues

Recognition issues have always found a sound position in the Bologna follow-up activities. In Prague, “*Ministers encouraged the follow-up group to arrange seminars*” to explore several areas in order to take the process further, including “*recognition issues and the use of credits in the Bologna process*” (Prague Communiqué, 2001). The first official Bologna Seminar on these issues was held in Lisbon in April 2002, that is, during the 2001 – 2003 follow-up period. In Berlin, Ministers declared to “*strengthen their efforts to [...] improve the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies*” (Berlin Communiqué, 2003). During the period 2003 – 2005, the second Seminar was held in Riga (December 2004). The ENIC and NARIC Networks as well as the Committee of the Lisbon Recognition Convention have also importantly contributed to the elaboration of recognition issues within the Bologna Process (e.g. Vaduz Statement, 2003; Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees, 2004).

In May 2005, when summarizing the progress in this area, Ministers in Bergen noted under the heading “Recognition of degrees and study periods”

“that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. We urge those that have not already done so to ratify the Convention without delay. We commit ourselves to ensuring the full implementation of its principles, and to incorporating them in national legislation as appropriate. We call on all participating countries to address recognition problems identified by the ENIC/NARIC networks. We will draw up national action plans to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications. These plans will form part of each country’s national report for the next Ministerial Conference. We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all national authorities and other stakeholders to recognise joint degrees awarded in two or more countries in the EHEA.”

We see the development of national and European frameworks for qualifications as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning in higher education. We will work with higher education institutions and others to improve recognition of prior learning including, where possible, non-formal and informal learning for access to, and as elements in, higher education programmes.” (Bergen Communiqué, 2005)

The Bergen Communiqué determined “*recognition of degrees and study periods*” as one of “*three intermediate priorities*” and added that “*procedures for the recognition of prior learning*” should be included into stocktaking exercise for 2007. Further on, the Communiqué stressed that “[*t*]he European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world” and “*a strategy for the external dimension*” was asked to be elaborate. A draft strategy (presented to BFUG in November 2006) made it already clear that “[*d*]eveloping policies and practices to further the fair recognition of qualifications is [...] a key element of the Strategy for the European Higher Education Area in a Global Setting”.

Thus, recognition issues got a distinctive position on the *Bologna Work Programme 2005 – 2007*. On top of tasks fixed in Bergen for the 2005 – 2007 follow-up period the third Seminar on “Recognition of prior learning and recognition of European degrees outside Europe” was also agreed.

The seminar¹ was held in Riga on 25 and 26 January 2007. It dealt with challenges and answers to recognition issues as appearing in the course of the Bologna Process gradually progressing towards the European Higher Education Area in 2010. The seminar attracted a very international audience. About 130 participants joined the seminar in Riga, coming from 30 member countries of the Bologna Process (representing ministries as well as universities and other institutions and organisations) as well as from 4 other countries (Belarus, Canada, New Zealand and USA).

Besides its working character, the Riga seminar had also an exclusive memorial feature: *ten years* have passed since the Council of Europe and UNESCO *Recognition Convention* was agreed and signed in Lisbon (April 1997). A reflection on these ten years as well as a look ahead were present in inaugural addresses by Baiba Rivža, Latvian Minister of Education, Sjur Bergan, Head of Department of Higher Education and Research, Council of Europe, and Tatjana Volkova, President of the Latvian Rectors Conference, but also in presentations and discussion during the seminar.

2. Recognition issues as a priority on the Bologna agenda

In ten years, the *Lisbon Recognition Convention* has been fully adopted into the Bologna framework. It can't be treated as a “genuine product” of the Bologna Process since it was signed two years *before* the Bologna Declaration; however, it already expressed what has

¹ Official Bologna Seminar organized by Latvia and Council of Europe. *New Challenges in Recognition: recognition of prior learning and recognition of European degrees outside*. Riga, Latvia, January 25-26, 2007; <http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007>.

been later called the “Bologna spirit”. In recent years, it has been also often stressed that the Convention is the only legal instrument within the Bologna Process so far. Communications from ministerial summits and from other events organized within the Process have continuously referred to the principles laid down in the Convention, supported its implementation and further developments (e.g. subsidiary documents).

The Sorbonne Declaration (1998) already referred to it directly and stressed that it “*set a number of basic requirements*” and that “[s]tanding by these conclusions, one can build on them and go further”. The Bologna Declaration (1999) with its six objectives focused at “*the creation of European area of higher education as a key way to promote the citizens’ mobility and employability and the Continent’s overall development*”. Indeed, the Process built on these “basic requirements” and “went further”. Recognition has not been seen any more only as tools and techniques of changing “degree currency” at check-points between national higher education systems. On the contrary, recognition issues intersect with all other objectives of the Bologna Process and form fundamentals for the European Higher Education Area.

Recognition is not a magic word of the Bologna Declaration; in fact, it contains only one, rather marginal reference to “recognition”.² Was the Bologna Declaration a step back with regard to the Sorbonne Declaration? Not really. Inherently, all “Bologna objectives” or action lines are closely connected to recognition. Within the Bologna Process, the *adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees and establishment of the system of credits* as the most central Bologna objectives have been very closely related to recognition procedures. *Promotion of mobility* has been linked to principles of mutual recognition of degrees and study periods. *European co-operation in quality assurance*, another genuine Bologna objective, aims at removing most of mistrust among national higher education systems. *Promotion of European dimension in higher education* underpins these aims in new ways. All in all, it is obvious that improved recognition procedures can most effectively enhance *the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area*. Recognition is not only an issue for national ministries and agencies; “higher education institutions as partners in the Bologna Process” have a lot to do in this field as well. Finally, *lifelong learning as an essential element of the European Higher Education Area* substantially depends on prior learning assessment and recognition, which has – unfortunately – entered the Bologna agenda with a delay.

Despite delays, important milestones have been set up after Bologna. In Prague (2001), Ministers “*strongly encouraged universities and other higher education institutions to take full advantage of existing national legislation and European tools aimed at facilitating academic and professional recognition of course units, degrees and other awards, so that citizens can effectively use their qualifications, competencies and skills*”

² See the fourth Bologna action line: “Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:

- for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services;
- for teachers, researches and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in European contest researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.”

throughout the European Higher Education Area” and “called upon existing organizations and networks such as NARIC and ENIC to promote, at institutional, national and European level, simple, efficient and fair recognition reflecting the underlying diversity of qualifications”. The Prague Summit also stressed, for the first time, the importance of “closer cooperation between recognition and quality assurance”.

In Berlin (2003), Ministers underlined “the importance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, which should be ratified by all countries participating in the Bologna Process, and call on the ENIC and NARIC networks along with the competent National Authorities to further the implementation of the Convention”. In addition, the Berlin Communiqué brought forward certain topics which can’t be avoided in “translating” new recognition philosophy into higher education practices: academic recognition for further studies, recognition of joint degrees and – in relation to for lifelong learning – recognition of prior learning.

The key message on recognition issues from Bergen (2005) has been already quoted above.

Thus, it can be concluded that – inherently or explicitly – *recognition is a cross-cutting Bologna issue*. It is a complex issue since is a term with a broad meaning extending at various levels from e.g. recognition of *foreign qualifications* via *recognition of study periods* (as e.g. in Erasmus programme and other short mobility schemes) to *recognition of prior learning*. Recognition belongs to key Bologna terms with highest frequency in policy documents and background studies (see *Table 1*).

Table 1: Frequency of key Bologna terms in Declarations and Communiqués

	Sorbonne	Bologna	Prague	Berlin	Bergen
Mobility	3	4	8	8	7
Recognition	4	1	4	8	13
Quality Assur.	0	1	9	11	13
2 (3) Cycles	4	5	3	12	8
Qualification Fr.	(1)	0	1	5	10
Attractiveness	(1)	(1)	6	3	4
Employability	1	2	2	2	2
LLL	0	1	5	4	2
Learning Outc.	0	0	0	1	1
Prior Learning	0	0	0	1	1

3. Recognition issues and the Bologna Process: where are we today?

Since 1997, not only the language but also issues have evolved. Developments in this area are obvious; but, as it was already said, there are also delays. Remind only that in Bergen, ministers noted “that 36 of the 45 participating countries have now ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention” and urged “those that have not already done so to ratify

the Convention without delay". They also promised to work "to improve recognition of prior learning". What is a situation today, that is, 20 months after Bergen and 10 years after Lisbon? Today, it is probably too early to make firm conclusions for the period 2005 - 2007: stocktaking analysis 2007 is not ready yet and some other Bologna biannual reports are still in progress. However, some data are already (and continuously) available and some preliminary results from the Trends 5 Report were communicated few weeks ago. Let focus to some facts and figures.

As one can check at the Council's of Europe conventions website (status as of 23 January 2007),³ there has been *very little progress in this area*: two new countries (Malta and Turkey) are now on the list of ratifications while *not less than seven* "old Bologna countries" – with their mostly large and important national higher education systems – who have been members of the Process since 1999 (and two of them since 1998!) are still missing (see *Table 2*). On the other hand, seven countries who are not members of the Bologna Process either signed or ratified the Convention (Australia, Belarus, Canada, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and USA). What could be the inner logic of the European Higher Education Area after 2010 about if the Lisbon Recognition Convention would not be ratified by all its genuine members?

Table 2: *Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention by Bologna members*

LRC ratifications	Bologna members	Ratified	Not yet
May 1999	29	7	22
May 2001	33	21	12
Sept. 2003	40	29	11
May 2005	45	36	9
January 2007	46	39	7
→ ???	(all)	(all)	0

There is an additional point in monitoring the Bologna Process which should get us even more anxious. On one hand, reports proved that an important progress and developments have been achieved e.g. in implementing the three cycle system, ECTS, understanding and promoting employability of new degrees, quality enhancement, internationalization of higher education etc. Unfortunately, on the other hand, recognition seems to be a rather gray area on this map. If a comparison between the Trends 3 Report from 2003 and preliminary results from Trends 5 is made, *almost no improvement in recognising credits from partner institutions has been achieved*. In 2003, 50% of respondents answered that "some students have problems" but during the last four years the figure has remained almost the same and it amounts today to 48%. Almost the same figure (47%) refers to higher education institutions which already issue Diploma Supplement to all their students. Less than a half! Saying it in a more simple way: *only three years before entering a common European Higher Education Area, one half of our students "have problems" in recognising credits achieved in mobility schemes with partner institutions*.

³ <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ChercheSig.asp?NT=165&CM=8&DF=1/23/2007&CL=ENG>

These and similar cases request us to consider the years behind us as well as years to come. They request us to go deeper and to go further. Briefly, and from today's point of view, the Process at early stages was mainly occupied (a) by *negotiating* and *developing* principles and tools and (b) had a predominantly *internal focus*: it was a "European occupation with Europe". The Process at the present stage is characterised (c) by *implementation* of principles and their elaboration for practice; (d) by "*looking out*" to cooperation with other parts of the world and, last but not least, (e) by *questioning about the future*: what will EHEA be over 2010?

Bologna is a construction of necessary common tools and frameworks (*how* does it work?), which have to be implemented until 2010, but not only. It is also a "*philosophy*": it is laid down on agreed principles (*why* all this work?); it is a reconstruction of our higher education systems on basis of *common values* (*why* do we need it?). Therefore, not only a change of tools and frameworks but also a *change of minds* (e.g. a change of academic culture) is necessary.

This change already takes place; it could be illustrated by a number of cases. Let take, for example, international cooperation; last but not least, it is closely related to various aspects of recognition. As we can see from preliminary results of the Trends 5 survey, there have been shifts in perception of international co-operation in higher education with various world regions (*Table 3*).⁴ These shifts can affect recognition issues in future, in particularly if the observed trends will continue.

First of all, it is obvious that European higher education institutions are still highly occupied with cooperation among European higher education institutions, *but less than three years ago*. They are "looking out". At the present stage of development, it seems normal that international co-operation in higher education as a predominantly European business will continue to decrease in the years to come and that interest in other world regions will increase. Of course, a division to "Europe" and "East Europe"⁵ (i.e. "the European interest in East Europe") should be also addressed until establishment of a common EHEA in 2010.

Secondly, there is a visible and *substantial shift of European interest in Asian higher education systems* which confirms this finding. In European eyes, Asia lagged rather far behind East Europe and North America in 2003, but in a rather short period of three years it overtook US and Canada and came as close as possible to the (constant) position of Eastern Europe. Probably, there could be some miscalculation in evaluation of this shift⁶ but it is clear that Asia came very high on European higher education institutions' priority lists.

⁴ The first figure refers to Trends 5 (2006 survey) while the figure in brackets (T3) refers to Trends 3 (2003 survey).

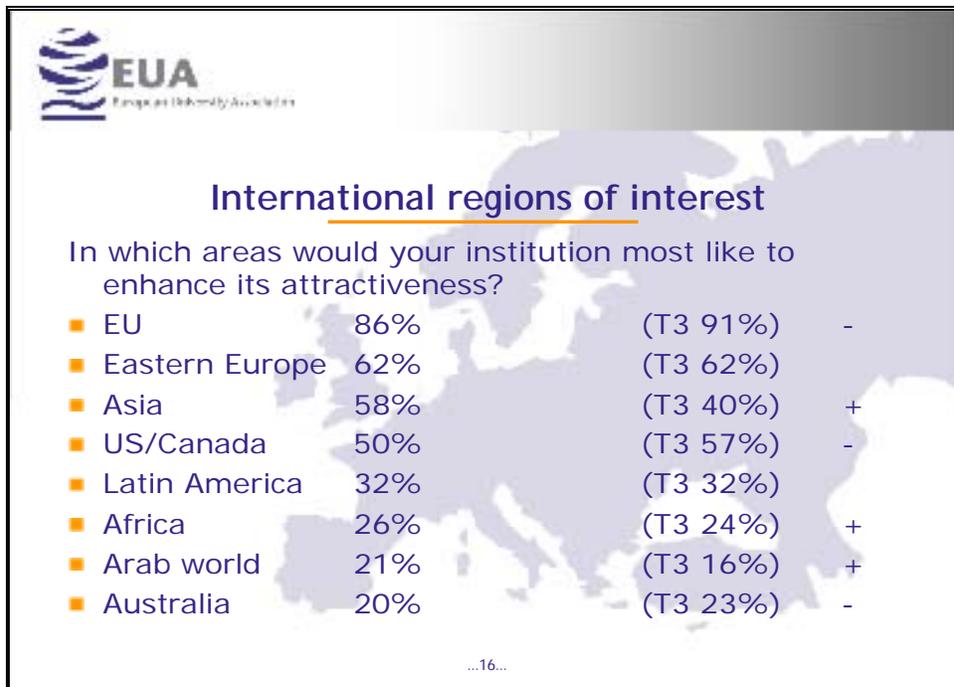
⁵ It is easy to note that the so-called "East Europe" and Latin America are the only two constants of the *Table 3*.

⁶ As one could conclude on basis of available data (e.g. ACA study on Perception of European Higher Education in Third Countries, 2006) it seems that there is no similarly substantial shift of interest in Europe from Asian countries.

Thirdly, some of those regions which were at the bottom of regions of interest in 2003 – *Africa and the Arab world* – are now positioned better and perceptible in European eyes more “attractive”. In these cases, shifts are not substantial and a real improvement of cooperation should be evaluated again later. On the other hand, Latin America is another constant and lead to a scruple that interest is not shared equally in all parts of Europe.

Lastly, US, Canada and Australia are the only *two regions with a slightly decreased interest*. Of course, changes in perception of world regions influence each other and cause relative and absolute shifts on the table. However, US and Canada still reach rather a high score of one half (50%) and quality of trans-Atlantic cooperation gives good prospects for future. The negative shift in interest for Australia (rather low already before) is more questionable: indeed, in European eyes it is “most far” region and it can produce pragmatic concerns with regard to mobility, but in 2006 Australia increased its interest in the Bologna Process launching a national consultation process on it – with no similar action on European side (if invitations to some Bologna follow-up seminars are excluded).

Table 3: Preliminary results of the Trends 5 Report



Similar shifts could be observed and similar reflections could be made also with regard to – on the first side rather “technical” – issues as e.g. mobility, credit systems, issuing Diploma Supplement, developing frameworks of qualifications, learning outcomes based courses, recognition of prior learning, quality enhancement, etc. All these shifts prove that important changes take place not only at the system and institutional levels of European higher education but also in broader “academic culture”: they do not give only evidence on “quantitative effects” of common tools and frameworks implemented so far

but draw attention to “qualitative effects” of higher education reforms. On-going changes are closely connected to new aims and they are also connected to values – new values as well as traditional ones.

Of course, changes never take place without a resistance. But if the new values are so appreciated and broadly shared we should ask – why resistance? First of all, we should always ask: are they really so appreciated and broadly shared? Secondly, and as it has been always a case, values are disputed in human culture and subjected to different interpretations. Since 1999, for example, “*the experience [...] has demonstrated that there is ample room for different and at times conflicting interpretations regarding the duration and orientation of programmes. Especially the employability of 3 year Bachelor graduates continues to be an issue in many countries*” (Trends 4, 2005). From the recognition point of view, this is a very serious interpretation issue and a problem: if there is no firm agreement on it within Europe, if there are e.g. attempts to “equalise” previous 4-year Diploma as the new “Bologna Master”, how could Europe expect from e.g. US to recognise the new “Bologna Bachelor” in full? However, a dispute is a “normal” – sometimes even necessary – way of changing minds and cultures, academic culture in particular. On the other hand, resistance can also take place when certain preconditions (resources, skills, “tools” etc.) for change are not met. This could be a “less normal” (at least less favourable) situation.

The Bologna Process has made clear from the beginning that the achievement of the EHEA “*requires continual momentum in order to be fully accomplished*” (Bologna Declaration, 1999); through demanding discussions and long lasting consultations it has proceeded from basic principles to elaboration of rather concrete details. Since Berlin, the progress of the Bologna Process has been monitored systematically while fostering implementation and checking critically about eventual delays. The issue of “different and at times conflicting interpretations” should be a part of this monitoring as well, aiming at achieving a dynamic consensus which could enhance the momentum, allow for European diversities – and test as well as promote the new higher education philosophy and/or culture.

Learning from good practice is (also) a Bologna characteristic. In this context, good practice in higher education is a proof of emerging new academic culture. As it is often possible to see at Bologna seminars, there is a hunger for new approaches and practices which could show reliable paths how to “translate” principles to concrete actions and how to implement systemic tools into everyday life of European higher education institutions. This is a Bologna bottleneck. As Stephen Adam noticed already at the previous Riga seminar of 2004, “*we are faced with a big problem – the reality gap between having systems and process and using them. [...] The problem is that there is still widespread ignorance, poor practice, xenophobia and reluctance to move from viewing recognition of qualifications as a process of simply looking for exact equivalence rather than ‘fair recognition’.*”⁷ And “fair recognition” is a challenge, which has not only to deal with tools and techniques but with aims and values.

⁷ Stephen Adam, *Final Report and Recommendations of the Conference*; Bologna Seminar on Recognition, Riga, 3-4 December 2004 <<http://www.aic.lv/rigaseminar/>>.

4. The seminar work

The Riga seminar on new challenges in recognition addressed a number of questions which crosscut both “how” as well as “why” horizons. Two distinctive recognition dimensions were addressed: (1) recognition of prior learning and (2) recognition of European degrees outside.

At the beginning of the first plenary session, Stephen Adam, rapporteur at the 2004 Riga seminar, presented a comprehensive paper on APEL. On backgrounds of significant developments in the area of international recognition since the inception of the Bologna reforms he noted that the challenge facing us now is not to create more devices but to ensure the existing ones are properly and extensively employed. He focused on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and exposed a number of intertwined issues which make clear the importance of recognition of prior learning in today’s higher education as well as the national and institutional implications for lifelong learning. At the end of his paper he contributed a proposal with concrete recommendations which were taken further in discussion groups and synthesized in final conclusions and recommendations of the seminar.

In the continuation, recognition of lifelong learning was extensively illustrated by examples of practices from Belgium Flemish community, France, Estonia and Canada. Stephan Neetens, on behalf of National Union of Students in Flanders (VVS), presented reach Flemish experience in Recognition of Prior Learning. In Flanders, lifelong learning has been high on the agenda since the late nineties – both in education and training as well as in labour and employment. The policy objective of “the right of the individual to have her/his experience and knowledge recognized” was legally translated in two Parliamentary decrees and today recognition of prior learning is an established practice in academic as well as in professional context. Definitions, standards and procedures are well elaborated. E.g. Recognition of Prior Acquired Experiences (EVC) is defined as a total of knowledge, insight, skills and attitudes acquired via learning processes that have not resulted in a certified proof of study.

Michel Feutry from the University of Sciences and Technologies of Lille presented another long and well established national practice. Validation of non formal and informal learning in France (VAE) underwent three historical steps: validation for access to Universities (1985), validation for credits (1992) and, recently, validation for a qualification (2002). The last step allowed institutions to award a full qualification (a degree, a diploma or a certificate) on the basis of individual experience. By this way VAE is opening up a new road towards qualifications by comparison with schooling, apprenticeship, or further education. The whole experience of an individual, and not only professional/work experience, should be taken into account. The duration of the experience required has been reduced from 5 to 3 years. In future, a move from an individual to a collective demand (human resource policies in companies) is envisaged.

Aune Valk from University of Tartu reported on AP(E)L and reforms in higher education in Estonia. In last 15 years, the system of higher education in Estonia underwent several reforms and deeply changed. Consecutive changes of degree systems and more flexible university curricula resulted in a need of individuals to assess their qualifications already achieved and to help them to advance in the new qualification structure. There were also changes in status of higher education institutions, which created the need for transfer of credits between institutions. Against this background, discussions on AP(E)L started and according to the University act all institutions have to adopt detailed regulation on this issue. At the University of Tartu, regulation now in force allows up to up to 50% of the Bachelor studies to be obtained through APL (accreditation of prior learning) and 50% of the applied higher education degree and Master studies through APEL (including experiential learning). Since 2006 APEL is also possible in Bachelor studies but access is not possible. Several issues are still open, but AP(E)L principles, assessment methods and procedure have been developed importantly.

Yves E. Beaudin from Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials at the Council of Ministers of Education presented good practice in Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada. Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a widely accepted practice. Canada is a nation of immigrants and recognition of their qualifications is of utmost importance. Very few provinces have developed formal policies on recognition of prior learning but this does not mean that policies do not reflect the importance of such methods of assessment. It is done differently in a decentralized environment. Universities are responsible for setting academic standards and for assessing formal, non-formal and informal prior learning for admissions and credit purposes; they also develop their own assessment methods and procedures. Most universities have personnel dedicated to PLAR activities at the institutional, departmental or faculty level. In the development of PLAR policies they use competency-based assessments, summative assessments, portfolio development and challenge examinations, etc. Credit transfer systems are used towards a university degree and challenge for credits towards specific courses are authorized. Some universities use portfolio assessments for non-formal and informal learning towards a degree program. There are also other institutions and bodies with responsibilities in this area.

The second plenary under the heading “Bologna and the World or Bologna vs. the World” addressed recognition of European degrees in a global setting. Stephen Hunt from US Department of Education contributed analytical views on a transatlantic cooperation. Last ten years show a gradual progress from problems towards mutual understanding. In mid-nineties, there were several obstacles in recognition on both sides and there was a mutual incapability to understand other higher education systems. Concerned educators and policymakers in many countries began to push for the policing of national systems and transnational activities via international organizations and agreements. When the UNESCO European Region countries negotiated and signed the Lisbon Recognition Convention in 1997, the transatlantic cooperation entered a new phase. Recent surveys show that over 50% of US and even more Canadian institutions are aware of the Bologna Process and its importance. 56% of the US and Canadian graduate schools that accept the most international students now accept 3-year degrees,

and nearly half (44%) of the rest. US institutions that have close partnerships with EHEA institutions, are aware of the Diploma Supplement and sometimes use it. US, Canadian and European educators now hold frequent conferences and participate in one another's meetings. This is what makes good prospects for future.

Nina Gustafsson Åberg (ESIB) spoke on a relationship between Europe and other parts of the world and warned about the possibility that the building of the EHEA creates new obstacles for student mobility in both directions – from outside to the EHEA as well as from the EHEA to other countries of the world. She stressed that recognition of degrees or study periods rests on the same principle no matter where a student got his/her degree or learning experience. Since the purpose of the Lisbon Convention is to create and to increase mutual trust, it is important that trust increasing activities are undertaken between European institutions and institutions in other regions. It is similar with recognition of prior learning: the procedures have to include also students from outside of the EHEA. She was rather critical about traditional recognition approaches at institutions and recognition authorities; the use of the concept of learning outcomes and competences must be more widely implemented than it is today. On behalf of ESIB, she also expressed concerns about the fact that several Bologna countries haven't ratified the Convention yet. The Lisbon Convention principles can be used not only within European region but also for qualifications from outside Europe. The EHEA has to be open to the world and must not result in an academic Fortress Europe, she concluded.

At the end of the second plenary, Andrejs Rauhvargers from University of Latvia and organizer tireless organizer of Riga Recognition seminars, provided participants with some provoking thoughts on the Diploma Supplement ten years after its inception. Has anything happened afterwards, he asked. Of course, profound changes have occurred and it is obvious that these changes request certain modifications. Rauhvargers suggested some necessary changes and argued – for good reasons – in favour of modifying the Explanatory Report of the DS and not the DS as such.

Seminar participants had good opportunities for discussions in four working groups of manageable size. Working Group 1 dealt with recognition between Europe and North America and Working Group 2 extended this topic to recognition between Europe and other parts of the world. Other two groups discussed various topics of recognition of prior learning: defining and recognizing learning outcomes (Working Group 3) and recognition for access (Working Group 4). Group rapporteurs synthesized discussions in four reports and their key recommendations are recapitulated in conclusions and recommendations at the end of this report.

In the concluding part of the seminar, Andrejs Rauhvargers, this time as a chair person of the BFUG stocktaking working group, presented *first findings from the national plans for improving recognition*. This was another opportunity to get preliminary information on monitoring the progress of the Bologna Process between Bergen and London. His presentation was underpinned with an important statement: *recognition of higher education qualifications or of a period of studies acquired abroad is an integral part of the right to education and the promotion of the freedom of movement*. Actually, this

statement was – inherently or explicitly – present in a number of other presentations and discussions and represents well the seminar atmosphere in the halls of *Banku Augstskola*, (Banking Institute of Higher Education) which hosted the event.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The Bologna Seminar *New Challenges in Recognition: recognition of prior learning and recognition between Europe and other parts of the world* (Riga, Latvia; 25 – 26 January 2007) was a well organised *European/international forum* as well as another opportunity to *share good practices* and deepen *understanding of new paradigms* in higher education.

The following conclusions and recommendations were summarized:

1. First of all, the seminar reaffirmed that *recognition of higher education qualifications, of periods of studies acquired abroad or of prior (experiential) learning are an integral part of the right to education and the promotion of the freedom of movement.*

Seminar also reaffirmed the *value aspects of higher education*. Recognition should not be understood in a narrow instrumental sense but *in relation to all fundamental objectives of the higher education*:

- *preparation for the labour market;*
- *preparation for life as active citizens in democratic society;*
- *personal development;*
- *development and maintenance an advanced knowledge base.*

2. Participants encourage all European HEIs, ENIC/NARIC centres and other competent recognition authorities *to assess qualifications from other areas of the world with the same open mind with which they would like European qualifications to be approached elsewhere*, and to assess qualifications from outside Europe according to the criteria and procedures outlined in the Council of Europe/UNESCO Recognition Convention and its subsidiary texts.

In view of the great variety of higher education systems and approaches worldwide this should include shifting the emphasis further *from input characteristics* of the qualifications *to the learning outcomes* achieved.

The Convention and its principles should be observed in a spirit of openness to all potential partners and a revision of regional conventions in a mutual dialogue should be encouraged as well.

3. *Reliable, easily understandable and easily accessible information on education systems and qualifications frameworks is essential to promoting the fair recognition of qualifications from the EHEA in other parts of the world.*

To a large extent information on educational systems is already provided. Yet, there is a need to adapt this information for easier understanding by those from outside the EHEA who are not familiar with the specific terminology created through the Bologna Process.

The information should be made available on the web together with other information on the Bologna Process.

4. Participants firmly support *the proposal to establish policy fora with partners from other areas of the world*, as a part of the Bologna Process in a global context.

They encourage the BFUG to make recognition the topic of one of these fora, building on the work undertaken in this area by ENIC/NARIC Networks and involving them closely in this work.

A promotion of cooperation between the ENIC/NARIC Networks and similar networks from other world regions, in particular with a view to the development of a common understanding of recognition criteria, procedures and practices as well as transnational higher education provision is highly recommended.

5. European HEIs rely today on a number of useful tools developed through the Bologna Process and these tools are often well accepted in other areas of the world. These tools should be kept update and efficient. Participants realize that the *Diploma Supplement was designed already in 1998* and that *afterwards European higher education systems have undergone substantial reforms*. The Diploma Supplement is still well suited but it is *recommended to amend and renew its Explanatory Report* (e.g. joint degrees, workload and credits, quality assurance systems, transnational higher education etc.). Since the Diploma Supplement is a joint instrument, amendments have to be adopted both in the framework of the Lisbon Convention Intergovernmental Committee and the European Commission.

6. Participants realize that *recognition of prior learning and credit allocation for competences acquired outside formal higher education (APL/APEL)* is well developed only in a relatively small part of the emerging EHEA. Therefore, it is essential that progress be made in this area in the next period and ministers in London should make a specific commitment in this regard. Existing and planned developments to create national lifelong learning systems, including the “new style” qualification frameworks, should include systems to facilitate APL/APEL and recognition of prior learning should be used also for access to higher education. This will, *inter alia*, require that study programmes and individual courses of formal higher education be linked to *learning outcomes and competences*. ENIC/NARIC Networks can give information also about APL/APEL and similar strategies in various countries – in Europe and worldwide – and their educational systems.

7. The seminar proved that *recognition issues are substantially interlinked with quality assurance issues*. Therefore, participants encourage ENQA, in conjunction with E-4 partners and other appropriate bodies, to *explore the creation and implementation of good practice* (models, procedures and guidelines) *for recognition procedures in general*, including *APL/APEL*, consistent with their ‘Standards and Guidelines’ and in the context of lifelong learning.

8. National higher education authorities are encouraged to include *elements to facilitate APL/APEL in the national lifelong learning systems*, including the development of ‘new style’ qualifications frameworks. National authorities are also expected to introduce operational *guidelines and principles for APL/APEL fully integrated with national quality assurance processes* and to promote the widespread implementation and acceptance of APL/APEL and lifelong learning by academics, employers and students.

9. Similarly as in quality enhancement issues, main responsibility for improvement of recognition lies with institutions. All European HEIs are encouraged to *put in place clear processes and practices that transparently detail their internal APL/APEL systems and procedures for staff, students and employers*. They are also expected to adopt appropriate staff development strategies to overcome barriers to broader implementation of APL/APEL and to ensure that all processes are transparent, fair, rigorous and efficient.

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Bologna Seminar on Doctoral Programmes
(Nice, 7-9 December 2006)

Final Conclusions - Preparing Recommendations for the London Communiqué

“Matching Ambition with Responsibilities and Resources”

I Introduction

1. Starting Point-The Bergen Communiqué: Ministers meeting in Bergen in May 2005 recognised that in order to *improve the synergies between the higher education sector and other research sectors and between the EHEA and the European Research Area* “doctoral level qualifications need to be fully aligned with the EHEA overarching framework for qualifications using the outcomes-based approach. The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. Considering the need for structured doctoral programmes and the need for transparent supervision and assessment, we note that the normal workload of the third cycle in most countries would correspond to 3-4 years full time. We urge universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes promote interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills, thus meeting the needs of the wider employment market. *We need to achieve an overall increase in the numbers of doctoral candidates taking up research careers within the EHEA.* We consider participants in third cycle programmes both as students and as early stage researchers.

2. Mandate: The European University Association, together with other interested partners, is asked to prepare a report under the responsibility of the Follow-up Group on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes, to be presented to Ministers in 2007.

3. Methodology:

- Steering Committee: EUA, Austria, France, ESIB, EURODOC
- Terms of Reference endorsed by the BFUG
- Design of a specific “inner circle” of events, & also taking account of an “outer circle” of other events & analyses
- Consolidation of the work at the **Nice Bologna Seminar** followed by the preparation of a draft report for the BFUG in early 2007

II Taking action to follow up the basic principles adopted in Salzburg

The Bergen Communiqué took account of the 10 basic principles adopted in Salzburg. The further development of these ten basic principles requires action and commitment from all the partners in the (Bologna) Process: governments, institutions, and their staff in partnership with doctoral candidates and other early stage researchers.

II.1. Setting the scene

In formulating the conclusions and recommendations that follow participants underlined the importance of the uniqueness of the doctoral cycle that provides training by and for research and is focused on the advancement of knowledge through original research. Participants furthermore reiterated the crucial role of the doctoral cycle in contributing to meeting Europe’s research goals and in linking the European Higher Education and Research Areas.

1. *While doctoral programmes are unique they should not be considered in isolation but in relation to the implementation of the three Bologna cycles as a whole: a research component,*

and the development of transferable skills, need to be adequately included and developed throughout the cycles.

2. *A range of innovative doctorate programmes are emerging* to respond to the changing demands of a fast-evolving labour market. Employability of doctoral researchers both within and outside academic institutions, as well as individual and societal needs for lifelong education and training, have acted as a catalyst to the development of new programmes, including professional doctorates, more industrial collaboration and increased European and international cooperation.
3. Doctoral programmes are a key component of European higher education in a global context; questions of *internationalisation and mobility, and the establishment of joint degrees at doctoral level, are central to institutional strategic development.*
4. *Greater attention is needed to the social dimension of the third cycle.* Equity is a major concern. Equality of access to, and ability to succeed in, the third cycle must be a consideration, whether inequality derives from gender, ethnicity, financial situation or other circumstances.
5. Doctoral programmes are also crucial for *fostering innovation and creativity in society*, and it is vital to invest both in high quality disciplinary research and in inter-disciplinary and intersectoral programmes.
6. *The need for greater and targeted investment* in the third cycle is clear, and should be addressed as a matter of urgency. It should not be forgotten, however, that this also implies investment in the first two cycles. It is important, in particular, to ensure that second cycle (master) degrees are not only driven by market demand given the integral link between the second and the third cycle.

II. 2. The role of higher education institutions

Higher education institutions fully accept their responsibility to develop and deliver high quality doctoral programmes. This requires autonomous institutions able to develop strategies and policies in line with their own missions and goals and *create the necessary framework conditions at institutional level that enable critical mass.*

2.1 Providing structure and organisation

Accepting responsibility for the provision of high quality doctoral programmes involves introducing the appropriate structures within institutions. Organisational structures chosen must demonstrate added value for the institution, in particular in seeking to:

- counteract the isolation of the early stage researcher, from other disciplines, or from the larger peer group, or the larger scientific community.
- establish transparency of expectations, quality and assessment standards (supervision etc.),
- create synergies regarding transferable skills development (at institutional or at inter-institutional level)

Different solutions may be appropriate to different contexts and the choice of structure is a matter for each institution, based upon the specific institutional aims which these structures are supposed to meet.

Recent developments and an analysis of practice across Europe points to the emergence of two main models of high quality, internationally oriented and networked doctoral/research/graduate schools as organisational structures:

- structures including master & doctoral candidates & providing crosscutting administrative, training and development support, or,

- structures including doctoral candidates only, around a research theme or a cross-disciplinary area & possibly including several institutions.

2.2 Developing attractive research career perspectives for early stage researchers

It is similarly the role of higher education institutions to take responsibility for:

- Promoting attractive research careers and career perspectives for doctoral researchers in collaboration with partners outside academia, thus promoting the development of clear career paths inside and outside academia and between academia and other sectors of employment
- Creating attractive conditions for research, in accordance with the provisions of the European Researchers' Charter & the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers
- Concentrating funding to create more effective PhD training

Post-doctoral researchers

European higher education institutions need to pay attention not only to the career development of doctoral researchers but also to the strategic need to make research careers attractive for post-doctoral researchers and to facilitate their career development. Clear academic career structures and a variety of career perspectives in academia as well as in industry, commerce and the public sector are needed, both for individuals and for Europe to compete on the global stage, taking account of the recommendations made under 4.1.

2.3 Ensuring access and admission

In a fast-changing environment, it is essential to maintain flexibility in admissions to doctoral programmes, and full institutional autonomy: diversity of institutional missions and context, and the growing importance of lifelong learning, mean that there are good reasons for different entry requirements in institutions and programmes provided fairness, transparency and objectivity is ensured;

The Bologna commitment that the second cycle gives access (= right to be considered for admission) to the third cycle should be maintained, but access to the third cycle should not be restricted to this route.

2.4 Enhancing the internationalisation of doctoral programmes

Mobility is an integral part of doctoral education at many universities. Higher education institutions should support enhanced mobility at doctoral level within the framework of inter-institutional collaboration as an element of their broader international strategy. Institutions, but especially public authorities, need to address legal, administrative and social obstacles, for example concerning visas, work permits and social security issues.

Both international and transsectoral and interdisciplinary mobility should be recognised as bringing added value for the career development of doctoral researchers and other early stage researchers.

Joint doctorate degrees, European doctorates and co-tutelle arrangements should be further developed and considered as an important instrument of international inter-institutional cooperation.

II. 3. Improving the Quality of Doctoral Programmes

3.1 Diversifying doctoral programmes

A number of diverse routes to the doctorate have been developed in Europe in recent years. These recent developments include doctorates tailored towards specific professions (so-called “professional” doctorates), joint doctorates and the European doctorate, and a variety of university-industry collaboration based doctorates.

All awards described as Doctorates should (no matter what their type or form) be based on a core of processes and outcomes. Original research has to remain the main component of all doctorates. There should be no doctorate without original research.

Core processes and outcomes should include the completion of an individual thesis (based upon an original contribution to knowledge or original application of knowledge) that passes evaluation by an expert university committee with external representation.

Professional Doctorates

So-called “professional” doctorates are doctorates that focus on embedding research in a reflective manner into another professional practice. They must meet the same core standards as ‘traditional’ doctorates in order to ensure the same high level of quality. It may be appropriate to consider using different titles to distinguish between this type of professional doctorates and PhDs.

In order to ensure a broad discussion on this topic it will be important to ensure the dissemination of information on the rapidly growing number of professional doctorates – particularly in the UK but also in other countries - across the entire European higher education sector.

3.2 Supervision, monitoring & assessment

The importance of supervision, monitoring and assessment, as outlined in the Salzburg principles, must continue to be stressed, and universities encouraged and supported in the development and dissemination of good practices in the management of research degrees. Arrangements need to be based upon a transparent contractual framework of shared responsibilities between candidates, supervisors and the institution, and, where appropriate other partners, as indicated in the Salzburg recommendations. Attention should be paid in particular to ensuring: multiple supervision, the continuous professional skills development of academic staff and performance reviews of supervisors.

Multiple supervision should be encouraged, also at international level, through tutoring and co-tutoring by academic supervisors in different European countries.

Assessment of the thesis should be done by an expert university committee with external representation. The impact of the supervisor on the outcome of the process should be limited. This does not preclude participation of the supervisor in the examining body, especially when this is a large body or when the thesis defence is public.

3.3 Transferable skills development

Transferable skills development, which should already be an integral part of first and second cycle study programmes, is also important in the third cycle, and should be developed in the context of overarching institutional support structures at doctoral level. The main goal should be to recognise and raise awareness among doctoral candidates of the skills they acquire through research, thus improving their employment prospects both in academia and on the broader labour market.

Ensuring that adequate funding is devoted to transferable skills development is crucial. It is likewise important to ensure that reference to transferable skills development is included in institutional quality assessment procedures.

II. 4. Public responsibility

4.1 Status and conditions of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers

Universities and public authorities in Europe share a collective responsibility to address the status and conditions of doctoral and post doctoral researchers. Doctoral candidates are early stage researchers who are vital to Europe's development and, as stated in the Salzburg principles, should have all commensurate rights.

Appropriate status and working conditions should also be recognised as essential for post doctoral researchers for whom clear academic structures and a variety of career perspectives are also needed. Post-doctoral researchers should be recognised as professionals with a key role in developing the European knowledge society, as underlined in the European Researchers' Charter and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. This implies that:

- The duration of the post doctoral phase without a clear career perspective should be limited to five years.
- They should be eligible to apply for national and international grant schemes to fund their research.
- Initiatives like the Independent Researcher grant scheme of the ERC should be encouraged.
- If the number of researchers is to rise and be covered by appropriate salaries, governments should invest more in research and social infrastructure for researchers in order to make the European Research Area more attractive.

4.2 Funding¹

Ensuring appropriate and sustainable funding of doctoral programmes and doctoral candidates as well as higher education institutions and their infrastructure is the 10th and final Salzburg principle, and quite simply needs to be implemented, given the crucial role of doctoral education and training as the key formative stage of a research career in both academia and non-academic sectors of employment and that because the attractiveness of a future career in research is determined largely at the doctoral stage. Hence the importance of ensuring status and financial support of the doctoral candidate, and of offering adequate incentives.

On the basis of the **provisional analysis of the questionnaires received from BFUG members** it is recommended that:

- Funding for doctoral candidates should be stable, covering the full period of the doctoral programme, and provide sufficient means to live and work in decent conditions.
- Funding should be sufficiently attractive to encourage suitably-qualified candidates from lower income groups, as well as sufficiently flexible to support the needs of part time students over a longer period of study.
- there is an urgent need for greater consultation and coordination at the national level between government ministries, research councils and other funding agencies (including European Institutions) on doctoral programme financing and career development.

Nice, 9 December 2006

Final recommendations, 6 January 2007, taking account of the feedback received from participants.

¹ This section is based upon the provisional analysis of the questionnaires received from BFUG members. The final results will be incorporated into EUA's report to the BFUG and will feed into the specific recommendations for action that will be made.

Oslo seminar (Oslo, 28-29 September 2006)
“Looking out! Bologna in a global setting”
The external dimension of the Bologna Process

Conclusions and recommendations by Pavel Zgaga
Oslo, 29 September 2006

Presentations and discussions at the seminar in general, but in particular at a panel discussion with speakers from two European and seven countries from various parts of the world, followed by intensive discussions in six parallel working groups, resulted in a number of statements, conclusions and recommendations related, in a direct or indirect way, to the foreseen strategy on the “external dimension”. Presentations, discussions and conclusions from working groups have been presented in greater detail in the reports by rapporteurs (available at the seminar website <http://www.bolognaoslo.com>). On this basis, the next paragraphs aim at presenting a recapitulation of the seminar in a form of synthesized conclusions and recommendations.

1. Discussing a range of issues on a possible strategy for EHEA international cooperation, the elementary but fundamental fact that *cooperation presupposes at least two willing partners* was stressed several times. The “external dimension” cannot be carried out by Europeans alone, and this requires consultations with partners from all other parts of the world. However, there are still a vast number of issues which should be agreed, elaborated and solved within the Bologna Process.

1.2 The seminar dealt at length with the questions *by whom* and *toward whom* a strategy should be developed. On the one hand, there was a consensus that strategies may be elaborated for several actors, from institutions through national public authorities to the European level. Yet, it was also made clear that institutions are not all alike and countries are not all in the same position. A differentiation of their needs is a fact and any strategy should strictly avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. Discussing a strategy at European level opens also the question of “what Europe”? It is not always easy to delineate between “EU-25” and “EU-45”, but to make EHEA cooperation strategy really work, it is necessary to ensure that there will be no “A group” and “B group” within the Bologna Process.

1.2 Regarding the question *toward whom* a strategy should be developed, it was agreed that stimulating “Bologna-like” developments in other areas seems to be the most realistic scenario. It could improve compatibility of higher education systems and policies and could also be a valuable exercise in capacity-building.

1.3 A further question was also raised at the seminar about whether the *organisational model of the Bologna Process* is fit to *promote* the EHEA after 2010 and to *stimulate* broad cooperation with other parts of the world. A warning against institutionalising an informal process so far was opposed by advocating the necessity of a firmer, more permanent organisational structure. While this structure should be as light as possible, some kind of funding and organisational structure would be necessary. Therefore, the organisation of the EHEA after 2010 must be placed on the agenda as a matter of urgency – also from the “external dimension” point of view.

1.4 The EHEA must provide *a framework that facilitates inter-institutional cooperation*. For that purpose *information* on the EHEA, linked to information on national systems and

institutors, is necessary. There is a growing consensus on the need to establish an EHEA portal, providing clear information on the EHEA and providing links to sites of both national public authorities and individual institutions. However, there are a number of details which still remain to be settled.

1.5 Global cooperation in higher education, partnership agreements between higher education institutions from different part of the world and mobility of students and staff depend to a large degree on recognition matters. For that reason, UNESCO should be encouraged to continue its work on revising its *regional conventions on the recognition of qualifications*. These issues are also closely related to quality assurance provision in various countries and to transnational higher education provision. It is a vital interest of the EHEA that these issues are openly discussed between partners in higher education cooperation worldwide.

1.6 As a particularly good case of international cooperation, the seminar pointed out *Lusophone* cooperation and *Francophonie*, encompassing both members and non-members of the Bologna Process and illustrating the great potential for cooperation between groups of countries. In higher education, this cooperation should be placed within the overall *acquis* and strategy of the EHEA.

2. Considerations on *conditions for inter-institutional cooperation* between the EHEA and other parts of the world – in particular with regard to complex relations between *mobility, transparency and recognition* – as a particularly necessary element of an “external dimension” strategy have demonstrated that improving the quality of mobility and reducing barriers is what is most required. Looking either from an institutional or national point of view, cooperation with the outside world in higher education and research is, first of all, linked to enhancing quality development: mobility, internationalisation and the “external dimension” are means; quality education and research are ends in all systems. This position presumes the following focuses, actions and measures:

2.1 All EHEA partners at all levels need *to improve information flows and dissemination*. The proper involvement and consultation of the stakeholders in order to be able to cope with mobility and internationalisation (e.g. student unions that need to deal with management and support of mobile students) should be ensured. Visibility of national assessments regarding the quality of higher education as well as general decisions regarding recognition are needed, as are their availability in more than one language. There is also a need to be clear concerning the terminology used. The lack of appropriate informational, linguistic and cultural preparation for mobile students and staff should also be addressed.

2.2 It is also necessary to promote further and better *understanding and use of existing recognition and transparency tools* within the EHEA as well as in relation to the rest of the world, as it will also benefit international exchange and mobility (e.g., the use of frameworks improving compatibility of higher education systems and regulating recognition; exchange of good and bad practices; working towards the recognition of each others’ recognition decisions, etc.). On the other hand, multilateral and bilateral agreements should stimulate the growth of inter-institutional frameworks and partnership agreements that make institutions committed to recognising periods of study abroad for mobile students as well as degrees awarded abroad.

2.3 Strengthening mobility and removing obstacles should not be regarded as “purely higher education issues” but efforts should be increased so that *all relevant national ministries and other responsible authorities* (especially immigration authorities) are cooperating in

solving them. Increased efforts are particularly necessary to solve visa issues and work permits for students and staff.

2.4 In developing international exchanges, the EHEA institutions as well as authorities in regions and countries might also consider having *special policies for developing countries* and projects for developing regions, in addition to special information campaigns. Institutional capacity-building activities are a particularly important area of international cooperation within such networks.

2.5 In most of these issues, there is no clear divide between the EHEA and non-EHEA countries and institutions. Hence, conditions for international cooperation should be improved outside as well as within the EHEA.

3. Considerations on the envisaged strategy for EHEA international cooperation may open partly differing perspectives depending on general (systemic) or institutional points of view, but it is clear that cooperation should be among its key elements. However, discussions at two previous as well as at the present “external dimension” seminar have proved that *cooperation* should be carefully considered together with two other important “key elements” – namely *attractiveness* and *competitiveness*.

3.1 The seminar confirmed and underlined that there is no inherent contradiction between *cooperation and competition*: they coexist in the academic world, where institutions must cooperate to be competitive, but they must also be attractive to find cooperation partners. *Attractiveness* is a broader concept than *competitiveness*, since it extends to non-economic aspects as well.

3.2 *The value of higher education* and *values in higher education* are an important aspect of the “external dimension”; technical cooperation totally divorced from values could easily lead the EHEA astray. A technically perfect solution might be counterproductive if the solution does not enhance genuine higher education values and purposes. There is broad consensus within the Bologna Process that cooperation aims and strategies should be adapted to prospective partners. Nevertheless, there should be a minimum of core values – like academic freedom and institutional autonomy – that should be maintained to make cooperation “Bologna-compatible”. Of course, other modes of (technical) cooperation are also possible, but “external” to the Bologna Process in terms of objectives and values and not in terms of geography.

3.3 The member countries of the Bologna Process need to agree upon a set of *principles and concrete actions to enhance the EHEA’s attractiveness and competitiveness* as well as to strengthen mutual cooperation, e.g.:

- existing national and European schemes for students and staff mobility should be further developed;
- more educational programmes are needed in international languages;
- the awareness of the importance of investment in higher education and the social dimension through improved access and participation should be increased; the use of development funds (0.8%) for broad educational reforms, including capacity-building in HEIs, is strongly recommended;
- capacity-building through the education of teachers can be particularly effective;
- different policies are needed for different regions and sectors and all types of higher education should be included in the planned activities (diversity);
- measures to stimulate continuous partnerships and networks in research and education as well as in capacity-building should be prepared at national and European level;
- special attention should be given to countries with one-way (either predominantly incoming or predominantly outgoing) mobility and measures should be agreed to minimise

the risk of brain-drain (internally within the EHEA as well as externally - in particular in relation to developing countries) and to maximise sustainability.

3.4 The discussion on *what makes the EHEA attractive* has only started; it is necessary for this discussion to continue, also in the period after the London conference. A proper response to the question of what makes the EHEA attractive depends to a large extent on a common and clear picture of what the Bologna aims really mean to its actors. On the other hand, attractiveness requires making substantial progress in quality assurance and recognition issues. It also requires communicating on the Bologna “philosophy” and content and making it clear that its aims are not limited to formal changes of structures. Yet, it is very important that this message matches with what is being done in all Bologna countries.

4. Finally, it is necessary to mention the topic – at first sight only marginal – that was also discussed at the Nordic seminar on the “external dimension”. It is about terminology and, as always in such cases, about meaning and understanding. As the discussion on the “external dimension” is advancing, it seems that the Bologna Process is in need of a better term to describe relations between attractiveness, competitiveness and cooperation.

In one of the working groups it was stressed that the “external dimensions” is certainly about how European higher education is perceived by the rest of the world, but it is in equal measure about how we, as Europeans, perceive the rest of the world. Only if we include how we view the Other as an element of the “external dimension” of the Bologna Process as well as how the Other views us, can we move beyond the “external dimension” of interaction between “them” and “us” to the global dimension – to how we can work together in a healthy interaction of cooperation and competition.

There was no final agreement on this issue at the seminar but some concrete proposals which need more time to be considered were formulated, e.g. to move from the “external” to the “global dimension” or to the “dimension of global cooperation”.



**WORKING GROUP ON THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION
OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS**

“External Dimension” of the Bologna Process

(First Report)

Pavel Zgaga, Rapporteur

14 September 2006

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1. Introduction

1. The Bergen Communiqué (20 May 2005), under the heading “The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world”, included the following two paragraphs:

The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.

We see the European Higher Education Area as a partner of higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of intercultural understanding and respect. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions. We stress the need for dialogue on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify partner regions and intensify the exchange of ideas and experiences with those regions. We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.

2. The Ministers’ mandate was considered in detail at the Bologna Follow-up Group meeting on 12-13 October 2005. Proposals for three seminars on this theme were presented: the Holy See seminar foreseen for March/April 2006, Greece seminar in June 2006 and a seminar arranged by the Nordic countries in September 2006. In the Terms of Reference, prepared by the Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, it was proposed to link all these three seminars to an overarching Working Group with the mandate to elaborate upon a strategy for the external dimension, as asked for by ministers in Bergen.

Seminars were accepted on a list of official Bologna events of the period 2005-2007 and it was also agreed to establish the External Dimension Working Group chaired by Norway. Membership of the working group encompassed the wide range of interests in the external dimension. The Working Group was composed of BFUG-representatives from 11 countries: Norway, Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, The Holy See, Malta, Portugal, Spain and Sweden as well as of 7 consultative members: Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), Council of Europe (CoE), Education International (EI), National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB), European Commission (EC), European University Association (EUA) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO-CEPES). The Working Group was later extended to include a member from the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE).

Permanent members of the Working Group are as follows:

Toril Johansson (Norway) Chair
Barbara Weitgruber (Austria)
Mogens Berg (Denmark)

Eric Froment (France)
Birgit Galler (Germany)
Athanasios Kyriazis (Greece)
Padre Friedrich Bechina (the Holy See)
Joseph Mifsud (Malta)
Pedro Lourtie (Portugal)
Felix Haering Pérez (Spain)
Annika Persson Pontén (Sweden)
Bernd Wächter (ACA)
Sjur Bergan (CoE)
Monique Fouilhoux (EI)
Daithí Mac Síthigh (ESIB)
Anita Līce, ESIB
Alan Smith (EC)
Peter van der Hijden (EC)
Michael Gaebel (EUA)
Lesley Wilson (EUA)
Stefan Delplace (EURASHE)
Jan Sadlak (UNESCO-CEPES)

Yvonne Clarke joined the group on behalf of the Bologna Secretariat from London and Pavel Zgaga was invited to be the Rapporteur of the group. The Working Group has also been supported by Foteini Asderaki (Greece), H el ene Lagier (France), S oren N orgaard (EURASHE), Rolf Larsen (Norway) and Alf Rasmussen (Norway).

3. This Report fulfils a part of the mission; it is a preliminary version (“*Report A*”) prepared to be presented at the last of three “external dimension” seminars – the one in Oslo (28-29 September). The revised and final version (“*Report B*”) will be produced after the seminar to make it possible for the conclusions and recommendations from all seminars to be appropriately considered in the text and be a basis for the Strategy document.

2. The “external dimension” – what is it?

4. What in fact is to be understood under the “external dimension of the Bologna Process”?

This question may seem a bit unusual at the beginning of a report which is expected, first and foremost, to give answers. Even though such expectations have been taken into account it is, nevertheless, necessary to start with this basic question.

5. In modern times, we use the word “dimension” quite often in our languages. Yet, it is not always used in a traditional way, e.g. as a size or a measurement of a length, etc. At the very beginning of the Bologna Process we started to talk about the “*structural*” dimension of European higher education systems and, today, this term denotes not only three cycles, but a whole array of related issues – credit systems, learning outcomes, frameworks of qualification etc. Soon after the Prague meeting, the “Bologna language” continued to differentiate it from the “*social*” dimension, since it is impossible, in a European context to reduce higher education to either abstract system “architectures” or to a “private good”. A very frequent term, although not born within the Bologna Process but within the much broader European integration processes, is also the “*European*” dimension (e.g. within national education systems in general) and this is another serious issue. Last but not least, since the Prague Ministerial Summit, the term “*external dimension*” of the Bologna Process has also entered European higher education vocabularies.

When reflecting on the “Bologna language” (in fact, it could apply to any other similar modern slang as well) it seems that the term “dimension” is used in the same way as in mathematics: a number of “unknown quantities” contained as “factors in a product” (a product named the Bologna Process). At least, it could be said that there have been a lot of rather similar entities not analysed in the finest detail, and our language has classified them as a cluster, as a “dimension”. Later on, people always come to question what precisely these entities are and if these entities exist – are they really linked together, why do they produce certain paradoxes, etc.

The “external dimension” and its roots

6. Roots of the term *external dimension of the Bologna Process* can be found already in the genuine Sorbonne and Bologna aims: the Sorbonne Declaration stressed “the international recognition and attractive potential of our systems” while the Bologna Declaration looked “at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European systems of higher education” and claimed to ensure “a world-wide degree of attraction”. However, considerations on the international role and influence of European higher education can be found earlier: in pre-Bologna contexts, e.g. in discussions on European integrations and on the role of higher education. Ann Corbett in her recent study, “both a detective story of the early attempts to Europeanise higher education and an academic study of policy change”, says: “The aims are external to Europe, and internal. The goal is not only to make the European higher education area (EHEA) attractive enough to the rest of the world to draw in more of the best foreign students and scholars, but also to boost quality within Europe itself, as a way of making universities more effective within the knowledge-based economy which the

world's richest nations regard as the sine qua non of economic growth.” (Corbett, 2005, p. xii; 4).

Europe has sentiments about its “attractiveness” and attractiveness is measured most often, of course, in “external mirrors”. However, Europe has also a lot to do with self. This is what produces certain paradoxes, whether the observation is made from outside or inside. Ulrich Teichler justly noted that “[I]n the early 1990s, external observers could come to the conclusion that higher education in Europe ‘Europeanised’ rather than ‘internationalised’. [...] The Bologna Declaration would not have come about if there had not been a reconsideration of the European emphasis of internationalisation. In the mid-1990s, attention shifted towards the relationship between higher education in Europe and higher education in the wider world.” (Teichler; in: Muche, 2005, p. 114).

7. This shift was a result of a much longer process. In Europe, at least in Europe prior to 1990, internationalisation could refer both to Europeanisation (from outside probably seen as European “internal” internationalisation) as well as internationalisation in “wider” terms. Internationalisation itself could have various meanings,¹ depending first of all on political alignments (e.g. links with previous colonies, limited but existing academic cooperation over the “iron curtain”, academic cooperation between countries of the “non-alignment movement”² etc.), but also on cultural traditions and linguistic links, on the size of the national higher education system and support institutions, etc. Students and academic staff have always been coming from other countries and continents, but the proportions of students received by the different countries varied widely. At the early stages of internationalisation – as well as “Europeanisation” – “the prime movers of such initiatives in the different countries tended to be mainly individual academics whose enthusiasm and personal commitment sustained and build up the networks” (Eurydice, 2000, p. 160).

A systemic support to gradual internationalisation of higher education was appearing rather slowly and in different ways in different countries. “These disparities in the proportion of students sent and received were reflected by differences in the internationalisation support structures in place in the participating countries and often also by differences in the amount of collaborative international research undertaken. Those countries which had a relatively high level of internationalisation before 1980 (Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom) primarily had links with non-industrialised, developing countries, often ex-colonies, which were associated with development aid programmes. These links consisted mainly of the reception of students from and the secondment of teaching staff to these countries as well as joint research projects. International links with other industrialised countries were primarily focused on collaborative research and exchanges of academic staff.” (Eurydice, 2000, p. 157).

¹ On certain horizons, internationalisation of higher education can be understood in Europe differently from e.g. USA. The 2003 Transatlantic Dialogue focused on the theme “Higher Education in a Pluralist World”; it is very interesting to see how participants approached the defining of pluralism. There were strongly shared views as well as some divergences, both related to academic values and contexts that provide values. Understanding pluralism as *openness to different intellectual perspectives* or as *safe space for debate* was common to all. On the other hand, a difference appeared in relation to “an insistence by the Europeans on *internationalization* as a dimension of pluralism. The Bologna process has provided enormous energy and visibility for an agenda that will increase the cultural and linguistic diversity of European higher education institutions by enabling students to move freely among those institutions and bringing students from around the world in Europe.” (Green, Barblan, 2004, p. 6).

² For example, former Socialist Federal Yugoslavia had been receiving a lot of students from Africa and Asia during the late 1950s to the 1980s; but after 1990 these traditional streams almost ceased to exist.

In the mid-1980s, European “internal” internationalisation of higher education was strongly encouraged - with the establishment of the European Commission’s action programmes for research and student mobility for the first time in a systemic way. Indirectly, it was important also for “external” internationalisation: Europe was both an “internal” EU and a “larger” Europe, strongly divided during the cold war but coming closer and closer in a period before and after the fall of the Berlin wall. In the west, government initiatives relating to internationalisation entered legislation and policy documents and went further to establish support agencies, special funding for institutions, support measures to promote student exchanges, etc. After 1990, stimulated first by the European Commission’s *Tempus* programme and, for a number of countries, by a wish to join *Erasmus* as soon as possible,³ similar changes occurred also in central and eastern Europe. The Eurydice study of two decades of reforms in European higher education concludes “that internationalisation has certainly become a component of planning and administration in higher education institutions in all participating countries”. (Eurydice, 2000, p. 168-169). This was an extremely important step towards understanding the “external dimension” of what happened in European higher education policy debates.

8. These trends were only strengthened by the “globalisation challenges” starting to be discussed in the economy and in politics but later also in higher education during the nineties worldwide. Here we are. At the beginning, four countries, ever followed by new ones to make up a group of 45, agreed to move “the European process”, not only to Europe “of the Euro, of the banks and the economy” but towards “Europe of knowledge” as well: “We must strengthen and build upon the intellectual, cultural, social and technical dimensions of our continent”. (Sorbonne Declaration, 1998). Eight years later we probably understand this message a bit differently, but inherently it was obviously from the beginning a reference to “us” as well as to the “others”.

The very beginning of the Bologna Process was characterised by the belief that changes in the structure of European higher education systems could be the main vehicle for raising attractiveness worldwide. Few weeks before Prague, the *Trends II Report* made an interesting note with regard to “indications and directions for the future”: “The marked growth of the attention given to the ‘external’ dimension of the process and to the development of tools/plans to make national higher education more attractive at home, in Europe and in the world should continue. The fact that this process could be made easier and more successful if it had a European dimension has not yet been acknowledged: European degrees will not be generally accepted in the world if they are not generally accepted in Europe.” (Haug and Tauch, 2001, p. 7).

Indeed, Europe still has to agree on so many details; it has to stand up from sharp shards of the past and to grow up as *Europe*. As studies show, the perception of European higher education outside Europe is still very weak: there are rather British, French, German etc. systems and universities and not “European” ones.⁴ The long way from Prague via Berlin to Bergen has led to a growing consensus in a number of issues: an overarching framework for qualifications of the European higher education area (EHEA), standards and guidelines for

³ Many Central and East European countries joined Erasmus in the second half of the 1990s.

⁴ “Overall, Europe is not perceived as a union as regards higher education. There is a perception of Europe as an ‘entity’ in general terms and as an economic union. However, when it comes to cultural aspects and higher education, most students rather saw Europe as a range of very different countries. An important share of Chinese and Indian respondents and of staff members saw large differences between the quality of education provided in individual EU member states. Beyond this, respondents saw the most substantial discrepancies regarding cost-related issues (both tuition fees and living costs) and student support.” (ACA, 2006, p. 10-11).

quality assurance, etc. Parallel to “internal” developments, an awareness of the “external” dimension of the Process increased and concrete issues were raised. Firstly, one of them was a geographical issue: if the “Bologna club” is enlarging what could/should be the limits of membership? What could/should be the confines of the EHEA?

9. In Prague, eligibility for the Bologna Process was still limited to the “countries for which the European Community programmes Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci or Tempus-Cards are open” (Prague Communiqué, 2001). It soon became clear that this is too narrow a definition and at the Berlin Conference it was agreed that “Countries party to the European Cultural Convention shall be eligible for membership of the European Higher Education Area provided that they at the same time declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education. Their applications should contain information on how they will implement the principles and objectives of the declaration” (Berlin Communiqué, 2003). While referring to “Countries party to the European Cultural Convention” the “internal” vs. “external” delineation of the emerging Higher Education Area was drawn. Could it be more than delineation? A new border? To whom and why?

Sjur Bergan warned once that “the term ‘the external dimension’ seems to be more concerned with drawing a line between ‘them’ and ‘us’ than with fostering one of the key values of the university heritage – that of true international cooperation” (Bergan; in: Muche, 2005, p. 43). This warning should again be taken seriously.

Should the Bologna reforms be extended to other parts of the world?

10. In May 2002, on the way from Prague and Berlin, the Bologna Follow-up Group “approved that a specific point for debate of the external aspect of the Bologna Process should be added to the agenda of the next meeting”.⁵ A special working group was formed, but it took more time than originally envisaged: the final report was given in June 2003, already close to the Berlin Conference. Contrary to *competitiveness* – a term from the Bologna Declaration – the report exposed *attractiveness*, *openness* and *cooperation* as three main entities of the “external dimension”. *Attractiveness* “depends on many factors of which the most important are quality, transparency, diversity and visibility”. *Openness* was interpreted on the basis of the principle that “European higher education should be open to students from all over the world”. The working group strongly recommended that existing “scholarship programmes should be further developed” and that visa and entry requirements and procedures should be simplified.

Finally, when *cooperation* entered the agenda, the working group made the following introductory statement: “Accomplishing the objectives in the Bologna Declaration is a huge task for the signatories. This task should not be complicated further by associating non-European countries to the process at this stage. Instead the Bologna-countries should cooperate in an open way with regions and countries in other parts of the world by promoting the idea and practice of regional cooperation and through practical cooperation and dissemination of experiences.” The main aims of cooperation between Bologna-countries and other regions was focused on promoting the “Bologna idea” and to regional cooperation “à la Bologna” (e.g. strengthening cultural contacts and mutual understanding, enhancing quality in

⁵ See Bologna Follow up Group, *Attractiveness, Openness and Co-operation. The European Higher Education Area and third countries*. Report by the Danish Presidency. 4th draft, Athens, 20 June 2003 (1st draft, Copenhagen, 4 November 2002; 2nd draft, Athens, 18 February 2003).

higher education, creating a coherent regional labour market with transparency in qualifications, etc.). Conditions for such cooperation were also discussed; as effective operative ways, the existing cooperative frameworks and contacts to UNESCO regions were mentioned. The Report also tried to identify regions of priority interest for a new type of cooperation and mentioned Middle Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countries, SNG/CIS countries, Caribbean and Latin America as well as South-East Asian countries.

The report on attractiveness, openness and cooperation found a sound echo in the Berlin Communiqué.⁶ Ministers welcomed “the interest shown by other regions of the world in the development of the European Higher Education Area” and agreed 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”. They also declared 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”. Last but not least, they encouraged “the cooperation with regions in other parts of the world by opening Bologna seminars and conferences to representatives of these regions” (Berlin Communiqué, 2003).

11. Interestingly, since the Sorbonne meeting in 1998 the “external dimension” has been constantly – implicitly or explicitly – on the Bologna agenda, but there were no focused official seminars or conferences on these issues until recently. The first seriously prepared conference was only in 2004,⁷ but it was not yet on the prioritised list of the so-called Official Bologna Follow-up Seminars. At the conference, Ulrich Teichler made some challenging comments: “The ‘Bologna Message’ attempts to strike a balance between a worldwide scope and a European scope: the introduction of a stage system of study programmes and degrees. But many observers have concluded that attention is increasingly paid in the Bologna Process to intra-European matters. Lists of objectives pursued in all the activities of establishing a European Higher Education and Research Area become longer, while links to the wider world remain a single item on these lists. Are the students from other parts of the world the ‘forgotten half’ of the key target population of the Bologna Declaration? Is the Bologna Process overshadowed by Euro-centrism?” (Teichler; in: Mucbe, 2005, p. 116).

12. After the Berlin Summit, there were more and more warnings and contributions of this kind – not only from Europe, but Europe received the first messages on the “external dimension” from “outside”. Thus, at the EUA Glasgow Convention prior to the Bergen Conference,⁸ Goolam Mohamedbhai, President of International Association of Universities (IAU), asked “*whether the Bologna Reforms should be applied internationally*”. It is not a purely rhetorical question. On the contrary, it is a far-reaching question. He argued: “I fear that the Bologna reforms could lead to an isolation of HEIs in some parts of the world. With globalisation what is needed is greater international collaboration among universities in different parts of the world, not just among those in one region only. It is international collaboration among universities that can truly bring about inter-cultural dialogue and world understanding and peace. [...] Generally speaking the Bologna reforms (the 2-cycle degree programmes, the establishment of a credit transfer system, the introduction of quality

⁶ See three paragraphs under the heading “Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”.

⁷ *Opening up to the Wider World: the External Dimension of the Bologna Process*. A Conference organised by the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) in collaboration with the University of Hamburg. Hamburg, 18 and 19 October 2004.

⁸ The 3rd EUA Convention. *Strong Universities for Europe*. Glasgow, 31 March – 2 April 2005. Materials from the Convention are available at <<http://www.euaconvention.org/index.asp>>.

assurance, the introduction of student-centred and problem-based learning) are in line with, for example, the conclusions of the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. They can bring about important and positive changes in higher education. The question then is: should the Bologna reforms be extended to other parts of the world?" (Mohamedbhai, 2005).

Indeed: *should the Bologna reforms be extended to other parts of the world?* Probably it is not a right question, but it is provocative and demands that all these issues be addressed seriously and that any Euro-centrism be put aside. The problem could probably be whether the "Bologna reforms" or the "Bologna idea" should be extended to other parts of the world? The "Bologna club" itself has argued firmly and several times in favour of flexibility and respect for (national) differences. If "the Bologna reforms" were understood as recipes, their extension to other parts of the world could be very questionable. However, it could be quite the opposite if the extension was more about ways of thinking, cooperating and performing as developed within European higher education (the "Bologna idea" or "philosophy"). Goolam Mohamedbhai is obviously well aware of the different contexts which could profoundly affect the "extension": "There has so far been limited organised debate on the effects or the applicability of Bologna reforms on HEIs in other parts of the world. But it is imperative that debate gets properly structured. What is not clear is whether the debate should be national, regional or international. And whether it should be started by universities, by associations of universities or by governments."⁹ (Mohamedbhai, 2005).

13. This has been also one of the issues that the present (2005-2006) External Dimension Working Group addressed in discussions at meetings and in ongoing virtual contacts. In these discussions, on the one hand, reactions from "outside" of the Bologna Process and echoes of various kinds were collected and carefully analysed; these are the contents of the next, third chapter. On the other hand, attention was also given to the "history of ideas"; more precisely, to the development of understanding the "external dimension" related to European higher education policy debates within the last fifteen or twenty years. In *Annex 1*,¹⁰ an effort was made to collect relevant quotations from various documents that appeared between 1988 and 2006 and that illustrate this development best. WG ED was convinced that the attempt to draft and agree on the "External Dimension" Strategy should take into account previous developments: either to continue and to expand logic and argumentation elaborated so far or to revise it and to change.

The "external dimension" in a historical perspective: documents 1988 – 2006

14. In *Annex 1*, the historical overview starts with a remarkable *pre-Bologna document* – the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988). It is a document which obviously cannot be classified as a proper "Bologna document". However, the Magna Charta has had a huge influence on European higher education policy debates and this influence has been particularly important when approaching the Bologna Process from an institutional point of view.¹¹ It was signed at the meeting of European rectors who met to celebrate the 900th anniversary of the University of Bologna in 1988, that is, "four years before the definitive abolition of boundaries between the countries of the European Community" and, as it can be added today, two years before the fall of the Berlin wall. Among its fundamental principles it inscribed that "[A] university is

⁹ See e.g. also L. Rivero's differentiation between "European" and "Latin American dream"; chapter 2, note 25.

¹⁰ Excerpts from documents are edited chronologically and classified into three categories: relevant *pre-Bologna documents*, genuine "*Bologna documents*" (produced within the Bologna Process) and the *European Union documents*.

¹¹ For details see *Magna Charta Observatory* website <<http://www.magna-charta.org/home.html>>.

the trustee of the European humanist tradition” – this is a principle which has been common to the Bologna Process as well. It also referred to “the mutual exchange of information and documentation, and frequent joint projects for the advancement of learning, as essential to the steady progress of knowledge”, and encouraged “mobility among teachers and students; furthermore, they consider a general policy of equivalent status, titles, examinations (without prejudice to national diplomas) and award of scholarships essential to the fulfilment of their mission in the conditions prevailing today” (Magna Charta Universitatum, 1991).

Thus, the Magna Charta approached some of the most important Bologna policy objectives already ten years before the Sorbonne Declaration was signed. Internationalisation of higher education and its openness was one of them, observed from an academic values point of view. This is an aspect which has remained important in Bologna discussions until today, and there seems to be no reason why it should not remain so also in the future.

Another document can be also found within the category of pre-Bologna documents that deeply influenced the Bologna Process and its “external dimension” as well. This is the *Lisbon Recognition Convention*. Today, it is sometimes stressed that this is the only legal document within the Bologna Process. As this is true, a note is necessary here: it was signed *before* the Sorbonne and Bologna initiatives. Therefore, it could be probably said that the Convention was developed and signed in a similar “spirit of the time” as the Magna Charta – announcing “new times” in the internationalisation of higher education – but the initiative came this time from international organisations (Council of Europe and UNESCO) and it was signed by government representatives of European as well as some non-European states.¹² A particular feature of contemporary European higher education policy discussions has been that governmental and institutional – as well as student – engagements run more or less in parallel.¹³ Last but not least, the composition of the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) reflects this particularity: its members are representatives both from Ministries responsible for higher education and the academic community.

The Convention does not say much about internationalisation in general or about the “external dimension” in particular. Nevertheless, it addresses one of the key issues of higher education policy in a context of internationalisation – *the recognition issue*. This is why this document achieved such an important position after the Bologna Process was launched. In the Preamble, it also stated some important principles which have remained valid and important until today: the Convention considers that “higher education should play a vital role in promoting peace, mutual understanding and tolerance, and in creating mutual confidence among peoples and nations”, it approaches also “other Regions of the world” and stresses “the need for an improved exchange of information between these Regions” (Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications..., 1997). Even without these concrete statements, this is clearly a document

¹² The Lisbon Recognition Convention has been signed and/or ratified also by the following “non-Bologna” countries: Australia, Belarus, Canada, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and U.S. – For details see <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=165&CM=8&DF=9/7/2006&CL=ENG>.

¹³ “The university Europe of the Bologna process may be running in parallel with the Lisbon process, at any rate for the governments of the EU member states. But the Bologna process, in working for means of convergence which will allow the creation of a common academic ‘space’, gives universities a political voice. Governmental decisions have been significantly shaped by an academic input. Governments are committed to respecting the fundamental characteristics of universities qua universities and not simply seeing them as economic engines. The Bologna process is explicitly underpinned by a university ‘Magna Carta’, the Magna Charta Universitatum, which combines both aspirations and a process to challenge governments taking action to infringe their autonomy.” (Corbett, 2005, p. xii; 10).

which is legitimately built in the basements of the Bologna Process and its “external dimension”.

15. Another cluster of influential statements on the “external dimension”, which partly precede and partly go in parallel with the “proper” Bologna documents, can be found in policy documents from the EU institutions. However, higher education and general education policy had very little to do with these institutions until the late 1980s. During this period, policy and legal responsibilities remained firmly with national country states. Anne Corbett presents the key phases of the transformation of this trend in her – already quoted – excellent study on EU higher education policy 1955-2005: “On the higher education front, the received view is that the Community had nothing to do with universities, or education in general, before the 1970s. The policy sector was ‘taboo’, according to Guy Neave, author of the earliest account of EC education policy, because national governments had not given the Community competence for education when they signed the Treaties of Rome” (Corbett, 2005, p. 10).

This trend had been gradually changed and “the period from 1985 to 1993 is seen as the period of transformation which put education policy on the road to Maastricht. [...] This led to the formal adoption of a number of EC programmes in the late 1980s and early 1990s [...].¹⁴ The Community’s subsidiary competence in education was defined for the first time by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1991 after which new and reorganised programmes could be developed by the EU institutions. [...].¹⁵ By the 1990s, and in Shaw’s much-cited phrase, education had moved from the margins to the centre of Community policy-making concern.” (Ibid., p. 11).

Some reflections on the “extra-European Community dimension” – a remote predecessor of the “external dimension” – can be found within the popular debates on the “European dimension in higher education” at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Exactly fifteen years ago, it was stated in the *Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community* (1991) that besides the “European dimension in higher education” there are also “historic linkages and relationships between higher education institutions in the different Member States and various countries of the world”.

It was also said that an enhanced role for education and training in the external relations of the Community is evolving for a number of reasons and that there has always been an “extra-European Community dimension” in the relationships between higher education institutions. The Memorandum brought some important conclusions: »While it is vital to the future of the Community that the European dimension in higher education be emphasised and strengthened, this extra-EC dimension is of fundamental importance to an open European Community, deriving strength from cooperation and interaction across the world”. Europe

¹⁴ Comett (Community Programme for Education and Training in Technology), Erasmus (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students), Lingua (to fund and promote training and skills in foreign languages), Tempus (Trans-Mobility Programme for University Students) and Jean Monnet (the system of chairs to promote teaching and research on European integration).

¹⁵ See Article 126 of the Maastricht Treaty, e.g.: “1. The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity. [...] 3. The Community and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the field of education, in particular the Council of Europe.” The emphasis placed on “cooperation with third countries” is particularly important for developing the “external dimension”.

must not only strengthen its own identity, but it must do so in a political, economic and cultural equilibrium with the rest of the world» (Commission..., 1991).

16. The importance of the “extra-European Community dimension” was only enhanced during the 1990s and it found sound echoes also in the Lisbon strategy and related policy documents after 2000. Of course, this is already a period of certain parallelism between the Bologna Process (enlarging from 29 member countries in 1999 to 45 since 2005) and the EU Lisbon Process (also enlarging from 15 countries in 2000 to 25 since 2004). The famous Lisbon “new strategic goal” contains implicitly the whole array of issues closely connected to higher education and research policy. The Lisbon Strategy explicitly addressed only one, related to the European Research Area - to “take steps to remove obstacles to the mobility of researchers in Europe by 2002 and to attract and retain high-quality research talent in Europe” (Council..., 2000). However, a number of documents which elaborate Lisbon objectives into details also develop many aspects on the “extra-EU dimension”.

Thus, the Concrete Future Objectives of Education Systems stressed “an openness of spirit towards foreign countries, Europe and the wider world” (Commission..., 2001-a). The Detailed Work Programme made it even more clear, saying that “Europe will be open to cooperation for mutual benefits with all other regions and should be the most-favoured destination of students, scholars and researchers from other world regions” (Council..., 2002-b); yet, it put at the top of the agenda that “the highest quality will be achieved in education and training and Europe will be recognised as a world-wide reference for the quality and relevance of its education and training systems and institutions” (ibid.).

Approximately at the same time, international cooperation among European universities and encouragement “to integrate new cooperation with third countries into a wider partnership framework” (Commission..., 2001-b) was addressed in a Communication on Strengthening Cooperation with Third Countries in the Field of Higher Education. The document stressed that “[T]his effort is also needed because there is an ever-increasing demand for international education and student mobility” but also noted that students “flock mainly to the US”. It is made clear that “there may be healthy competition between Member States countries to attract international students”; yet, “the role of the EC should be primarily to encourage cooperative approaches so that the benefits can be shared more widely within the EC and partner countries.” The document concludes that the Community “should ensure that its education activities include the international dimension in a more systematic way” and “should give greater visibility to its action in this field in order to promote Europe as a centre of excellence, and to attract students seeking an international education” (ibid.).

A soundly echoed step forward in the implementation of the Lisbon strategy in higher education was the launch of the Erasmus-Mundus programme (Commission..., 2002-b). Its overall aims (“to enhance the quality of European higher education by fostering cooperation with third countries in order to improve the development of human resources and to promote dialogue and understanding between peoples and cultures”) as well as specific objectives (to promote a quality offer in European higher education and attractiveness “both within the European Union and beyond its borders”, “to encourage and enable highly qualified graduates and scholars from all over the world, to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union”, “to improve accessibility and enhance the profile and visibility of higher education” in EU etc.) are highly important for developing the “external dimension” of higher education in EU and broadly in Europe.

Research is one of the key issues of the Lisbon strategy and a Communication on the European Research Area of 2002 (Commission..., 2002-c) already reported on “several

initiatives [...] undertaken to take account of, benefit from and exploit the international dimension of the European Research Area and its openness to the world". These initiatives were obviously not sufficient, and critical voices and urgencies¹⁶ could be heard later. Thus, with regard to research, Wim Kok's Report ascertained that "[T]he EU needs to draw more of the best and brightest researchers in the world by raising its attractiveness" and recommended that "[F]ast-track work permit and visa procedures should be introduced for researchers and the mutual recognition of professional qualifications must be improved" (Kok, 2004). A Communication on Mobilising the brainpower of Europe noted further on that "[R]aising quality and attractiveness requires major transformation at universities" (Commission..., 2005-b). The document stressed flexibility and "openness to the world in teaching/learning" as important factors to raise attractiveness of European universities.

In more recent debates, the idea of establishing a European Institute of Technology (EIT) raised several questions on the "external dimension" as well: "The EIT must act as a pole of attraction for the best minds from around the world" and "as a model for promoting change across the European Higher Education Area" (Commission..., 2006-b). However, the global attractiveness of the EIT to non-EU students and researchers depends on "the academic credibility of the courses, degrees and research programmes" as well as on "the ease with which it would be possible for foreign Masters or Doctoral candidates and researchers to join the EIT and for the EIT to employ third country citizens in the Knowledge Communities" (ibid.). Concrete measures are needed "to simplify and accelerate legal and administrative procedures for the entry of non-EU students and researchers" (Commission..., 2006-a). "Building an attractive image for European universities in the world also calls for a serious effort to make European degrees more easily recognised outside Europe. However, first, cross-recognition has to be fully achieved within the EU itself." (Ibid.) This is a point where the "internal" ("structural") and "external" dimension cross each other; last but not least, this is a point which is essential for the Bologna Process in general

17. It is time to draw some attention to genuine Bologna documents from the "external dimension" point of view. As was already briefly mentioned in one of the introductory paragraphs, *recognition* and *attractiveness* – terms discussed at the end of the previous paragraph – were also among the key words of the *Sorbonne Declaration* (1998). A debate on the "external dimension" was actually launched here: "The international recognition and attractive potential of our systems are directly related to their external and internal readabilities. A system, in which two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate, should be recognised for international comparison and equivalence, seems to emerge". In the same line, the language of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999) added *international competitiveness* as well: "We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European systems of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions".

¹⁶ E.g., while referring to the Lisbon strategy, a Communication on European values in a globalised world (Commission..., 2005-c), prepared for the Hampton Court Meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the EU, stressed: "[...] what is different five years on is the added sense of urgency. Global competition, particularly from Asia, has intensified. Cutting-edge knowledge is no longer confined to Europe or North America. Indian universities are turning out more than a quarter of million engineers every year. Research spending in China is set to catch that in the EU by 2010".

In fact, the concept of the “external dimension of the Bologna Process” was not yet born at this time; however, it was certainly conceived. The initial “Bologna push” in combination with discussions that accompanied, on the one hand, the launching of the Lisbon strategy (2000) and, on the other hand, the Salamanca European convention of universities (2001) additionally contributed to the fact that, during their Prague follow-up meeting, “Ministers agreed on the importance of enhancing attractiveness of European higher education to students from Europe and other parts of the world. The readability and comparability of European higher education degrees world-wide should be enhanced by the development of a common framework of qualifications, as well as by coherent quality assurance and accreditation / certification mechanisms and by increased information efforts.” (Prague Communiqué, 2001). The next paragraph of the Communiqué added: “Ministers particularly stressed that the quality of higher education and research is and should be an important determinant of Europe’s international attractiveness and competitiveness. Ministers agreed that more attention should be paid to the benefit of a European Higher Education Area with institutions and programmes with different profiles. They called for increased collaboration between the European countries concerning the possible implications and perspectives of transnational education.” (Ibid.)

Several horizons of the “external dimension”

18. Thus, horizons for discussing the “external dimension” were moulded and opened. The work of the first Working Group on External Dimension (2002-2003) has already been presented and the relevant parts of both subsequent (Berlin and Bergen) Communiqués have already been quoted as well. Further on, the documents attached into *Annex 1* can speak for themselves. Discussion on the “external dimension” has shown that it is not only about international competitiveness, attractiveness and recognition.

One of the findings of the present/second Working Group on External Dimension (2005-2006) has been that it is not possible to define the “external dimension of the Bologna Process” using a single definition: there are several elements interlinked in this expression. Passing through several discussions, it has identified several horizons, agendas and approaches in which the “external dimension” appears in Bologna documents and which could be synthesised into four main clusters:

- (a) *a competitiveness and attractiveness agenda*, which is to result in an inflow of non-European students and scholars into European higher education; complemented by
- (b) *a partnership and cooperation agenda*, in which collaborative activity will democratically benefit both European and non-European higher education, and from which notably commercial motives should be absent (“academic values”);
- (c) *a dialogue approach*, by means of which the EHEA would foster the exchange of experience and ideas on higher education reform issues with representatives of other world regions; and which would develop concrete mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of the “partnership and cooperation agenda” (see b) between the EHEA and the respective country/region;
- (d) *an information (didactic) approach*, by means of which the EHEA would be correctly presented and explained in other world regions.

These horizons can be also perceived while searching for echoes of the Bologna Process from world regions. This is the objective of the next chapter.

3. The “external dimension”: echoes of the Bologna Process from world regions

19. This chapter is intended to capture and present the main echoes of the Bologna Process from world regions. It was not possible to lean on any previous systematic review of this kind; thus, entering on the issue was possible only through surveying a huge amount of heterogeneous documents and information. In order to reflect developments at the present stage of the Bologna Process, as well as to facilitate preparation of the “external dimension strategy”, such an enterprise seems necessary. Yet, the ambition is not – and cannot be within the limits of a given mandate – to provide a comprehensive, all-embracing review but rather to present the most characteristic facts and events, as well as to outline the main trends and questions that have been arising as the waves of the Bologna have been spreading around the globe.

From today’s point of view it is really curious how deep the “Bologna family” was occupied with itself during its “childhood” years. The “international competitiveness of the European systems of higher education” and “a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions” (Bologna Declaration, 1999) were on the agenda, but it seems that in the given circumstances of European “coming together” of the 1990s there was not much time to enhance “the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions” (Bergen Communiqué, 2005). However, documents prove that the “external” importance of the Process was perceived among higher education experts in all world regions but it had taken a lot of time, so that information and communication with representatives of these regions became a matter of organised and systematic work.

The ACA Conference on the “external dimension” (Hamburg, 2004) was one of the early opportunities to articulate this issue: “Speakers from other world regions confirmed that the reform agenda was being perceived outside of Europe, though at different degrees by the different target academic groups. While higher education leaders and managers were probably best informed, there were clear deficiencies on the side of the faculty. The fact that word about the reforms had travelled beyond the confines of Europe does not mean, however, that non-European observers had a detailed knowledge of the aims and the elements of the reform process. There was therefore a clear need for the provision of targeted information on the Bologna Process outside of Europe.” (Recommendations for inclusion..., 2004).

The appeal depends on relations

20. Why is it so important to consider these echoes seriously? Is it just to improve European self-esteem? Are there more substantial reasons?

Yes, there are. It has been stressed several times that structural reforms alone will not suffice to increase the appeal for other countries, if we may paraphrase known words from the Bologna Declaration. The appeal ceases to exist if there is no *relation*: no tension between the “internal” and the “external dimension”. Even Narcissus had his “external” mirror. Yet, to understand the relation – and to avoid either autism or centrism of any kind – it is necessary to understand the other; last but not least, this is the best way to understand self. However, as

always in human learning and understanding it takes time to understand. Impatient readers can immediately turn the pages to the end of this chapter and read its very last sentence. But hopefully they will most probably decide to start from the beginning again.

21. The review will run as a “geographical tour” – normally starting from the neighbourhood. Since this is not Marco Polo’s long-lasting expedition but rather an intensive Phileas Fogg’s “*le tour du monde en quarante pas*”,¹⁷ there will be no time to visit just all interesting places and present just all valuable views on the issue. Firstly, it seems that such a tour could be structured only according to world geography; yet, this is not easy, after some consideration. When cultural, political and similar issues are elaborated we often find that there is no clear-cut division between “continents”, “world regions” etc. For example: how to delineate Russia from Kazakhstan, or the north and the south shore of the Mediterranean, when discussing the “geography” of the European Higher Education Area? What “geography” could argue that certain parts of South America, Africa and Pacific form a common “region”, namely the “lusophone region”? Are there “trans-regions” etc? These issues will soon be tackled. Discussions within the External Dimension Working Group have shown that the term (*world*) *region* should be used very carefully and with due respect to cultural and political contexts when referring to the internationalised higher education of today.

Bologna and “countries in transition”

22. Between Berlin and Bergen, the emerging European higher education area expanded even further to the east; after applications from Moldova, Ukraine and three Caucasus countries to join the Bologna Process, interest was noticed also from the Central Asia countries. Eligibility for membership (the European Cultural Convention) put these countries in a special position: traditionally they were most closely connected to universities in e.g. Russia or Ukraine, but the Bologna Process put them on its “external” side. Interestingly, the Bologna Process entered also a forum which initially has nothing to do with comprehensive reforms of higher education systems.

It was at the 12th OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Economic Forum where Per Nyborg, head of the Bologna Secretariat under Norway’s coordination (2003-2005), was invited to present the Bologna opportunities to a broad range of countries, broader than the circle of signatories. He stressed at the beginning of his speech that “the principles and objectives of the Bologna Process may be used for reforms in any country and they may be a very good basis for international cooperation in higher educations also outside the European Region” and added: “I shall be very interested in what the next speaker, Rector Kuznetsova from Kazakhstan, is going to say about university reforms in the light of the Bologna Process.” (Nyborg, 2004).

The theme of the conference was “New Challenges for Building up Institutional and Human Capacity for Economic Development and Cooperation” and higher education reforms found a sound place on the agenda. As it is recorded in the summary of the conference, the importance of the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Convention as a framework for educational reform was highlighted, “particularly, but not exclusively, in transition countries”. The goal of the reform process is “to promote the achievement of four objectives: employability, competitiveness, mobility, and regional and international cooperation”. Speakers presented the reform processes in the field of education in some countries and regions of the OSCE area. “In this vein, Ms. Olga Kuznetsova, Rector of the International Academy of Business in

¹⁷ This chapter comprises of fourty sections.

Almaty, also focused her contribution on analysing the context, trends and challenges in educational reform in Kazakhstan, particularly in the field of business education. She drew our attention to the need to strike a balance between standardisation and flexibility when it comes to developing degrees and curricula.” (OSCE, 2004, p. 46).

According to the summary of the conference, there was a broad consensus among participants that any reform process in the field of education “is not to be considered as an imposition but as a two-way cooperation” (ibid., p. 48). The importance of such cooperation was obviously taken into account when recommendations were made. At the top of a long list of recommendations we can find a proposal that “in promoting educational reform, the OSCE can encourage and help in the implementation of the Bologna Process on a voluntary basis” as well as that “the OSCE could assist in facilitating mobility and regional and international co-operation among educational institutions by several means, particularly by backing the establishment of regional and international accreditation centres, and quality evaluation systems” (ibid, p. 49).

Euro-Mediterranean partnership

23. Another “trans-region” with traditional international academic ties is the Mediterranean. Its historical and cultural context enables universities to play a very active role in international cooperation in general. On the one hand, the Mediterranean as such is the meeting point of various world regions, economies and cultural influences; on the other hand, in today’s political circumstances the “European part” of the Mediterranean provides more and more opportunities also to non-Mediterranean European countries to take part in the cooperation activities also with “non-European” Mediterranean countries. Today, this is particularly true in the field of higher education and research.

Most countries of the “European part” of the Mediterranean are today EU Member States and it can be no surprise that the European Union strongly supports several cooperation programmes and promotes various concrete actions. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership¹⁸ (“Barcelona Process”: Partnership and Cooperation or Association Agreements; 1995) and the decisions taken by the EuroMed Committee and the Conference of Ministers, along with the Neighbourhood Policy,¹⁹ led to a complex programme of Euro-Mediterranean “co-development” in the economic, political, cultural, environmental and security fields. Two transversal issues are of fundamental importance: to encourage interaction and cooperation between the social agents from the north and the south, and to generate an image of Europe in the Mediterranean that makes it possible, as stated by the Advisory group named by Romano Prodi in 2003, “to construct in the Mediterranean area, and starting from the Mediterranean, a friendly neighbourhood with a human dimension.”²⁰ Today, higher education institutions from most countries around the Mediterranean cooperate also in EU education and training

¹⁸ See <http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/index.htm>.

¹⁹ “The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in the context of the EU’s 2004 enlargement, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and our neighbours and instead strengthening stability, security and well-being for all concerned. [...] Originally, the ENP was intended to apply to our immediate neighbours – Algeria, Belarus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. In 2004, it was extended to also include the countries of the Southern Caucasus with whom the present candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey share either a maritime or land border (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). Although Russia is also a neighbour of the EU, the mutual relations are instead developed through a Strategic Partnership covering four ‘common spaces’.” – See <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm>

²⁰ See <<http://www.unimedforum.net/index.htm>>.

programmes, e.g. Tempus projects covered through Meda Programme,²¹ similarly as through Cards and Tacis in the Western Balkans Eastern Europe and Central Asian region.

There have been visible intergovernmental higher education activities in the region. Recently, in January 2006, the Ministers of Education from 12 Mediterranean countries²² met in Italy and signed the *Catania Declaration*, further proof of the dissemination of the Bologna spirit. In the preamble, Ministers referred to the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 and to two other conferences held in Catania (2003, 2005) that have set forth the proposal to create a “Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education Area”. Further on they agreed, among others, to “activate a structured cooperation in order to promote the comparability and readability of higher education systems in the Euro-Mediterranean Area, though preserving each country’s individuality”, as well as to “establish common education and training paths based on a system of transferable credits and on easily readable qualifications and exploitable as well by the labour market, by sharing criteria, evaluation methods and quality assurance schemes in order to facilitate the mobility of students, researchers and professors”. As priorities Ministers stressed also the promotion of doctoral programmes and the encouragement of scientific and technical collaboration, the establishment of Centres of Excellence, strengthening distance learning system and developing vocational expertise and diplomas in higher education. Finally they agreed “to meet regularly to assess progress and to promote further collaboration through the establishment of a Follow-up Group, in which each participant Country will be represented, and who will report to the next ministerial meeting to be held in 2008” (Catania Declaration, 2006).

24. Activities have not remained on a political level alone. Recently, an influential higher education action has been launched within this agenda – the *Mediterranean University Forum*, a part of the European Commission's Jean Monnet project. After careful preparation, at the 2nd Forum, held in Tarragona (Spain) in June 2005, the basic policy document was signed – *the Tarragona Declaration*. So far, 137 signatory universities from 30 countries (out of altogether 35 so-called Euro-Med countries) have joined the initiative. Its main aims are to promote academic thinking about the key elements required to create an open Mediterranean area, to define the role of the university in the social, cultural, economic and scientific aspects of the Mediterranean area and to gradually build a Mediterranean area of higher education and research.

The declaration estimates that “the participation of the universities to the construction of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership appears to be much necessary and urgent, given that the most consistent obstacles encountered for the completion of this process are also of a cultural nature”. It also expressed the awareness of EU universities “that the Mediterranean issue is one of the priorities in order to define the political and cultural future of Europe. They are interested in developing a dynamic and functional concept of inter-university cooperation that fits the growth of efficiency and competitiveness within the European Higher Education system. They can offer the partner countries a valid contribution to acquire a variety of necessary skills for their economic, social and institutional development. The universities of the partner countries not only expect an improvement of the economic and political relations from the Barcelona Process and its outcome, but also an increase in cultural and technological exchange. They shall contribute to the renewal of the European university system by means of

²¹ See <http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/euromed/meda.htm>. The MEDA programme is the principal financial instrument of the European Union for the implementation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

²² Algeria, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Malta, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey.

encouraging the great cultural traditions and contributing with academic institutions of great prospective growth”.

The declaration identifies several fields in which cooperation is much urgent, and declared “their particular interest in the promotion of the various components of the Euro-Mediterranean Cultural Heritage.” Finally, it ascertains that the time has come “to create a ‘Euro-Mediterranean area of Higher Education and Research’, to contribute to the promotion of a knowledge society, to encourage collaboration and dialogue among the educational institutions, to increase their management efficiency, the quality of teaching and research, a non-discriminatory education and the involvement of civil society in a knowledge society. More specifically, a ‘Higher Education Network’ should be established and made up of universities and research centres in the Mediterranean, supported by the community, national and regional political institutions of the countries involved” (Tarragona Declaration, 2005).

25. The 3rd Forum, held in Malta in June 2006, gathered already more than 300 representatives from universities as well as national and international institutions and organisations from 38 countries. Participants discussed the possibilities and problems of direct cooperation and exchange between universities in Europe and the whole Mediterranean region. The main objective of the Malta Forum was to create a common platform for the discussion of Euro-Mediterranean issues through an academic approach. In particular, it focused on the development of activities that can set in motion the Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education Area - the development of programmes for staff mobility, the strengthening of joint research structures, the identification of structural needs for specific countries, etc. One of the principal objectives was also to enhance the attractiveness and visibility of European higher education.

In his speech at the Forum, Giuseppe Giliberti from Italy stressed the importance and mutual character of cooperation: “The universities of the EU countries and the associated states – even those geographically distant from the sea – can help the countries of the Eastern and Southern shores of the Mediterranean upgrade the capacity of their scientific and educational system. They are conscious that this is their own interest. The European universities are able to help the countries on the other shore acquire a wide range of competences necessary to development. They can, in their turn, receive significant cultural impulses from them.” (Giliberti, 2006).

On the other hand, A. Touhami from Syria addressed the issue of quality assurance and warned about obstacles and special contexts that Europe is not always aware of. “It is needless to say that the higher education system in the South is archaic and it is now in a critical situation, and I cannot exclude those countries in the process of development that have already started the implementation of Bologna process (Tunisia, Morocco²³) since the outcome is not yet evaluated. For some other countries, reform is mere ink on paper. [...] In a situation such as this, the simple act of concentrating on, or thinking about quality assurance can be difficult.” Touhami concluded that the South alone cannot achieve the required quality

²³ See, for example, A. Bencherifa speech at the EUA Glasgow Convention (2005): “Degree transparency, the pooling of resources and collaboration instead of stark competition are as much ingredients of the novel university system in Morocco as it is the hallmark of the Bologna recommendations. [...] The on-going European Process of University changes has provided the Moroccan experience with an additional factor of legitimacy. More decisively, however, this process has also established a benchmark along which the long time, French-based, Moroccan University system could adhere to a more Universal academic system.” (Bencherifa, 2005).

but “‘It takes two to tango’ as they say, and North-South cooperation is vital.” (Touhami, 2006).

The Forum agreed on three priority activities: the development of international cooperation and exchange offices, especially at universities in the Arab countries, to facilitate the mobility of students and staff, the enhancement of North-South and South-South research cooperation and the establishment of a network of networks of Euro-Mediterranean universities. It was also agreed that the next Forum would be held in June 2007 in Alexandria (Egypt), hosted by the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures.²⁴

26. Looking at the other shore of Mediterranean, one could also find broader academic events presenting higher education developments in North Africa and the Middle East. As an interesting case, we can take the *Academia Conventions*. Since 2003, Academia Conventions hold annual academic conferences in Beirut and Cairo²⁵ on pertinent higher education issues in concurrence with its mission of integrating the regional education market in an increasingly challenging global environment and contributing to building a knowledge society in the Arab World. In last few years, themes like “Access to Knowledge in the 21st Century” and “Quality Management and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in the Arab World” have been organised. In December 2005, a “Conference on Partnering for Knowledge: Policies of Higher Education Reform” was organised. The agenda addressed almost all key issues of contemporary higher education policy: Quality Assurance in Higher Education, International Partnerships, Career Development and Lifelong Learning as well as ICT in Education.

The conference officially declared the establishment of the Arab Society for Quality Assurance in Education (ASQAE)²⁶ and this could be particularly interesting for an outside observer. The ASQAE is a product of the recommendations of Academia Egypt 2004 Conference on Quality Management and Accreditation of Higher Education, which called for the creation of a steering committee to work on the regional accreditation project, mandated to prepare the required studies and procedures to create an Arab NGO (Society) for quality assurance in higher education with open membership to experts and organisations from the Arab region.

What could Bologna say to Africa and what could Africa ask of Bologna?

27. Moving further South, the context changes even more. When discussing international cooperation in higher education, Africa today seems to be too much at the margins of interest, if not altogether forgotten.²⁷ Public higher education in Africa still has strong links to European education, but during the era of colonialism the influence of diverse European systems left substantial traces in African systems. This is a legacy of “the past Europe”: today, European systems are coming together and the Bologna Process will soon make old differences and incompatibilities part of history. However, here too Africa still displays inherited divisions from “the past Europe”. There are national higher education systems, in particular in South Africa, or, as just mentioned, there are some countries on the southern

²⁴ See <<http://www.euromedalex.org>>. The Foundation is the first common institution jointly established and financed by all 35 members of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

²⁵ See <<http://www.academiaegypt.com>> and <<http://www.academialebanon.com>>.

²⁶ See <<http://fathielnadi.blogspot.com/2005/12/mandate-arab-society-for-quality.html>>.

²⁷ See for example Ulf Lie, *Africa – the forgotten continent?* (In: Muche ed., 2005).

shores of the Mediterranean that are implementing important reforms and making progress. However, in general, there are many problems and sometimes even signs of worry.

In a recent study on World Bank policies on higher education in Africa, prepared for the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge, authors openly say: “The past two decades have indeed been difficult for Africa’s universities. Deteriorating economic conditions, pressure from external founders and internal constituencies to reduce costs and redirect resources to basic education, and leaders’ perception that university communities were more a political threat than a development engine combined to undermine higher education. In many countries staff salaries stagnated or declined, requiring second jobs and increasing the attraction of overseas opportunities. Book purchases, journal subscriptions, laboratory equipment, facilities maintenance, and research support also suffered.” (Samoff and Carrol, 2003; Samoff and Carrol, 2004). Authors examine “the pressure of World Bank policies” as one of multiple causes for the distress of African universities. Within the framework of our analysis it is necessary to examine whether European higher education changes could contribute to the multiplicity of these causes or whether they can contribute to a positive future scenario.

28. With regard to this dilemma, Goolam Mohamedbhai, made an interesting point in his (already mentioned)²⁸ speech at the 2005 EUA Glasgow Convention when reflecting “on what could be the effects of the Bologna Process on the rest of the world”. Generally speaking, “there is no doubt that the Bologna reforms will have an effect on higher education in other parts of the world.” Yet, this statement only raises new questions: “It is well known that most of the universities in countries which were former colonies of Europe were patterned on the institutions in the respective colonising country. In Europe these countries are mainly the UK, France, Spain and Portugal. The former colonies, mostly developing countries, are mainly in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. There has always been very close collaboration in teaching and research between universities in Europe and those in the south.” (Mohamedbhai, 2005).

If a strong European Higher Education Area holds strong promises from a European point of view, it does not mean that it cannot raise concerns when observed from other perspectives. Of course, one potential concern could be more intensive global *competition* in higher education markets. Yet this is not necessarily the only option. There could also be concern about future *cooperation*: “there is the danger that European universities will now prefer to collaborate with their counterparts in Europe rather than with those in the south. This would have a negative impact on the latter” (ibid.).

The consolation that this is purely a subjective view and that now “Bologna is looking out” is obviously not enough. Higher education institutions in Africa, for example, are coping with developmental tensions just like higher education institutions everywhere in the world, but their situation is characterised by a context which makes the problems much more severe – in particular if traditional ties and cooperation paths with institutions from other world regions grow weak. Mohamedbhai says: “I believe that the universities in the south which currently have links with European ones, will be inclined to align themselves with those in the north. In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, which is the region I know best, this may not be too difficult in Anglophone countries where the 2 cycle degree structure, as proposed under Bologna, is already in use, and most universities now adopt a modular and credit system. But this may not

²⁸ See section 12 (Ch. 2).

be true for francophone and lusophone countries where the institutions may have to undertake major changes as are taking place in Europe “.(Mohamedbhai, 2005).

29. There are some clear signs that the Bologna Process, as an example of good practice in the field of policy development, is now entering Africa. An interesting reference was recently made at the African Union meeting of experts on revitalisation of higher education in Africa.²⁹ Among other issues discussed at the meeting, the importance of system approach in higher education was stressed “as opposed to dealing with single institutions, organisations or even countries. This is important in view of the need for collective responsibility and mutually supportive action, towards the integration agenda of the African Union. We should be looking at ‘the big picture’, to consider how we can benefit from initiatives outside Africa, avoiding mistakes made by others and building on their gains. The Bologna Process for harmonisation of higher education certificates was cited as an example worth studying”.

Similarly, the *Communiqué* of the International Conference on Accreditation, Quality Assurance and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in Africa (February 2006)³⁰ stresses in its preamble the awareness “of the development in Europe of the Bologna process which seeks to harmonise the higher education space in the region thus bringing together such issues as quality assurance, student mobility, recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates» as well as a conviction »that higher education in Africa will benefit from the adoption of the model of the Bologna process especially in fostering regional collaboration in the three areas of focus of the Conference” (Communiqué, 2006).

Further on, in the framework for priority action, the *Communiqué* continues: “On the strength of the merit of the European example of the Bologna process in fostering regional collaboration in quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications, the model should be recommended for the Africa region. In achieving this goal, a taskforce should be set up with UNESCO and AAU as lead agencies to develop a strategic plan for the consideration of the Conference of African Ministers of Education and the African Union on how Africa can model the Bologna process. Other members of the task force should be drawn from southern Africa, central Africa, west Africa, east Africa and northern Africa. The taskforce should submit its interim report for discussion at a regional meeting on the subject to be convened by UNESCO during the fourth quarter of 2006” (ibid.).

Policy development action plans in combination with systemic possibilities to start concrete cooperation projects at the institutional level could importantly improve the situation and give punctual support to develop these initiatives to sustainable results. There are good prospects that a similar possibility, as has been already made for a large group of other countries, will be soon available also for Africa. In a recent (28 April 2006) proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be adopted by the Community within the ACP [Africa, Caribbean, Pacific] – EC Council of Ministers regarding a decision to reassign part of the reserve of the 9th European Development Fund envelope for long-term development, it is also envisaged to support “the creation of a Erasmus Mundus ‘window’ for the ACP States (about EUR 5

²⁹ Revitalising Higher Education in Africa. Report of First Experts’ Meeting. Held on 27th –28th October 2005, Johannesburg. See <http://www.aau.org/au_experts/docs/midrand_rep.pdf>.

³⁰ Communiqué (2006). International Conference on Accreditation, Quality Assurance and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education in Africa. Nairobi, Kenya, 6-8 February 2006. See <<http://www.unesco-nairobi.org/documents/highereducation.pdf>>.

million)”.³¹ The proposal is currently under discussion between the EU and the African Union for probable implementation in 2007.

The case of francophone and lusophone countries

30. So far, cooperation between countries linked by a language and/or a similar tradition of higher education systems proves an advantage in informing other countries of the world about higher education changes in Europe. This is, for example, the case when higher education in countries of the *Afrique francophone* is discussed. The progress that France achieved in implementing “*architecture du LMD*” facilitated approaching the “spirit” of the Bologna Process in other – not only African – countries. Since 2002, a series of international meetings has been organised that have addressed various aspects of higher education reforms in Africa, enabling an exchange of good practices between universities from different regions and, by avoiding a mere transfer of ready-made recipes from North to South, have stimulated a discussion of possible adaptations of general principles in a concrete African context. The most recent event in this series was the International colloquium on university reforms in African Countries³² held in Morocco in May 2006 (Éducation & Politiques, 2006).

31. A similar process is characteristic not only for *francophone* but also for *lusophone* countries.³³ The Community of the Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP),³⁴ established in 1996, constitutes a formal forum with regular meetings of Ministers of Education and also with higher education issues on the agenda. There is also the Association of the Portuguese Speaking Universities (AULP)³⁵ with an already well-established tradition of cooperation. At the 12th Annual Meeting of the AULP in Luanda (Angola) in 2002, a paper on the Bologna Process was given by Pedro Lourtie and, in conclusion, it was proposed to use the experience of the Bologna Process to develop a special project within the AULP.

Thus, the Lusophone Higher Education Area (ELES – *Espaço Lusófono de Ensino Superior*) has been established. The project involves four clusters of issues: endeavours to establish quality assurance systems that may be mutually recognised, improvement of the mutual recognition of qualifications (an initiative for a recognition convention), development of common principles, taking into account the national legal frameworks, in order to facilitate

³¹ See <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0185en01.pdf>.

³² See *Les réformes universitaires dans les pays d'Afrique*. Présentation du colloque international «Les réformes universitaires dans les pays d'Afrique» qui aura lieu à l'Université Chouaïb Doukkali à El Jadida au Maroc du 23 au 25 mai 2006. <http://ep.inrp.fr/EP/r_a_venir/colloque_reformes_universitaires_afrique/>.

«Le débat qui s'est par le passé focalisé sur la question des cycles d'études est aujourd'hui confisqué par d'autres sujets épineux. Ceux de la qualité, de l'organisation de diplômes conjoints, des masters recherche et des écoles doctorales, de la gestion des universités et des pôles d'excellence, parmi les plus discutés en Europe, sont de première importance. Des idées ont été émises pour aider les pays d'Afrique à progresser dans ces matières, notamment lors de la rencontre de Marseille (2004) qui visait l'échange de pratiques entre les pays du Nord et du Sud. Suite aux évolutions mondiales, les états d'Afrique francophone ont pris des initiatives importantes dans certains de ces domaines dont la plus forte à ce jour est sans doute l'adoption par les pays de l'UEMOA (Union économique et monétaire Ouest africaine), d'une directive (décembre 2005) qui vise à faciliter la mobilité par l'installation des mêmes droits d'accès à une institution d'enseignement supérieur à tous les étudiants des pays de l'Union.» (Éducation & Politiques, 2006).

³³ The following paragraphs are based mostly on Pedro Lourtie's contribution to the External Dimension Working Group. See Lourtie, 2006.

³⁴ See <<http://www.cplp.org/>>. Its members are Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissao, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe and, since its independence, East Timor.

³⁵ See <<http://www.aulp.org/>>.

exchange of students, recognition of qualifications and double degrees and, last but not least, strengthening mobility of students and graduates. The project was presented at the next Annual Meeting of AULP (Macao, 2003); as the actions proposed implied the involvement of the CPLP Governments, these were approached in order to obtain their engagement.

In May 2004, the 5th Meeting of the CPLP Ministers of Education was held in Fortaleza (Brazil). At this meeting, a text for a convention on the recognition of qualifications, prepared by the AULP on the basis of the Lisbon Convention was presented and proposed. The peak point of the meeting was the adoption of a resounding policy document, *Declaração de Fortaleza*. The Declaration aims at building the CPLP Higher Education Area and indicates a number of priorities: (1) “the fostering of the quality of the formations offered in the CPLP and their mutual and international recognition”, (2) “the promotion of the mobility of students and teaching, research and technical staff”, (3) “the cooperation in the field of the structure of higher education formation”, (4) “the incentive to the participation of the institutions of the CPLP in relevant programmes of other communities of countries.” The Declaration also establishes a Follow-up Group, composed of “a representative of each of the ministries responsible for higher education” and “a representative of the Association of the Portuguese Speaking Universities” (Declaração de Fortaleza, 2004).

On this basis, the Follow-up Group was established and the following Meeting of the Ministers (December 2005) approved a work plan. A two-year plan deals with several topics. The establishment of a network of information centres about higher education systems and the recognition and mobility of students and teaching staff has been proposed, capable of providing relevant, reliable and timely information so as to promote elements of convergence with the European Bologna Process. Cooperation among national systems of evaluation within the framework of the quality of higher education will be encouraged, as will the promotion of inter-institutional cooperation through the development of networks involving activities of teaching and research, including the mobility of students and teaching staff. It is also envisaged that the existing obstacles to the mobility of students and staff will be identified and that proposals to overcome these obstacles will be presented to CPLP Governments (Lourtie, 2006).

The EU-LAC Common Area of Higher Education

32. Over the last decades, bi-regional relations between Europe and Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) have been substantially improved on a political level. EULAC countries (or “EULAC Process”) consist of EU Member States and two Acceding Countries and of 33 countries of LAC. Two main forums for political dialogue exist: a dialogue between the EU and the Rio Group at Foreign Minister level and Summit Meetings of EU and LAC Heads of State and Government. The first Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1999. The 2002 Madrid Summit accepted a political declaration (the Madrid Commitment). In this document, a commitment was made, among others, “to create more opportunities in our regions for education, culture and access to knowledge as keys to success in the twenty-first century”.³⁶ In the final declaration of the last Summit, which was held in Vienna in May 2006, Heads of State and Government attached “priority to the creation of the EU-LAC Common Area of Higher Education, geared towards mobility and cooperation.”³⁷

³⁶ The Madrid Commitment. Political Declaration. [Heads of State and Government of the EU and of LAC]. Madrid, 17 May 2002. See <http://ec.europa.eu/comm/world/lac/conc_en/decl.htm>.

³⁷ *Declaration of Vienna*. IV EU-LAC Summit. Vienna, Austria, 12 May 2006. See <<http://www.uealc.at/includes/images/EULAC/EU-LACViennaDeclarationEN.pdf>>.

Strengthened cooperation in higher education between the EU, on the one hand, and LAC on the other, (UEALC) is a particularly good result of this political process. The EULAC higher education framework emanated from the Ministerial Conference held in November 2000 in Paris.³⁸ Ministers declared “the need for an action framework for cooperation on specific themes to foster the emergence of a ‘European Union -Latin America -Caribbean Higher Education Area’ (EULAC) as one of the key elements of the strengthening of bilateral and multilateral relations among States, with the mission of facilitating the sharing of knowledge, the transfer of technologies and the mobility of students, teachers, researchers and administrators, while paying particular attention to the links between training, employment and scientific knowledge in the countries concerned”.

The Action Framework for the EULAC Higher Education Area foresees encouragement towards better comparability of degrees and the establishment of compatible credit systems. Priority themes were identified for the first period, and it was agreed to redefine them in the future. Main areas include science and technology training, exchanges of successful experience in managing, assessing and administering higher education systems, the information society, competitive growth and environment, sustainable development and urbanisation, cultural heritage and regional integration. The declaration concludes that “the ministers or the authorities responsible for higher education, supported by the higher education institutions, will meet regularly and at least every four years to assess progress made in implementing the objectives”.

33. A plan of action was subsequently established for the period 2002-2004³⁹ and later extended until 2008. It also gives an interesting definition of the EULAC common space for higher education which includes quite a number of elements also known from the Bologna Process:

“The construction of a common space for higher education in the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean (EULAC) will allow the building of a framework open to a plurality of cultures, which will offer the chance to train and work in a plurilingual environment governed by an equal opportunities based policy.

The countries in these regions, firm in the belief that higher education is a public asset that falls within the sphere of state responsibility, consider that the said framework can offer an alternative to globalisation, help to overcome North/South differences and develop further collaboration, from the point of view of equality and solidarity. This belief is based on a mutual acknowledgement of the differences and similarities in these regions, in the diversity of languages and the variety of university systems. Therefore, it implies the need to work within a system of collaboration, cooperation, exchanges of good practices and reciprocity.

Lastly, this framework stresses the right for all those who are integrated into the common ground of EULAC higher education to have equal access to information regarding the opportunities that these regions offer them (programmes, regulations of each country, university studies etc). Moreover, the new technologies and distance

³⁸ The European Union - Latin America-Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education. [Including Declaration of Ministers.] Paris, 3 November 2000. See <<http://www.columbus-web.com/en/partb/archivo/paris.html>>.

³⁹ Plan of Action Project 2002-2004 to build common ground for higher education in the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean. See <http://www.aneca.es/present/docs/plan_accion_0204_ing.pdf>.

learning constitute fundamental aspects that should be intrinsic to academic programmes.”

The proposed projects for the period 2002-2004 focused mainly on activities to encourage mobility and assessment of quality. Here, the document set the task “to promote a study on the current accreditation systems or recently drawn up in the regions within the common ground. To achieve this, the Bologna process that is taking place in Europe will be taken into account. To help communication between both processes (Bologna and the EULAC common ground) the EULAC Common Space Follow-up Committee should participate in the preparatory meetings for Berlin 2003”. As it is well known, the Berlin Communiqué recorded the fulfilment of this task: “Ministers welcome the interest shown by other regions of the world in the development of the European Higher Education Area, and welcome in particular the presence of representatives from European countries not yet party to the Bologna Process, as well as from the Follow-up Committee of the European Union, Latin America and Caribbean (EULAC) Common Space for Higher Education as guests at this conference” (Berlin Communiqué).

47. The EULAC Higher Education Area provides a firm political framework to the ongoing concrete cooperation on the institutional level. Here, an important role is played by two academic associations: *Iberoamerican University Council (CUIB)*,⁴⁰ an institutional group of networks of universities in the Iberoamerican countries, and *European University Association (EUA)*. CUIB was established in Cartagena (Colombia) in November 2001. It is a non-governmental organisation which operates in the form of a network of networks of Iberoamerican Universities. In an Iberoamerican context, it should be noted that CUIB has a cooperation agreement with the OEI (*Organisation of Iberoamerican States for the Education, Science and Culture*) and is integrated in RIACES (*Iberoamerican Network for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education*). After the XV Summit of Iberoamerican Heads of State and Government, the Iberoamerican General Secretariat, OEI and CUIB were asked to promote the necessary process of political agreement to move forward in the creation of an Iberoamerican Area of Knowledge, Higher Education and Research.

CUIB is made up of national organisations representing universities and other higher education institutions of the Iberoamerican countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela. CUIB has, among others, the objectives of promoting the creation and consolidation of an Iberoamerican Area of Higher Education and Research and fostering cooperation between Iberoamerican universities and universities from other areas of the world.

34. In May 2004, CUIB and EUA signed in Guadalajara (Mexico) a cooperation framework agreement.⁴¹ Six action lines are oriented to reinforce cooperation in higher education and research between both regions. The Plenary of CUIB and the Council of the EUA met again in Oviedo (Spain) in April 2006 and reviewed the state of cooperation and proposed new measures in order to revitalise it. The results of the meeting are presented in the final

⁴⁰ The description of CUIB (*Consejo Universitario Iberoamericano*) is based on Félix Haering Pérez contribution to the External Dimension Working Group. See Pérez (2006).

⁴¹ *Framework Cooperation agreement* between the Consejo Universitario Iberoamericano (CUIB) and the European University Association (EUA). Guadalajara, Republic of Mexico, 27 May 2004. See http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/Convenio_CUIB-EUA_EN.1103218276011.pdf.

declaration (Asturias Declaration)⁴² which sent a message from universities to the EU-LAC Summit that took place in Vienna in May 2006.

The priorities section of the Declaration comprises a paragraph which is particularly important for the “external dimension” of the Bologna Process: “Mutual knowledge and understanding is crucial for building successful partnerships. Thus EUA and CUIB will promote and facilitate information-sharing on convergence processes in Europe, in particular the Bologna reforms, and similar processes underway in Latin American and Caribbean higher education systems.”

At the end, in the recommendations section, the Declaration stresses the development of joint programmes as a priority area for collaboration, as well as facilitating academic staff, researchers and student exchange. It also addresses Governments, the European Commission and private funding bodies to “allocate increased funding to promote enhanced cooperation in higher education and research as a matter of priority. The European Commission is encouraged to strengthen existing initiatives open to universities in Latin American and Caribbean countries such as Alpha, Alban and Erasmus Mundus - for example through the opening of a Latin-American and Caribbean ‘window’ in Erasmus Mundus along the lines of the recently agreed ‘Asian window’ – in the priority areas identified, as well as to increase opportunities for involvement in the 7th Framework Programme for Research. All such initiatives should take account of Latin American and Caribbean realities and favour endogenous growth. Governments should ensure that the appropriate legal frameworks are modified to allow LAC countries that are part of the ACP group to participate in all EU-LAC higher education and research initiatives.”

35. Despite significant developments there are many signs that concrete institutional level cooperation is still in an early phase. Last but not least, social and political contexts are quite different.⁴³ Information on the developments in European higher education seems to be inadequate, yet questions and dilemmas have also appeared. The ACA Perception Study refers to this situation in the following way: “The Bologna Process and Erasmus Mundus were specifically addressed in Mexico and Brazil. Although they were very interested in European higher education reform and in European programmes, Latin American interviewees (experts and rectors/international officers) had doubts vis-à-vis the potential of the Bologna Process and of Erasmus Mundus to enhance Europe’s attractiveness. However, their doubts concerned not the concepts but the way they were implemented: interviewees feared that cooperation would be unilateral and lacking transparency. Therefore, they recommended that any approach or new programme should be as little bureaucratic and as transparent as possible, and that it should emphasise cooperation and reciprocity.” (ACA, 2006, p.168).

⁴² *Asturias Declaration*. Oviedo, 11 April 2006 [EUA and CUIB]. See http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/upload/EUA_CUIB_Asturias_Declaration_210406.1146834606320.pdf.

⁴³ Luis A. Riveros, Rector of the University of Chile and Executive Vice-president of the Chilean Council of Rectors, made an interesting comment at the EUA Glasgow Convention (2005): “The transformation of European Universities along the lines of the Bologna process has largely depended upon the political will of governments to nurture what it has been called the European dream. This has to do with a common view of the future, the attainment of a regional-based globalisation, and a political will to reach a strong international presence of the region as an entity. We still do not have anything similar in the form of a Latin American dream, and consequently universities do not count on a political mandate to produce changes in the academic structure and on the duration and design of the curricula.” (Riveros, 2005).

A lack of information is proven also in two ACA Country Reports. Authors of the Brazil Report say that “the homogenisation of European universities is not always welcome either, as important decision makers at the state agencies criticise openly the Bologna Process (due to mixing up the commercial orientated cooperation policy of some countries, e.g. Spain, with the whole EU)” (Brazil, in: ACA 2006, p. 19).

The Mexico Report comes to a similar outcome: “The European programmes ALBAN, ALFA, Tuning, Erasmus and Erasmus Mundus often are not known, even not among representatives of the exchange bureaucracy and even less within universities. Therefore, there is high interest in receiving information on the Bologna Process and on all usual programmes, as well as specifically on accreditation and recognition of graduate studies. Credit recognition is to a certain degree under way with the start-up meeting of the UEALC project (formation of common academic standards between the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Guadalajara, Mexico, in April 2005)” (Mexico, in ACA 2006, p. 26). The study also ascertains: “Furthermore, it would motivate more students to study in Europe if they would get information on specific details on the effects of the Bologna-Process within Europe and for national education systems in Europe and the advantages of joint degree programs. The promotion of a common European internet platform with national corners could facilitate this information process.” (Ibid., p. 43).

36. There is a resounding case of good practice in this area which deserves to be mentioned here. It is about concrete institutional cooperation in modernising structures, contents and approaches to study. After the progress that the *Tuning project*⁴⁴ has made in Europe since 2001 (as one of the most visible Bologna implementation activities running jointly at more than 135 universities and in 9 different study areas) it has been successfully implemented also in the LAC academic environments. Similarly to the “European Tuning”, the ALFA⁴⁵ *Tuning Latin America Project (Tuning América Latina)*⁴⁶ seeks to “fine tune” the educational structures that exist in Latin America, initiating a debate whose aim is to identify and improve co-operation between higher education institutions, so as to develop excellence, effectiveness, and transparency.

The *Tuning Latin America* website gives its short history: “During the 4th follow-up meeting of the UEALC in Cordoba (Spain) in October 2002, the representatives of Latin America who took part, after listening to a presentation of the results of the first phase of Tuning, suggested the possibility of developing a similar project in Latin America. From this moment, the project began to be prepared, and was presented to the European Commission by a group of European and Latin American at the end of October 2003. It can be said that the Tuning proposal for Latin America is an inter-continental idea, a project that has been nurtured by both European and Latin American academic contributions. The search for consensus is inter-continental too, and unique and universal; the things that change are the people involved and the special situations that arise as a result of each new challenge.”

⁴⁴ Tuning Educational Structures in Europe. See <<http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/>>.

⁴⁵ ALFA (América Latina - Formación Académica) is a programme of cooperation between higher education institutions of the European Union and Latin America. Participant countries are the Member States of the European Union and the following 18 countries of Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

⁴⁶ See <<http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningal/>>.

Tuning Latin America is an independent project, promoted and coordinated by universities in many different countries, both Latin American and European. There are 181 LAC universities involved in the project so far, as well as 18 national Tuning Centres. The main work of the project goes on in the twelve subject groups (Architecture, Business, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Education, Geology, History, Law, Mathematics, Medicine, Nursing and Physics). In June 2006, members from both Tuning projects gathered at a joint conference in Brussels.⁴⁷ Academic colleagues from Europe and from Latin America and the Caribbean presented their work and results so far and had a chance to talk to one another about many details of the modernisation of higher education study today in different contexts. This seems to be the best way to overcome the existing lack of information and to strengthen academic cooperation to mutual satisfaction.

A positive message about EULAC cooperation and the possible impact of the Bologna Process was given by the Rector of the University of Chile Luis Riveros at the EUA Glasgow Convention: “The Bologna process is considered a key conceptual background for the change that it is being implemented in several Latin American traditional universities. The observation of the Bologna process has pointed out the importance of more flexible programmes to foster student mobility both across universities and disciplinary fields. The process is also important to make labour mobility easier in order to adapt to changing market conditions. The occurrence of an ‘undergraduate reform’ in several Latin American institutions has been originated from those issues, as a key instrument to attain more flexible and efficient formative programmes. Bologna has been an intellectual input to it, as well as the Tuning initiative to create a more compatible system of credit assignment across the region.” (Riveros, 2005)

Broad views through “Asia windows”

37. Quite often, “third countries” – a term used frequently in the “Brussels slang” – and other world regions in general are observed from European (only European?) higher education horizons primarily as reservoirs of potential international students. In China, India and the rest of Asia an incredible further growth is expected in the demand of higher education. Australian, North American and European higher education institutions put a lot of attention to recruiting students from various Asian countries and enter various cooperation schemes. In Europe, UK traditionally has had an important share of students from Asia. The Bologna Process now makes also continental Europe more compatible with Anglo-Saxon systems which are characteristic also for India, Pakistan and much of Asia. Yet, it is also broadly known that Europe is not the principal destination of students from Asia; Australia and in particular the U.S. seem to be still “most interesting”. An important support to probably change these trends has been given by the European Commission.

In 2002, the Commission launched (under the EU budget line for “Political, economic and cultural cooperation with Asian developing countries”) the so-called *Asia link*.⁴⁸ It was set up to promote regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions in all EU Member States and eligible countries in Asia. Its programme activities include partnership projects that support human resource development, curriculum development activities, and

⁴⁷ Curricular Reform Taking Shape. Learning outcomes and Competences in Higher Education. Brussels, 16 June 2006 <http://www.tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/index.php?option=com_docman&task=view_category&Itemid=59&subcat=12&catid=20&limitstart=0&limit=5>.

⁴⁸ See <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-link/index_en.htm>.

programme support activities (capacity-building, studies, European higher education fairs, information etc.). Since 2002, the programme has funded 155 partnerships with over 700 higher education institutions both from Asia and Europe. During the 2006 – 2008 period, the Asia-Link Programme is also financing seven European higher education fairs in Asia. The events – in Thailand, India, Malaysia, China, Vietnam, The Philippines and Indonesia – will provide a platform for European higher education institutions to promote their courses to Asian students, and for a symposium on the EU's higher education cooperation with Asia in general and with the respective countries in particular. Asia-Link does not offer scholarships to individuals, but there are other opportunities such as, for example, through the Erasmus Mundus programme and the so-called Asian Windows within it.⁴⁹

38. At the sub-regional level, interesting higher education initiatives can be found, e.g. in the Southeast Asia. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), established in 1967 to promote co-operation among countries of this region, put co-operation in the fields of higher education and human resource development on its agenda in 1992. The principal idea to strengthen the existing network of universities and higher education institutions was developed into *ASEAN University Network* (AUN), established in 1995. So far, the AUN has noted important developments. In 1998, the creation of AUN-Quality Assurance (AUN-QA) Networking was initiated.⁵⁰ An important step further was achieved at the meeting of Ministers for education in ASEAN countries held in Bangkok in 2005. An agreement was achieved to establish an ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Education as a new ASEAN mechanism to serve as policy body on education.

The meeting concluded with important conclusions: “To build a solid ASEAN socio-cultural community and promote ASEAN-ness among ASEAN citizens, cultural diversity as well as multi-cultural and multi-religious understanding was addressed. The strategies of utilising education to foster better understanding, identifying ASEAN's niche and enriching the ASEAN brand for education were also highlighted. Exchanges of teachers, academic staffs and students in the region will also be an integral part of the capacity-building process of the region's human resource development. Preparing our peoples for globalisation and technological advancement was also identified as a top priority for the region”.⁵¹

AUN activities do not focus only to ASEAN countries but also to the ASEAN “dialogue partners” South Korea, Japan, India, China, Russia and EU. Cooperation with EU has been developing within the *ASEAN-EU University Network Programme* (AUNP) which was officially launched with the signing of the Financing Agreement between the European Commission and the AUN in 2000. It aims at enhancing co-operation between higher education institutions in the two regions, to promote regional integration within ASEAN countries, and to strengthen the mutual awareness of European and Asian cultural perspectives. It also aims at strengthening the capacity of universities in Southeast Asian region through the transfer of European expertise and knowledge, to facilitate, through the provision of grants, the joint projects of ASEAN and the European universities in order to strengthen coordinated and sustainable relations in higher education, and to promote academic collaboration between ASEAN and the EU universities through a range of networking activities in the field of higher education.

⁴⁹ See <<http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/asian.pdf>>.

⁵⁰ See <<http://www.aun.chula.ac.th/Quality%20Assurance.htm>>.

⁵¹ See a brief report on the Meeting of Ministers for Education in ASEAN countries at the AUN website: <<http://www.aun.chula.ac.th/The%20Meeting%20of%20Ministers%20for%20Education%20in%20ASEAN%20countries.htm>>.

AUNP is about to terminate in 2006 with obviously fruitful results. The programme supported two major types of activities: the Partnership Projects aimed at improving cooperation between higher education institutions in ASEAN and EU (three components/areas: Human Resource Development, Curriculum Development and Common Applied Research) and the Network Initiatives which aimed at bringing universities together to share experiences. Thus, joint ASEAN-EU Rectors' Conferences have been organised (on Higher Education and Sustainable Development at the University of Malaya in October 2004 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; on Borderless Education in November 2005 at the University of Leuven, Belgium) as well as focused round table meetings on Quality Assurance (2003), on Autonomy in Higher Education (2005) and on Regional Cooperation in a Globalising World (2005). Technical assistance on Quality Assurance and on Credit Transfer System was also assured (2005). These activities indicate that Southeast Asia could be one of those regions where the emerging EHEA could develop successful partnerships.

39. One of ASEAN members, Singapore, has been developing a particularly ambitious policy objective: to make this city-state located at a strategic place of the Southeast Asia “a global Education hub of quality”. Kris Olds, an American analyst of Singapore’s moving towards knowledge based economy, noted “that Singapore has single-mindedly sought to fashion education as a tool for economic development over all other objectives”. From mid-1980s to mid-1990s “the Singaporean higher education system experienced the massification drive that continues to the present. For example, student participation rates in Singaporean universities rose from 5% in 1980 to 21% in 2001 (Lee and Gopinathan, 2004, p. 117). Singaporean universities also initiated the launch of endowment funds, though university governance and financing was still firmly controlled by the Ministry of Education. The era of ‘academic capitalism’ (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004) had yet to seriously emerge” (Olds, 2006, p. 5).

Already in 1998, the Singapore’s government launched, through the Economic Development Board (EDB), the World Class University (WCU) programme to attract up to 10 world class institutions to set up a significant presence in Singapore.⁵² These institutions would be centres of excellence in education and research with strong linkages to industries (e.g. business, medicine, logistics, engineering and the sciences). “EDB will now broaden its promotion efforts to develop in Singapore a mix of education and training institutions of good global standing and rich course offerings at all levels of education, targeting the student, corporate and continuing education markets both local and foreign. This will build diversity and create an ecosystem that is anchored by the core of world class universities already in Singapore” (EDB, 2002). Needless to say that majority of attracted universities have been coming from USA. Yet, since 2001, two distinguished European universities also established their institutes in Singapore: Technische Universiteit Eindhoven (Design Technology Institute) and Technische Universität München (German Institute of Science and Technology).

40. Asia as a whole, as well as through its sub-regions is growing into an important provider of international higher education. Parallel to economic development and growth, national higher education systems are expanding. The case of India and China is probably most convincing. Asia Times recently reported not only on »[E]xamples of world-renowned academics choosing China as their new home abound« but also on ambition to attract foreign students: “‘For a world-class university, it's necessary to attract the best students and faculty internationally. Eventually we don't just want the best Chinese students, but the best from around the world,’ said Zhang [assistant president of Peking University]. As a result, Chinese universities are increasingly offering courses wholly taught in English and in collaboration

⁵² See <http://www.sedb.com/edb/sg/en_uk/index/news_room/news/2002/economic_development5.html>.

with internationally recognized partners. The Guanghua School of Management offers a dual-degree program in English with the National University of Singapore. In addition, undergraduate courses and an MBA program in English wholly administered by Guanghua are on offer.” (Aiyar, 2006).

There are more and more warnings that traditional exporters of higher education can soon get serious competitors. »As China and India have emerged to be economic powerhouses, they have expanded their higher education offerings. [...] As educational opportunities improve in less-developed countries, they become more attractive to international students, especially given the far lower costs of tuition, room and board.« (Sadat Hussain, 2006). Indeed, these are potential new Higher Education Areas which should be seriously taken into account, not only by the emerging EHEA in Europe, but also by Australia or U.S. Is there any visible influence or impact of the Bologna Process – in terms of policy development, not in terms of student exchange as already mentioned – in these countries?

One would be rather disappointed if searching for this kind of influences and impacts. Knowledge about the Bologna Process as such is probably even less widespread than in Latin America, Australia or U.S. Not only a lack of information; comments can be also found that could make a European confused.⁵³ On the other side, there are well informed people who send very positive messages, as it was possible to hear at the EUA Glasgow Convention from T.P. Leung, Vice President the Hong Kong Polytechnic University: “Students of Hong Kong and China Mainland would most likely welcome the change of the European tertiary system to ‘3+2’, i.e. 3-year Bachelor Degree plus 2-year Masters Degree, since it would cost them less to study a first degree in Europe. Furthermore Chinese parents like to have their children go home as soon as possible. Students of Hong Kong and China Mainland interested to study first degrees in European countries would benefit from a common European system.” (Leung, 2005).

But there are also other parallels to higher education policy which can be, as in the case of China, very persuasive. An interesting overlapping – no doubt, totally coincidental⁵⁴ – can be found; in mid-June 1999, at the very same time as European Ministers gathered in Bologna to sign the Declaration, more precisely, on “June 15-18, 1999, the Communist Party of China and the State Council of China held the Third National Congress on Education since the open-door policy was carried out” (Li, 2004, p. 16). The main aim of the meeting was to ensure that

⁵³ See e.g.: “Another potential threat to the maintenance of Korean studies in Europe is the ‘Bologna Process’, whereby European Union members agreed to set up a common education curriculum and higher education system by 2010. The process includes the integration and abolition of certain academic studies that are regarded as ‘scholastically unpopular.’” (Choi Jie-ho, 2005).

Two comments should be made here. First, the quotation is the best proof that Europe should find better and more effective ways to present what the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area are all about. Secondly, and even more importantly, a serious analysis is needed on the cultural effects of “international concerting” of higher education. Last but not least, respect for cultural identities has several times been confirmed within the Bologna Process as being basic values in higher education. This principle is important also in the light of the “external dimension”.

⁵⁴ It is out of the question that there was no “coordination between Beijing and Bologna” in 1999 at all. However, philosophers have shown several times that coincidence is not an easy idea to understand and that the line between coincidence and necessity is a thin one. The 1990s brought in generally and worldwide similar – and obviously unavoidable – challenges (not only) to higher education systems. These challenges have been met in different ways and from different cultural backgrounds, but a common “spirit” – at least the “spirit of time” – could be recognised behind them.

important policy directives of 1998 (just not to forget: in Europe this was the year of the Sorbonne Declaration) were implemented throughout the nation.

41. The recent developments of Chinese higher education usually make an outside observer sincerely surprised.⁵⁵ This surprise would be even greater if one takes into account the last three or four decades of modern Chinese history. “Chinese economic system used to be very highly centralised. To adapt to that, the former higher education system was also centralised, with education provided by the central and local governments respectively and directly under their administration.” (Higher Education in China [2006]). Only at the end of the 1970s when the Cultural Revolution was over and opening up to the outside world was announced (1978) were the disadvantages of this system seriously addressed. China started to write its modern higher education pages almost from scratch. During the Cultural Revolution, “the numbers of postsecondary students dropped precipitously from 674,400 to 47,800.” (Robinson, 2005) At this time, everywhere in Europe higher education already waded deep into the process of “massification”.

China reached an important turning point in the process of modernisation of the higher education system in 1998.⁵⁶ This is a period “when China faced the challenges of the information technology revolution and the intense competition of economic globalisation of the new century, the situation has changed substantially. China’s higher education appeared so obsolete that some form of ‘major operation’ needed to be immediately performed. Thus, the Zhu Rongji Administration carried out a new round of educational reforms.” (Li, 2004, p. 14). In European eyes one of most fascinating features of these reforms is a strengthened ambition to increase university participation rates and to found world-class universities (so-called *Project 985* of 1999).

42. Important results have been achieved so far. “Firstly, the participation rate of the relevant age cohort in higher education has been raised to 15.0% in 2002. In other words, the goal that was to be realised by 2010 has been achieved 8 years ahead of schedule.” (Li, 2004, p. 18). On the other hand, administrative structures and higher education governance in general have been importantly modernised, primarily through decentralisation, by giving more attention to institutional autonomy but also by considering the issue of critical mass and quality of the sector through merging previously weak institutions into more university-like new institutions.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ “The Chinese education sector is in a state of radical growth and change. China practices a system of 9 years compulsory (basic) education, which has largely been realised. The illiteracy rate is low. There are over 110 million students in primary and secondary education and 11 million in higher education. Around 19% of the age group 18 – 24 years has access to (post-secondary) higher education, which includes both higher vocational and university education. Higher education has been reformed rapidly, with a focus on both an expansion of capacity and improvement of quality. Enrolment of new HE students has increased from approx. 2 million in 2000 to 4.7 million in 2005. These are impressive statistics, but they still reflect undercapacity. Thus Chinese education – which is also very examination driven – and its students are very competitive.” (Country Report China, in: ACA 2006, p. 3).

⁵⁶ “On 29 August, 1998, the 4th conference of the 9th standing committee of National Congress passed the ‘Higher Education Law of People’s Republic of China’ which is implemented from 1 Jan, 1999. Higher Education Law is the first complete higher education legal document in terms of legislature. It is a law, which standardises the internal and external complicated social relationship of higher education and its own activities.” (Higher Education in China [2006]).

⁵⁷ “According to a summary made on December 20, 2000 by Chen Zhili, Minister of Education of China at that time, 556 HEIs had been merged or adjusted into just 232, and the administration system of 509 HEI had been

Today, the Chinese government attaches great importance to international cooperation and exchanges in higher education. In the last ten years international cooperation and exchanges of higher education have increased significantly. As already mentioned, there are many Chinese students in European higher education systems today, and many tools of mutual cooperation have also been established so far. “Most experts agree that educational cooperation between China and Europe will increase in the future. They refer to better acceptance of Chinese degrees at European universities, better connections between the Chinese and European education and degree systems, more transparency in European higher education as a result of Lisbon and Bologna and lower risk for brain drain as important drivers of this trend.” (Country Report China, in: ACA 2006, p. 29).

However, in a brief statement of the Chinese Ministry of Education we can find an element which is even more important for the future, in particularly from the point of view of the “external dimension”: “By opening to the outside world, we broadly learn the useful foreign experience, promote the reform and development of our higher education and enhance mutual understanding and friendship between China and other countries.”⁵⁸ (Higher Education in China [2006]).

Yet, we should make it clear that this sentence does not refer to Europe alone!

“The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps”

43. Another important initiative has been recently launched in Australia which could be of particular interest for European higher education and for the Bologna Process as a whole. In the spring, Australia hosted the International Education Forum, attended by delegates from around the world, and parallel to it, on 3-4 April 2006, altogether 27 Ministers from across the Asia-Pacific region met in Brisbane, chaired by the Australian Education Minister Ms. Julie Bishop. The main theme of the ministers’ discussion was: What actions on education and training can be agreed that will strengthen good relations in the region and underpin its social and economic development, through the international mobility of students and research collaboration?

The political result of the ministerial meeting is the *Brisbane communiqué*. In this document, they “recognised the diversity of economies, resources, political structures and socio-cultural context, as well as significant differences in education systems” and “agreed that internationalisation is a necessary and critical element for all education systems within the region”. They also “agreed on the common goal of increasing greater student and academic mobility and transferability of qualifications, and greater integration or exchangeability of education frameworks”. Mobility and exchange “are seen to provide the basis for friendship, mutual respect and understanding, just as education is the key to prosperity, security and peace in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond”. In technical terms, the Ministers agreed to collaborate on quality assurance frameworks, recognition of qualifications, common competency-based standards for teachers, and the development of common recognition of

transformed or adjusted. As a result, the structure, distribution and function of China’s higher education were much improved through ‘joint construction, readjustment, cooperation, and mergers’.” (Li, 2004, p. 16).

⁵⁸ “Hosted by the Chinese Government and Ministry of Education, this most recent EU-China Forum on higher education policy took place in Beijing from 28 November – 1 December 2005. The Forum brought together experts from government and academia from both Europe and Asia and focused on four main themes: the Bologna Process and the interface with Chinese higher education; the internationalisation of research; quality assurance, regulation and accountability; and the socio-economic role of higher education.” – See <http://www.eua.be/eua/jsp/en/client/item_view.jsp?type_id=1&item_id=2962>.

technical skills. At the end, “the Ministers agreed to continue the Asia-Pacific Education Ministers’ Meeting as a biennial meeting that will become a new forum to consider common education issues at ministerial level, throughout this extended region”. They established an Officials’ Working Group⁵⁹ which will provide an interim report to the Ministers in twelve months. “Ministers also agreed to invite other nations from the Asia-Pacific region that have expressed interest in the work programme but were unable to attend this meeting to join the working group” (Brisbane communiqué, 2006).

It is obvious that the *Brisbane communiqué* is an important document for signatory countries but it is also important for the “external dimension” of the Bologna Process. Ministers met to discuss how to respond to the Bologna challenge and create stronger regional links. The method used reminds a little of the early days of the “Bologna Club” and there are some clear ties between this group⁶⁰ and the EHEA – for example, Turkey is a member of the Bologna Process (since 2001) and Australia signed the Lisbon recognition convention (in 2000; ratification in 2002). Yet, the context is different. The host Minister referred to global changes affecting “Australia's fourth biggest export industry”, international education. The economic development of India and China, the increase of students, the expansion of education systems, and a growing trend for universities everywhere to teach in English bring new dimensions into discussions.

44. At the same time, there was another, even more important event – important in particular in the “external dimension” perspective. Parallel to the International Education Forum in Brisbane, the Australian Minister released a discussion paper prepared by the Australian federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and entitled *The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps* (Australian Government, 2006). *The Australian* reported on 5 April 2006 that “Minister Julie Bishop warns that if Australia does not align itself with the changes taking place in 45 European countries under the Bologna Agreement, it will be left out of the tent” (Illing, 2006).

Indeed, the Minister begins her *Preface* with the following sentence: “The Bologna Process, whereby a significant number of European countries are working towards greater consistency and portability across their higher education systems, is likely to influence developments in higher education in many parts of the world including our region. It will have important implications for Australian higher education providers as we work to enhance our existing success and reputation as a provider of world-class education to both domestic and international students.” Then she continues: “The purpose of the paper which I am releasing today is to initiate discussion on the significance of Bologna for Australia and possible Australian responses. The issues must be considered in a broader context – the long-term vision for higher education in Australia.” The Bologna Process⁶¹ “is an important process that is receiving considerable attention, not only within Europe, but from a range of other countries. It presents challenges to, and opportunities for Australia’s relationship with Europe

⁵⁹ “The Officials’ Working Group will maintain cognisance of future possibilities for compatibility with initiatives already in development such as the European Bologna and Copenhagen processes.” (Brisbane communiqué, 2006).

⁶⁰ “This was the inaugural meeting of this group, with representatives from Turkey through to the Pacific Islands.” (Ibid.)

⁶¹ “The Bologna Process provides a series of opportunities and challenges, and is an opportunity for Australia to better align its frameworks with international standards and benchmarks. The challenge is how to achieve this and retain an Australian higher education sector that meets both domestic and international expectations of quality.” (Ibid., p. 2).

as well as Asia and raises the importance of developing effective multilateral dialogue with Australia's key Asian education partners about future directions in higher education". She concludes: "Developing an effective Australian response to the Bologna Process requires a national dialogue to develop a degree of common understanding of the key benefits and outcomes Australia seeks through alignment with Bologna initiatives." (Australian Government, 2006, p. 1-2).

45. The 15-page discussion paper aims to stimulate debate within the Australian Higher Education sector about the Bologna Process "which is driving reform within and between the 45 European signatory countries" (ibid., 3). The document says that "Australian institutions already have a range of relationships with European universities, including joint programmes. While students and academics move between Australian and European universities, and Australian qualifications are recognised in Europe, impediments resulting from differences in systems and basic structures still exist. [...] Bologna compatibility would closely align key features of the Australian higher education system with the university systems of 45 European countries and would allow broader cooperation, facilitate the movement of students between Australian and European higher education institutions and aid recognition". The document informs that there are currently some 32,000 European enrolments in Australia and anticipates that the adoption of credit transfer systems and a diploma supplement will be "as valuable to Australian students seeking to study in Europe as it will be for European and other students seeking to study in Australia" (ibid., p. 7).

Besides stressing the benefits of the "Bologna compatibility" it also warns about the risks of "Bologna incompatibility". It stresses that other countries or regions already follow the Bologna route. "The Latin American countries, for example, have expressed interest in emulating the Bologna Process and had observers at both the Berlin and Bergen meetings and [...] there has also been interest in the process in Asian countries." The authors estimate that Europe will become a more attractive destination for overseas students at the expense of Australia and foresee that "post-Bologna European higher education may offer a very attractive package for many foreign students, particularly those in traditionally strong markets for Australia". Finally, they see Europe as focusing on Europe: "Issues of European integration may as a result loom far larger in European eyes than those of cooperation with non-European countries". However, "the Bergen ministerial meeting made specific acknowledgement of the need for European higher education to look outward, not only inward. There were views articulated about the importance of engaging in constructive cooperation with other regions of the world, but much of any external focus will be on the position of the EHEA relative to the USA, emerging competitors such as China, and the impact of the reforms on less-developed countries such as those in Africa" (ibid. 9-10). The discussion paper ends with a series of questions for discussion and with an invitation for submissions and responses (to be sent to the DEST by the end of April 2006).

46. As far as we can see from the European perspective, the debate on the important issues outlined in the discussion paper was very lively and it still ongoing. Until the summer of 2006, the Working Group on External Dimension collected extensive documentation with responses (submissions) to the Australian DEST from important academic organisations and associations as well as from individual universities.⁶² A thorough analysis of these documents

⁶² Documents were received from DDOGS – Australian Council of Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies; ACED – Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations; Australian Council of Engineering Deans; Australian Technology Network of Universities; IRU – Innovative Research Universities Australia; the University of Adelaide, Deakin University, Edith Cowan University, the University of Melbourne, the University of New

would demand much more time and space than available here. In the continuation, we shall limit ourselves to only a few of them.

47. In its response, *Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee* (AVVC) focuses “around the issues and opportunities presented in the paper”. In the introduction, it comments critically: “Whilst the paper focuses on aspects such as the ‘benefits of Bologna compatibility’ and ‘risks of Bologna incompatibility,’ it does not examine the possible risks of Bologna compatibility”, concluding that “[I]t is acknowledged that the Australian international education industry must understand the changes occurring in Europe and engage in a dialogue about its implications for Australia. But it is equally important that Australia does not assume that full compatibility with the Bologna Process is the only option. Any engagement by Australia with Europe through the Bologna Process must not result in a diminution of the diversity of the Australian university system nor in its collaboration and cooperation with countries around the world especially those in the Asia-Pacific region, nor in any approximation to a one-size fits all approach” (AVVC, 2006, p. 1). In European eyes, in particular from an academic point of view, this is a perfect “Bologna” statement.

There are many interesting comments in the AVVC Response. One of the key concerns seems to remain the same as during the early stages of Bologna debates in Europe – uneasiness with any kind of standardisation in higher education as a result of international alignments: “The AVVC propose that the meaning given to alignment is *comparability*. This will ensure that the diversity of the Australian education system will be able to be maintained and does not infer standardisation which is clearly an element implicit in harmonisation.” On the other hand, “Australia should examine the global compatibility and all aspects of portability and recognition of the Australian Qualifications Framework using Bologna as a reference point to drive regional discussions about an Asia Pacific Higher Education space.” Analysing future demographics, “harmonisation within the Asian region may be much more important than with Europe.” The AVVC recommends, among others, to “review the implications of Australia’s engagement with the Bologna process from a regional perspective” (ibid, p. 2, 3).

AVVC made a series of other recommendations which can be very interesting from a European point of view. Any engagement with the Bologna Process should be based “on the precepts of university autonomy, flexibility, distinctive nature and diversity”; “a risk analysis of the risk from losing European market share as well as the risk associated with aligning Australia closely with European systems in the context of the Asia Pacific region and North American markets” is proposed, as well as to “consider the repercussion on resources, professional courses, research and the Australian Qualifications Framework of engagement with Bologna”, to “undertake a survey of European country compliance with Bologna” and to “undertake discussions with the United Kingdom and Asia-Pacific Governments to determine if these countries are looking at implementing the Bologna structure, or if they intend adopting a model more aligned with the USA/Canadian model”. The AVCC also recommends “that DEST liaise with all relevant stakeholders including employers, business, the AVCC and higher education providers regarding developments in and implications of the Bologna Process, taking into account timelines for consultation, an appropriate communication strategy, and risk and mapping exercises” (ibid, p. 3, 4, 5, 7).

48. Another important higher education stakeholder, *National Union of Students* (NUS), also welcomed the opportunity to discuss possible implications of Australian compliance with the

Bologna Process but also noted that it was “a little surprised that a DEST discussion paper would come out looking towards a unified, mainly social democratic Europe for inspiration. The Commonwealth Government over the last decade has generally been looking to America for its reform agenda to replace the traditional English-Scottish models. However, with Asia, South America and North America watching the Bologna process carefully the government is perhaps worried that Australia will be left behind what could become the global model for degree structure. Another factor that could be driving this debate is the University of Melbourne and University of Western Australia graduate school proposals where some Australian universities are already moving towards a degree of Bologna compliance.” (NUS, 2006, p. 2) Similarly as ESIB in Europe (it is obvious that NUS and ESIB have developed good communication), NUS is also pointing out the issues of “the globalisation of education as a commodity” (and a set of questions on the social dimension) as well as “pedagogical issues rising from a squeeze on bachelor courses creating questions as to whether they are sufficient for initial professional qualification” (ibid, p. 2-3).

Answering the question of what are the implications for the autonomy of Australian institutions and the diversity of the sector in becoming Bologna compatible, NUS provisionally estimates “that a minimalist approach to Bologna-compliance would not have a large negative impact on the autonomy and horizontal diversity of Australian higher education. [...] However, a move to the 3+2 graduate school model could lead to quite profound changes to the vertical diversity, and because of the peculiar demand saturation features of many prestigious fee markets, could lead to a narrowing of horizontal diversity.” (Ibid., p. 7) Among other issues, NUS also stresses the importance of stakeholders’ involvement in a policy debate (as a characteristic “Bologna feature”): “As the Bologna process has itself shown it is important that the voices of those who do the teaching/research and those who are being taught or trained are heard through the inclusion of bodies like NUS, CAPA and the NTEU in the Australia’s discussion of Bologna implications. [...] European student organisations have played a critical role in the development of the Bologna proposal, and NUS hopes that the Australian government will similarly recognise the importance of student input into the development and implementation process.” (Ibid., p. 9).

49. Last but not least, the response from *National Tertiary Education Industry Union* (NTEU), the *Education International* affiliate in Australia, could probably summarise the different views of stakeholders. The NTEU, representing the professional and industrial issues of over 28,000 staff employed at Australian universities, is “very supportive of the overall objectives of increasing staff and student mobility and increasing transparency in relation to degree structures as well as quality assurance in the higher education sector both in Australia and internationally” and agrees with the Government discussion paper “that many of the changes proposed for the Bologna process have already been implemented to varying degrees within Australia”. As an important (past) development NTEU stresses “Australia’s signing of the Lisbon Convention on recognition of qualifications within Europe.” Yet, there is also “a second, and highly influential, development” namely “the degree to which China (and other important markets in Asia) have become interested in aligning with developments in Europe. China is the number one market for Australian, European, and North American transnational education initiatives, and if China chooses the Bologna roadmap, then the chief exporting nations such as Australia will want to align themselves with these developments.” (NTEU, 2006, 2-3).

NTEU is not without concerns about imposing the Bologna three-degree cycle structure in Australia and the first concern relates to relative cost-benefits of developing and implementing such a radically new structure. A number of major issues of concern has been

identified in the document, including “the potential impact on institutional autonomy and academic freedom”, “student access and government support for students wishing to enrol in Masters degree programs”, “the role and function of the Honours year”, “the transition from existing degree structures to the new structure”, and “the role of research and research education under the new degree structure” (ibid., 10). NTEU would also oppose (again in the eyes of Europe, in a good “Bologna spirit”) any initiative “to impose common curricula, assessment or grading or marking standards across the higher education sector, as these would be seen as a direct infringement on institutional autonomy and academic freedom” (ibid., p. 5). On the other hand, NTEU is aware of the benefits that arise from further international integration and “strongly supports Australia playing an active role”. At the same time it stresses that “the Bologna Process has been a very resource-intensive exercise” and adds: “If Australia is to play a leading role, then it is important that there is extensive consultation among the academic community and other relevant stakeholders on how we would proceed to embrace elements of the Bologna process.” (ibid., p. 8-9). Here, a critical remark on stakeholders’ representation cannot be overlooked - the DEST discussion paper “fails to acknowledge that staff organisations are also formally involved in the [Bologna] process. Education International (EI) has ‘consultative member’ status and is currently actively involved in three separate working parties addressing issues of mobility, external dimensions and qualifications. The NTEU has also been monitoring the development and implementation of the Bologna process through our involvement with EI.” (Ibid., p. 3).

Is there a European challenge to USA?

50. It will be very interesting to follow future debates initiated by the Australian federal Department of Education, Science and Training - not only for Australians and not only for the partners from the new “Asia-Pacific Higher Education Area”. These debates are of extreme importance for the debates on the “internal” as well as “external” dimensions of the European Higher Education Area as well. Australia is often taken as the second largest competitor in global higher education market, but what is the situation for the largest one,⁶³ the U.S.?

Higher education in the U.S. is a special issue in many respects - also from the perspective of the “external dimension” of the Bologna Process. It is a large, diverse and decentralised system with many characteristics very different from European national higher education systems. “As with the U.S. higher education system in general, the international component of postsecondary education in the United States is large, diverse, decentralised and competitive. The recent decline in foreign student enrolments has stimulated academic institutions, higher education groups and the U.S. Government to take pro-active steps to reverse the decline and to ensure that the United States retains its position as a destination of choice for internationally mobile students.” (Country Report USA, in: ACA, 2006).

Of course, in various ways, global challenges to higher education knock on all doors today – and also that of the U.S. Secretary of State. The federal Government is engaged in many activities related to promoting U.S. higher education abroad but, from point of view of this report, systemic policy developments are more interesting. Thus, in September 2005, U.S. Secretary of State Margaret Spellings announced the formation of the *Secretary of Education’s Commission on the Future of Higher Education*. As we can read on the Commission’s official website, it “is charged with developing a comprehensive national

⁶³ “Of the nation’s nearly 14 million undergraduates, more than four in 10 attend two-year community colleges. Nearly one third are older than 24 years old. Forty percent are enrolled part-time.” (Draft Commission Report, 2006, p. 2-3)

strategy for postsecondary education that will meet the needs of America's diverse population and also address the economic and workforce needs of the country's future. [...] Through public hearings to be held around the country, the Commission will attempt to answer questions as: What skills will students need to succeed in the 21st century? How can we make sure America stays the world's leader in academic research? And, how can we make sure opportunities for quality higher education and best jobs are open to all students?"⁶⁴

51. The main task of the Commission is to develop "a comprehensive national strategy". Its work is not about the "external dimension", yet developing a national strategy today, even in the U.S, it is not possible to ignore the "external dimension". It should be borne in mind that governmental responsibilities for higher education in the U.S. differ substantially from European traditions. Nevertheless, it is interesting to check what position the federal Government takes against present challenges of internationalisation of higher education. In the Secretary's speech at the meeting of the Commission in September 2005, there is only one, yet interesting sentence on this issue: "The good news is that we still have the finest system of higher education in the world. But we're at a crossroads. The world is catching up. In 1970, America produced more than 50 percent of the world's science and engineering doctorates. But if current trends continue, by 2010, we will produce only around 15 percent."⁶⁵ In fact, the discourse used in this sentence is not that far from what we heard from Brisbane and, last but not least, what we used in our own European discussions, namely how to position the further (future) development of higher education in the fast-changing circumstances of today?

In the summer 2006, the Commission published its Draft Report (8/9/06 Draft). Surprisingly, from a European perspective, and probably from a non-American perspective in general, the document does not make any detailed reference to the issue of internationalisation and globalisation of higher education, which is high on agendas in other world regions! There is a notion – but only very general and similar to what the Secretary of State already stated – that there are other higher education systems in the world and that global competition is increasing: "We may still have more than our share of the world's best universities. But a lot of countries have followed our lead, and *they are now educating more of their citizens to more advanced levels than we are*. Worse, they are passing us by a time when education is more important to our collective prosperity than ever." (Draft Commission Report, 2006, p. 1).

Later in the draft document, summing up findings regarding the issue of innovation, we can find another interesting – and slightly more detailed – sentence: "It is fundamental to U.S. economic interests to provide world-class education while simultaneously providing an efficient immigration system that welcomes highly educated individuals to our nation. Foreign-born students represent about half of all graduate students in computer sciences, and over half of the doctorate degrees awarded in engineering. Almost 30 percent of the actively employed science and engineering doctorate holders in the U.S. are foreign-born. However, current limits on employer-sponsored visas preclude many U.S. businesses from hiring many of these graduates, which may discourage some talented students from attending our universities." (Ibid., p. 17).

52. There are 9 pages of recommendations in the document and the last one (the sixth) is clearly oriented to the questions we are searching for: "The United States must ensure the

⁶⁴ See <<http://www.ed.gov/print/news/pressreleases/2005/09/09192005.html>>.

⁶⁵ See <<http://www.ed.gov/print/news/speeches/2005/09/09192005.html>>.

capacity of its universities to achieve global leadership in key strategic areas such as science, engineering, medicine, and other knowledge-intensive professions. We recommend increased federal investment in areas critical to our nation's global competitiveness and a renewed commitment to attract the best and brightest minds from across the nation and around the world to lead the next wave of American innovation." It continues: "The need to produce a globally literate citizenry is critical to the nation's continued success in the global economy. The federal government has recently embarked on an initiative to dramatically increase the number of Americans learning critically needed foreign languages from kindergarten through postsecondary education and into the workforce. Higher education, too, must put greater emphasis on international education, including foreign language instruction and study abroad, in order to ensure that graduates have the skills necessary to function effectively in the global workforce." In addition to competitiveness trends, the Commission draws attention to "capable students from diverse populations" and to low-income and minority students, and then addresses an important "external dimension" issue: "In an effort to retain the best and brightest students and professionals from around the world, the federal government must address immigration policies specifically aimed at international students. [...] The Commission also recommends eliminating the requirement that in order to receive a student visa, all students must prove that they have no intent to remain in the United States after graduating. After all, talented graduates with sought-after advanced training represent precisely the kind of intellectual capital our nation needs." (Ibid., p. 25).

53. This is more or less all what the document says about issues reviewed in our paper. One might probably just ask why there is no *direct* reference to the emerging European Higher Education Area and to the Bologna Process? Why such a huge difference in this regard between Australian and American strategic documents? Americans as well could ask these questions. C. Stimpson from the New York University's Graduate School of Arts and Science began her contribution to the ACA Hamburg Conference on the external dimension of the Bologna Process (2004) with a provoking statement: "Ignorance is always dangerous, but the United States ignorance of the Bologna Process – outside of some educational experts – may be particularly dangerous" (Stimpson, in: Muche, 2005, p. 79).

However, this sentence should be understood primarily as a warning. On the one hand, it is true that the Bologna Process is well known only to interested circles of educational experts,⁶⁶ on the other hand, the challenges of globalisation of higher education are seriously considered by American higher education institutions⁶⁷ and partner organisations.⁶⁸ Last but not least, transatlantic cooperation is increasing and brings new incentives.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ "Thirty percent of the admissions professionals at American and Canadian higher education institutions are not familiar with the Bologna Process; another 35 percent have heard about it but do not know exactly what it is about. This is one of the outcomes of a survey on the admission of European students at U.S. and Canadian institutions conducted by Educational Credential Evaluators and the Institute of International Education. From a European point of view, this is a problem. For, when European Ministers of Education convened in Bologna in May 1999 and decided to create a single European Higher Education Area by 2010, one of their major motivations was to enhance the attractiveness of Europe's universities and colleges on a global scale." (Wächter and Muche, 2004). – See also Schatzman, 2005: "34% of respondents are familiar with the Bologna Declaration and understand its general goals. Another 35% have heard of it, but do not know much about it. The remaining 30% are not familiar with the Bologna Declaration." The survey was completed in spring 2004.

⁶⁷ See David Ward speech at the EUA Glasgow Convention (2005): "The Bologna process has not attracted great interest in the United States until quite recently. As you move forward to the maturing of this process, there will be an increasing interest on the part of the higher education community in the United States. I think there is also a growing admiration for the amount of progress that has been made in something which we thought initially would be a heavy handed government directed process. The EUA has provided effective bottom-up institutional

54. Specialised American media have been informing about the development of the Bologna Process continuously. For example, *World Education News and Reviews* (WENR)⁷⁰ brought several analytical articles on the Bologna Process starting from 1999. It is interesting to follow them and to track the logics of their presentation. In January 1999, WENR published information on the implementation of ECTS at a selection of European universities, and in January 2000 R. Sedgwick, the editor, wrote a comprehensive report on the Bologna Declaration. “On one hand, the Bologna Declaration is part and parcel of the ongoing trend to achieve greater cultural and economic unity in the region. At the same time, however, there is a tangible need to redesign and harmonise academic programmes to better prepare students for emerging on regional and international labour markets. [...] In addition, the signatories of the Bologna Declaration expressed the need to enhance international competitiveness in the overseas student market through the creation of a more viable and unified European system of higher education. [...] The trend towards globalisation, the utilisation of new technologies in distance learning programmes, the predominance of English as the world's lingua franca and intensified competition for international students all represent formidable challenges to European systems of higher education.” (Sedgwick, 2000).

55. From the perspective of early 2000, Sedgwick establishes that “Europe is attempting to meet these challenges through concerted efforts aimed at recruiting more international students, while expanding campuses and programmes to other parts of the world. Many European countries are already offering academic programmes in English to attract foreign consumers of higher education, particularly from Asia. But while Europeans need to consolidate their diverse systems of higher education and become more like the rest of the world in terms of curricula and degree structures, the real challenge will be whether or not Europe can adapt to the changes engendered by globalisation without losing its identity” (ibid.). A year later, he didn’t hide a bit of surprise: “Only two years later and many countries have already implemented groundbreaking reforms that not long ago would have met with severe opposition from governments and universities alike. Indeed, the breakneck speed at

responses and I have witnessed healthy discussions of the role of governments and the role of institutions in the delivery of higher education.” (Ward, 2005)

⁶⁸ NAFSA (Association of International Educators), an organisation promoting international education and providing professional development opportunities to the field, has established a Task Force on the Bologna Process to assist international education professionals who are looking for information on changes in European education. The purpose of the Task Force is to respond to NAFSA members’ needs for more information on the Bologna Declaration and the resulting changes that will impact transatlantic exchange. In addition to developing plans for collecting and sharing information on the Bologna Process, the Task Force has been charged with promoting dialog between the U.S. and the European exchange communities. See NAFSA Task Force website <<http://www.nafsa.org/practiceres/bologna/bologna-taskforce.htm>>. See also Schatzman, 2005.

⁶⁹ There has been a long-standing cooperation programme in higher education between the EU and U.S. At the EU-US summit in Vienna in June 2006, a new eight-year (2006 – 2013) education agreement was signed. The new agreement will promote further exchanges of students, teachers and researchers, strengthen the Schuman-Fulbright Programme and encourage greater institutional collaboration. It also includes innovative *Transatlantic Degree programmes* which could be a particularly important incentive for growing institutional cooperation in future years: “The idea of the new Transatlantic Degree Programme is to stimulate the creation of truly joint or double degrees by providing support to multilateral consortia with a minimum configuration of 2 EU higher education institutions located in different Member States and 1 US institution. The partner institutions will have to create an integrated joint study programme, with students from the two sides spending a period of study both in the EU and in the US institutions and getting either a joint degree (issued jointly by two institutions) or a double degree (two degrees, one from an EU institution, the other from the US institution) encompassing the whole period of study. At the core of the programme is the enhancement of student mobility, innovation and joint curriculum development and academic recognition between the EU and the US.” For details see <http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/eu-usa/index_en.html>.

⁷⁰ See <<http://www.wes.org/ewenr/>>.

which some of these educational changes are occurring has taken many observers and especially sceptics by complete surprise.” (Sedgwick, 2001).

Then he asks an important question: “Why, after years of intransigence, have Europeans suddenly agreed to unify their diverse systems of higher education?” A part of his answer is also marked by the “external dimension”: “Although the unified system of higher education proposed under the Bologna Declaration is mainly intended to benefit European students, increased competition in the international student market is also pushing Europeans towards convergence. Countries that used to send large numbers of students to Europe are now sending them elsewhere to earn degrees. [...] Moreover, by the early 1990s it was revealed that for the first time ever there were more Europeans studying in the United States than there were Americans studying in Europe. [...] Hence, Europeans see in the Bologna Declaration not only an opportunity to increase the region's share of the international student market, but also a chance to make higher education more attractive to their own students.” (Ibid.)

56. Immediately after the Berlin conference, the WENR editor commented the development of events again: “The reforms, known collectively as the Bologna Process, will no doubt impact Europe in many ways, but they also hold significant implications for international educational exchanges in the United States. [...] If Europe wants to attract more students from abroad it must offer degrees and programmes that are compatible with international structures. Newly reformed higher education in the EHEA, along with relatively low tuition fees, will hopefully make Europe a viable option for many international students who cannot or will not pay the high cost of education in North America or Australia.” (Sedgwick, 2003). This of course opens several questions on how the existing relations in international higher education could change in future. “For the United States the effects of the Bologna Process are difficult to predict, but a few things are clear. At the moment, the biggest challengers to the U.S. in the international student market are Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. In the future, with its transparent and flexible higher education system, Europe will offer an attractive alternative. The EHEA may end up challenging American dominance in international higher education, in much the same way that the European Union has become a counterweight in international trade vis-a-vis the U.S. and Japan.” (Ibid.)

Yet, the whole future scenario could not be about *competition* alone. Sedgwick makes clear that these developments provide a chance also for renewed and enhanced *cooperation*. “There will also be greater convergence between the U.S. and Europe as European higher education adopts aspects of the American system. There is a long tradition of academic exchange programmes between European and American institutions of higher education. A more transparent and flexible European higher education system will undoubtedly enhance the number of student exchanges between the two continents. This is important for both sides. There are currently 64,811 European students studying in the US -14 percent of the total international enrolment. Germany, the U.K., France Spain and Greece are the top sending countries, but the number of students from the former eastern bloc countries like Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary is on the rise.”⁷¹ (Ibid.)

⁷¹ Similar thoughts were presented again in one of 2005 WENR issues: “Although this trend can be seen to represent a challenge to U.S. institutions of higher education in terms of international student recruitment, the Bologna Process also presents future recruitment opportunities. A recent report by GMAC (Graduate Management Admission Council), a global business school association, assessed the possible implications of the structural changes of the Bologna Process in the context of graduate management education. The report concluded, in part, that the reforms will result in a huge increase in the number of post-Bologna bachelor graduates, many of whom will be seeking entry to master's-level programmes. If the findings of the report can be

Finally, Sedgwick says that “Europe and the United States are not the only actors here”. At least after the Berlin conference it has become clear that the discussion is far from being solely “transatlantic” – it is definitely a global one. “While the reforms are being implemented within the signatory countries, the planners of the EHEA are beginning to look beyond Europe. At the last follow-up meeting held in Berlin (Sept. 2003), the Ministers of Education advocated the need to encourage cooperation with other parts of the world, and to open up future Bologna events to representatives of non-European countries. In particular, they declared the necessity to actively promote the new EHEA abroad to attract students and researchers from non-participating countries.” (Ibid.)

57. Early in 2004, when the first new Bologna graduates were already expected in Europe, WENR asked a very concrete question which has most probably remained the central question of the Bologna Process in the U.S: “How will the Bologna bachelor's degree be viewed on this side of the Atlantic?” (Assefa and Sedgwick, 2004-a) This question produced a lot of uneasiness that has yet to subside.⁷² Already the following WENR issue brought an analytical article on evaluating the Bologna Degree in the U.S. written jointly by the editor Sedgwick and Mariam Assefa, the Executive Director of the World Education Services (WES). The key question of the article was: “How then does this new degree compare with the traditional American bachelor's degree?” The authors give the following introductory statement: “Even though the Bologna Process has resulted in shorter degree programmes that are defined in terms of required credits and introduced a two-tiered (undergraduate/graduate) system, the new European bachelor's is still quite distinct from its U.S. counterpart. Based on the sample “Bologna” bachelor's degrees we examined from Austria and Italy (see previous issue of *WENR*), it is apparent that the European degrees are more heavily concentrated in the major – or specialisation – and that the general education component which is so crucial to U.S. undergraduate education is absent. The new degrees, awarded by traditional European institutions, are undeniably European in character. [...] The main differences between the two programmes – the number of years of study, the amount of coursework devoted to the major, and the absence of general education from the Italian curriculum – reflect the distinct characteristics of each educational system.” (Assefa and Sedgwick, 2004-b).

Taking into account previous case analyses and credential evaluation criteria (and asking primarily whether the new “Bologna Bachelor” constitutes sufficient preparation for graduate admission in the U.S.) and referring also to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and to the category of “substantial differences”,⁷³ authors say very clearly that “WES regards the new

extended beyond the domain of management education to all fields of study, then, from the perspective of U.S. universities and colleges this newly enlarged pool of European bachelor graduates can be seen as a possible boon to recruitment opportunities.” (Clark, 2005).

⁷² According to the already quoted survey from spring 2004, “the new three-year bachelor’s degree was greeted with greater caution. While some indicated that the three-year degree would be readily accepted for admission to graduate programmes, many more expressed reservations. Tentative approaches and temporary solutions were mentioned, including experimenting with test cases, considering secondary education credentials when evaluating three-year degrees, handling students presenting the new degrees on a case-by-case basis, and having discussions with colleagues about how to evaluate these credentials.” (Schatzman, 2005)

⁷³ “Academic credentials serve as recorded proof of an individual’s itinerary and accomplishments within a coherent and unified system of education. Credential evaluation exists first and foremost to facilitate the international mobility of students, scholars and professionals. This ideal is codified in the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region, adopted in 1997 and signed by 41 countries including the United States. The Convention calls on member states to promote, encourage and facilitate the recognition of credentials earned outside of their borders to encourage the mobility of students and professionals. It also specifies that ‘Each country shall recognise qualifications as similar to the corresponding qualifications in its own system unless it can be shown that there are substantial differences.’” (Ibid.)

three-year Italian *laurea* as functionally equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree.” They add: “The number of years of study is merely one of the elements that define the structure of a programme. In this particular case, the discrepancy in the number of years between the Italian and U.S. bachelor's degrees is outweighed by the similarities between the two programmes.”⁷⁴ (Ibid.)

“Systems that develop without due regard to the outside world run a risk of failure”

58. This question was discussed in quite some detail also at the ACA Hamburg conference (October 2004). Sjur Bergan approached this issue very closely and argued in the following manner: “The underlying assumption seems to be that qualifications that require a similar duration of three or four years of study, as is generally the case for the first degree, are also similar in level, quality, workload – and ultimately in value. In one way, this assumption takes us back to where recognition specialists were ten years ago or more, where the counting of years of study took on great importance. Today, the recognition community is rapidly moving toward a much more sophisticated view of qualifications, in which the main parameter is not how much time a student has spent pursuing a given qualification, but how that time has been spent. The emphasis is, in other words, shifting toward what a graduate knows and is able to do with a qualification rather than the procedure through which the qualification was earned.”⁷⁵ (Bergan, in: Mucche, 2005, p. 45).

Actually, this discussion is important not only for the “external dimension” but also to resolve dilemmas and settle internal European disputes. Bergan recommends what seems to be a most important direction for the “external” as well as for the “structural” dimension of the Bologna Process, a view that is shared also by some American authors: “One of the main challenges for Europeans is therefore to go beyond the discussion of 180 or 240 credits and to help develop a more sophisticated discussion about qualifications in all parts of the world.” Further discussions should help “to reach agreement that the recognition of qualifications is far more than counting years, and that learning outcomes are more important than learning procedures” (ibid., p. 51).

59. The Bologna Process has so far offered methods as well as concrete tools to facilitate a change of paradigm – and this is an important aspect of how it impacts international and global developments in higher education. In this context we can understand Nick Clark when he says that “the Bologna Process is impacting the way in which U.S. admissions offices evaluate European credentials. Their work, however, is being made much easier by the abundance of information that is being made available as European nations increase the attractiveness and transparency of their tertiary-level credentials. Furthermore, the speed with which information is being made available both online and in hard copy means that the

⁷⁴ Authors make also a warning, addressed in particular to the American public but not less interesting to hear on the other side of the ocean: “Failure to recognise the Bologna bachelor's degree solely because it is a three-year qualification would leave U.S. graduate schools no choice but to reject candidates who apply for admission using these degrees, even when their records demonstrate that they have completed more than enough subjects in their discipline, have achieved the same skills and level of knowledge as their U.S. counterparts, and would very likely succeed at the graduate level. Such decisions would not only lack any academic merit, but they would also have profound and negative implications for international academic mobility.” (Ibid.)

⁷⁵ Within this context, it is impossible to overlook his brief comment: “As Europeans we may regret that US higher education institutions seem to have problems with recognizing first degrees of 180 ECTS credits from continental Europe, but seem to be less severe if the qualification in question is a three-year Bachelor's degree from a United Kingdom university.” (Ibid., p. 51).

evaluator in the United States more than ever has the tools necessary to make informed decisions when assessing the new European degrees.” (Clark, 2005).

These discussions are still far from firm conclusions. New questions are constantly cropping up⁷⁶ and time is needed to make them clear and to answer them. But one thing is certain - if we address these questions in a broad international arena and if we draw upon the best practice of so-called “international concerting” we will come much closer to productive results. “The ‘external dimension’ of the Bologna Process is therefore of key importance to its overall success, and now is the time to address it.” And we should not forget: “Systems that develop without due regard to the outside world run a high risk of failure.” (Bergan, in: Muche, 2005, p. 51).

⁷⁶ E.g.: “If the aim of Bologna is to standardise European higher education, then the expectations will be that all degrees at the same level are equal, and we, in the U.S., will be pressured to respond accordingly. One wonders if the U.S. joined the spirit of Bologna, and changed all its bachelor degree programmes to three years, how the Europeans might respond. [...] If we say, for example, that general education (to whatever extent) is required for a U.S. degree and, therefore, any degree that does not offer this cannot be equivalent, we’ve lost most of the world. What, then, are our basic standards? Are we able to articulate them in terms sufficiently inclusive that we don’t eliminate well-qualified international students because we are engendering agoraphobia as we fear moving from one safe niche to a more global perspective?” (Margolis, 2006, p. 21).

4. Conclusions: the “external dimension” – does it matter?

60. This overview has shown that the Bologna Process has reverberated with numerous echoes from various parts of the world. Many of them, unfortunately, had to remain outside the scope of this report. Nevertheless, the question from the beginning of the second chapter (*What in fact is to be understood under the “external dimension of the Bologna Process?”*) is now – hopefully – partly answered. Before concluding, it is time to raise yet another question: *the “external dimension” – does it matter and why does it matter?*

The “external dimension” matters – “externally” as well as “internally”

61. Many messages have been received through these echoes, and presented in the previous chapter. Countries in transition warn against a practice of imposition and argue in favour of two-way cooperation. It has also been heard from the Mediterranean that “it takes two to tango”. China declares readiness to “learn the useful foreign experience” and to “promote the reform and development of our higher education and enhance mutual understanding”. Everywhere, there are many cases of good inter-institutional cooperation which has been importantly enhanced through the European Commissions international agreements and programmes for higher education. In Africa, in addition to cooperation with single institutions and organisations, it has been proposed to look at “the big picture”: to build a system approach and to try to “benefit from initiatives outside Africa, avoiding mistakes made by others and building on their gains”. In Latin America, “the homogenisation of European universities” has not always been welcome due to some – likely bad – experiences with the commercially oriented cooperation policy from Europe; yet, the Tuning project has been successfully spread all over the continent. Australia stresses the benefits of “Bologna compatibility” and the risks of “Bologna incompatibility” but it also doubted “that full compatibility with the Bologna Process is the only option”. The U.S. is proud of their “share of the world’s best universities” but “a lot of countries have followed our lead”; a major issue with regard to the EHEA seems to be the recognition of new first cycle degrees. Last but not least, almost everywhere it was possible to notice a rather significant lack of information on the Bologna Process and on the emerging EHEA.

There have been clear and *direct* echoes, comments and messages to the Bologna Process but also tacit and *indirect* ones. Many issues, which could be probably perceived in European eyes as “the typical Bologna issues” have been discussed also in other parts of the world, but they could also be addressed without a necessary reference to the Bologna Process. Bologna certainly has its own character and context - higher education policies in other parts of the world likewise. However, there is a “general” higher education modernisation agenda which is common to all world regions and to all countries of today - broadening access, diversifying study programmes, quality enhancement, employability, links to economy, mobility, international students, recognition of study periods and degrees, etc.

When dealing with these issues today and in the near future, Bologna can be an interesting case for other world regions, but also experiences – problems as well as solutions – from other world regions can be interesting for the EHEA (even if there is no reference to Bologna as such). Therefore, the emerging European higher education area, preparing its External

Dimension Strategy, should not only seek *direct* echoes (not only to improve self-esteem but to verify if its claimed “readability” and “transparability” works outside the EHEA, if its “international competitiveness” and “degree of attraction” are really on the rise and if EHEA degrees are recognised abroad) but should consider these experiences as potential *indirect* “responses” to what Europe is actually doing or what it is planning to do in the near future. There can be no doubt that *the “external dimension” does really matter*. It matters directly and indirectly; “externally” as well as “internally”.

62. Differing and heterogeneous echoes captured and presented in the third chapter prove that “the external dimension” is far from being a simple phenomenon. They primarily appear at two distinctive levels: at the (national or international) *policy development level* and at the *level of institutions* (and/or their associations). In certain environments outside Europe, the Bologna “policy message” has received more attention; in other parts it has been a case of the “cooperation message” from universities and academic institutions taking an active part in the Bologna Process. The “policy message” can be, on the one hand, more interesting and useful for ministries of education, for governments and public policy-makers in general. Academic institutions within the same national environment do not necessarily always have to share this interest; contexts can differ widely. However, it is also possible to discern that interest in the Bologna issues of academic institutions sometimes considerably precedes that of ministerial or governmental policy makers. So far, the Australian ongoing public discussion on the Bologna benefits and risks and the future of the national higher education seems to establish the most balanced relationship between these two levels.

Europe of the last fifteen years – and particularly the Bologna Process – has been developing *the virtues of higher education policy development in partnership*. It should not be immediately taken for granted (at least not if reflecting on the long and winding history of Europe). It takes a long time for occasional virtues to transform into traditional values. Nevertheless, this could probably be an important Bologna “message” which may help in linking together both levels mentioned above. It is not that important who responds to this message – *policy-makers* or *academic institutions* from other parts of the world. Either of them alone but also both of them together would be welcome. Yet, it is for the EHEA to understand that national contexts may differ and that potential echoes will always depend on these differing contexts. Acting upon the principle of higher education policy development in partnership may gradually contribute to more balanced echoes from both target levels. The EHEA should raise its awareness that, while building its relationships with other parts of the world upon the Bologna partnership principle, it can strengthen this important virtue for itself and enhance its transformation into one of the traditional academic values.

Finally, at this point one should not overlook the fact that national contexts differ, not only “externally” but also “internally”. It is well-known that the national higher education systems within the EHEA are diverse: their traditions, to some degree their organisation (still), their size, etc. Of course, the “internationalisation needs” of the countries of the Bologna Process are equally diverse. Not only should the External Dimension Strategy take into account that the various target world regions and countries, as well as the different target levels in these regions and countries might require specific approaches, but the EHEA as such should also take account of its own existing diversities. Last but not least, the Bologna “philosophy” has always argued in favour of diversity and this attitude should not be forgotten here either. However, an EHEA “external dimension” Strategy is only possible if a “common denominator” is found or established.

Most probably, no such common denominator may be established to *substitute* national internationalisation agendas – their needs are simply too diverse – but to “*tune*” them according to certain common principles and to *enhance* them in doing so could be an alternative. These principles can lead the EHEA approaches to “external” world higher education areas in the future, but they can also strengthen the “internal” dimension of the Bologna Process. In June of this year, during one of the External Dimension Working Group in-depth debates, Eric Froment formulated an important dilemma: “opening up the process or building a European strategy for internationalisation?” He sharpened it into “the central question – can we discuss the external dimension without being sure that governments agree on the internal dimension of the Bologna Process, i.e. on the core element of Bologna?” (Froment, 2006). Considerations related to this question have been very helpful to subsequent work. Clarifying this and other possible dilemmas and open questions is a necessary part of drafting a strategy.

Some of issues discussed in this section have been openly and systematically addressed through the “external dimension” official Bologna follow-up seminars; it is time to focus briefly also on them.

Messages from the Bologna seminars on the “external dimension”

63. As already mentioned in the introduction, BFUG placed on the list of official Bologna Follow-up Seminars for the period between Bergen and London three “external dimension” seminars. Two of them have already been organised – the Holy See seminar at the end of March and beginning of April⁷⁷ and the Greece seminar in June⁷⁸ - while the third one, the Nordic countries seminar is scheduled for the end September 2006,⁷⁹, i.e. beyond the timeframe of this report. The conclusions and recommendations from the first two seminars can be found in the *Annex 2*.

64. The seminar on cultural heritage and academic values focused mainly on the issue of the *attractiveness of the EHEA* and, at least partly, it exceeded the “external dimension” in the strict sense of the term by addressing such important issues as e.g. the identity of European university, cultural heritage, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, understanding and respect etc. Around 200 participants from almost all Bologna countries as well as from some other parts of the world participated at this event, offering a rainbow of views and arguments. Two keynote addresses on European cultural heritage opened perspectives from historical, philosophical and cultural perspectives, while a panel of experts focused on the actualisation of the academic values of European Universities. Further on, in five discussion groups

⁷⁷ The Bologna Process Official Seminar. “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”. Organised by the Holy See in collaboration with: Rectors’ Conference of Pontifical Universities, Pontifical Academies of Sciences, *UNESCO-CEPES*, Council of Europe. Under the patronage of the European Commission. New Synod Hall, Vatican City, 30 March – 1 April 2006. – Papers and interventions presented during the meeting will be published in a special issue of *Higher Education in Europe*.

⁷⁸ Bologna Process Official Seminar. The External Dimension of the Bologna Process. “Putting European Higher Education Area on the Map: Developing Strategies for Attractiveness”. Organised by Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and Managing Authority of the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training. With the collaboration of the Academic Cooperation Association and Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency. Athens, 24 – 26 June 2006.

⁷⁹ The Nordic Bologna Process Official Seminar. “Looking out! Bologna in a global setting”. The External Dimension of the Bologna Process. Organised by the Nordic Countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden in collaboration with the Nordic Council of Ministers. University of Oslo, Georg Sverdrups hus. Oslo, 28 – 29 September 2006

participants discussed the following issues: basic values and academic freedom, foundations of interdisciplinary dialogue, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and scientific research and ethical responsibility.

With regard to issues followed within this review, the seminar clearly showed and confirmed that the *attractiveness of the EHEA* – a frequently emphasised “external dimension” aspect – is not separable from the rich European cultural and academic heritage and values. Archbishop J. Michael Miller, the rapporteur of the seminar, synthesised this aspect in his final summary in the following way: “This particular Bologna Follow-up Seminar was planned in light of the recognition that the process of globalisation entails ever more competition, interconnection and interdependence. Europe cannot turn in on itself if it wishes to play a leading role in the world of higher education in the future. From the outset, European universities were ‘international’ institutions to which students from various nations went to study and academics travelled widely to pursue their scholarship. But today new challenges face the European university: the integration of the world economy, open market competition, mass culture, the desire for life-long education, and advanced technology – to name just a few. To ensure that European universities maintain their competitive advantage, many speakers pointed to their distinctive, if not unique, qualities. This led to some discussion on the ‘essence’ of the European university – its identity as an institution which embodies the ‘memory’ of a continent and its curiosity. It also led some to express concern about how the university can find new ways to transmit the core of this heritage, a patrimony which is a living tradition.” (Miller, 2006, p. 3).

Some discussants stressed that now is the time to make cultural heritage and academic values more visible on the Bologna agenda. Until Bergen, they argued, structural issues and the “Bologna tools” (QF, ECTS, DS, etc.) have been mostly finalised; now, after Bergen, we should focus more on the “Bologna values”. If we did not know who we are, what particular identities we share etc., we cannot explain what is meant by “the attractiveness of European higher education for the wider world”. Today, nobody disagrees on the highest importance of academic values. Yet the real question is the implementation of honest aims and principles. The Bologna Process should also contribute to answering this question. At this point, participants expressed a conviction that the European university is in a position to offer an original contribution to the future. At the very beginning of the recommendations from the seminar the following statement can be read: “The participants in this Seminar are convinced that the commitment of the Bologna Process to strengthening the external dimension of European higher education depends in large measure on reaffirming the relationship between Europe's cultural heritage and its universities and on fostering its common academic values”.⁸⁰

These views were accentuated also in a special address by His Excellency Francis Campbell, H.M. Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Holy See, at the conclusion of the seminar. He argued that “the challenge for today’s higher education is both functional and moral.” The Bologna Process addressed this challenge as a voluntary action of European countries and their achievements are primarily based on learning from one another. “This learning from one another cannot be confined to Europe; it must also look outside. By looking to the outside we can not only learn, but we also show a responsiveness to the needs of the rest of the world.” (Campbell, 2006, p. 7, 4).

⁸⁰ For details and for the final recommendations see Annex 2, ch. 5.2.

64. *Post festum* discussions in the External Dimension Working Group confirmed the importance of the values aspect of the External Dimension Strategy. Academic values as developed throughout the history of the university have been taken over as the underlying principles of European higher education policy discussions. The *Magna Charta Universitatum* of 1988 stressed this aspect in relation to the changed social and political environment and ever progressive internationalisation of higher education; it has remained an important document until today. Besides the traditional set of values as e.g. institutional autonomy, freedom of teaching and research, service to society etc., new values have also been emerging, e.g. equity in higher education, inclusiveness, partnership in policy and governance (mentioned above), etc. It is possible to trace the values' aspect in the Bologna documents edited so far; however, as has already been argued, the real question is the implementation of these honest aims.

Therefore, this could be an important integral fibre of the External Dimension Strategy, but the implementation issue cannot be reduced to this dimension alone. Certainly, some of the values issues should be approached precisely from the point of view of the “external dimension”, as for example the potential tension between the potentially “egoistic” and “cooperative” agendas of internationalisation. Thus, Peter Scott noted very clearly at the ACA conference on the “external dimension” that in today’s circumstances, “it is necessary to be more generous and open-minded and – perhaps – less certain about the superiority of Western values. Here, universities and higher education have a very special role to play. They are both the most important carriers of modern values, values of ‘objectivity’, of science, of secularism; they are also mediators and translators, institutions with open frontiers that can transcend their own cultures, contexts and environments, and engage creatively with those of others (without demonising them as the ‘other’).” (Scott, in: Mucbe, 2005, p. 22).

65. The second (Athens) seminar on the “external dimension” approached the developing of strategies for attractiveness from a different angle and again, in a very international audience. The Greek Ministry of National Education as the main organiser effectively made use of the presence of delegates from the OECD conference, which started when the Bologna seminar ended. Thus participants from a wider world joined over one hundred participants from most of the Bologna countries. At the first plenary session, there were, on the one hand, presentations focusing on information about the Bologna Process, its achievements and potentials to make links and interaction with other regions of the world, and, on the other, the perception of speakers coming from these regions of the EHEA. The second plenary focused exclusively on the issues of quality assurance, international trends and European responses. There was also a plenary on the strategic management of higher education internationalisation and, last but not least, several workshops addressing the questions of what national practices can teach us in a global context and how higher education institutions can develop strategies and policies to attract international students.

Participants at this seminar were fully aware of the complexity of the “external dimension”. Evidence was given that the existing national “external dimension” strategies can promote – and in certain cases do already promote – the attractiveness of the emerging common European Higher Education Area. However, “external dimension” strategies at a national level and at a common EHEA level cannot be the same. An understanding was shared that the Bologna Process needs a common strategy on the external dimension on top of national “external dimension” strategies. Nevertheless, certain hesitation was expressed among some participants that a common EHEA “centre” and/or a common internet portal could widen the already existing gap between countries that are already close to the final goal and those just started on the Bologna road.

On the other side, it was stressed that “internal dimension” and “external dimension” agendas should not be divided, in particular not mechanically. Developing an “external dimension” strategy should not be a simple repainting of a façade; this would definitely turn foreign students and academics away and jeopardise the “internal dimension” as well. For that reason, reinforcing the “internal dimension” (e.g. “transparability”, compatibility, quality, recognition etc.) of the Bologna Process is the best approach to strengthen the attractiveness of European higher education and its “external dimension” as a whole. Parallels were made also between the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy – not always without polemic elements – that crossed in various issues dealing with modernisation of European universities and problems of their (under)performance.

Quality issues were not at the very forefront of the Bologna Process during its first years but after the Berlin conference, they have deserved continuously increasing attention. It is interesting to note that in 2005, two important documents were agreed: one within the Bologna Process and the other in OECD/UNESCO cooperation. Both documents were discussed at the seminar and, in addition, some aspects from the U.S. Accreditation System were also presented. Several parallels were made between the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (adopted in Bergen) and the *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*. These parallels are particularly visible if they are observed in the light of the “external dimension”. Neither document is binding; both aim at voluntary implementation and both have been developed by the educational community. Yet, it is particularly important that similar trends that have led individual European national higher education systems towards adopting common “Bologna” standards and guidelines characterise global higher education context as well.

The seminar considered the “external dimension” also in relation to the role of universities and other institutions as well as students. Fast internationalisation of European universities has brought many new opportunities as well as responsibilities. Thus, international strategies have entered also institutional agendas. To respond to new opportunities, institutions should define strategies that correspond to their specific roles, profiles, ambitions and environments. There is broad consensus among universities that international cooperation brings, first of all, an increased opportunity for mobile students but also benefits for all students studying now in a more international environment. Also here, it is evident that promotion and attractiveness of an individual institution depends mostly on an efficient implementation of the “internal dimension”: e.g. quality, transparency, autonomy and funding. In addition, European students – very active at this seminar again – stressed also the specific values of internationalisation like multicultural experience and more reach learning and research environments “affected” by international students, teachers and researchers.

As was stated in the *Berlin communiqué*, “the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself”. It could be also argued on the basis of this discussion that the primary responsibility for attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area lies with higher education institutions themselves. However, it is far better if they act as academic networks and not alone – fragmented and separated. Of course, systemic (e.g. legislative) and financial support within national environments is decisive for their success. Yet, there are also other important levers of a successful promotion in a global arena who presented themselves at the seminar: these are students and their associations (e.g. ESIB,

AEGEE, ESN, etc.)⁸¹ as well as international associations (e.g. EAIE, ACA, NAFSA, thematic networks etc.). As was argued, their potential is not fully used yet and the foreseen Strategy should take this aspect into account as well.

The seminar agreed on a list of conclusions and recommendations that are included in the *Annex 2* (see ch. 5.2).

Towards the elements of the External Dimension Strategy

66. Both Bologna seminars but also other conferences⁸² on the “external dimension” and/or related issues prove that this term cannot be reduced to one key word only. Nevertheless, the most frequent key word used in discussions on the “external dimension” has undoubtedly been – *attractiveness*. As already mentioned, the Lisbon Declaration referred to the “attractive potential of our systems” and the Bologna Declaration even stressed “the appeal that its [European] culture has for other countries” and aimed at “a world-wide degree of attraction” for the European higher education system. Since that time, the frequency of reference to attractiveness has increased very rapidly.

As in similar cases, it is very important to differentiate between “honest aims” and the so-called “constraints of reality”, as well as the implementation of these aims. One of the first insights into the issue was given just before the Berlin Summit in 2003. The *Trends III* survey contained for the first time a section on the *attractiveness of the EHEA to the rest of the world*. Among its key findings it was stated that “[E]nhancing the attractiveness of the European systems of higher education in the rest of the world is a driving force of the Bologna Process, ranked third after improving academic quality and preparing graduates for a European labour market”. Interestingly, respondents from different parts of Europe attached high priority to the attractiveness of their – national and/or institutional – higher education provision mainly to attract Europeans! “The EU is by far the highest priority area for most institutions (mentioned by 92%)”. Then come other world regions: “The second priority is Eastern Europe (62%), followed by US/Canada (57%), Asia (40%), Latin America (32%), Africa and Australia (24% and 23%) and the Arab World (16%).”⁸³ (Reichert and Tauch, 2003, p. 39).

Despite stressing attractiveness as the driving force of change, “[O]nly 30% of HEIs mention the use of targeted marketing for recruiting students, the notable exceptions being Ireland and the UK where more than 80% of universities conduct targeted marketing” (ibid). As it is possible to learn from an excellent recent study on student mobility in European higher education,⁸⁴ there are huge differences between countries: “A close look, however, reveals that for the majority of individual EURODATA countries, many of them small countries, the

⁸¹ For an extended list of international organisations and associations as well as their websites see Bibliography (F. *Links used or referred to in the text*).

⁸² The ACA 2004 Conference in Hamburg has been already mentioned. The ACA 2006 conference “Destination Europe? Players, goals and strategies in enhancing the attractiveness of European universities” (Bergen, 20 June 2006) addressed the attractiveness of European higher education on a global scale as well. For details see http://www.aca-secretariat.be/04news/SingleNewsletterDetail.asp?c_year=2006&c_month=06&news_id=537.

⁸³ On the other hand, “about 40 percent of the foreign students from outside the EURODATA region have an Asian nationality, about 31 percent of them have an African nationality, 15 percent have another European nationality, eight percent have a Latin American nationality, and only six percent have a northern American nationality.” (Kelo, Teichler, Wächter, eds., 2006, p. 7).

⁸⁴ 32 countries of the so-called EURODATA region are only included and not all 45 Bologna countries.

number of national students enrolled abroad exceeds the number of foreign students at institutions of tertiary education at home.” (Kelo, Teichler, Wächter, eds., 2006, p. 11).

67. Obviously, the European countries alone as well as their emerging EHEA need to establish concrete action plans to move from “honest aims” to effective coping with the “constraints of reality”. Yet, and as already said, attractiveness is not the only horizon where such coping should take place. Attractiveness is often understood in a dual relationship to competitiveness and cooperation. What could enhanced attractiveness be good for? On the one hand, it can strengthen international – but also national – *competitiveness*: higher education systems in general and institutions in particular should perform better in terms of mobile as well as international students, teacher and researchers, programmes obtained, etc. This issue is, first of all, related to quality assurance and quality enhancement aspects. Alan Smith said so very clearly at the ACA 2006 conference in Bergen: “The attractiveness agenda must, to be successful, also be an agenda for genuine improvement” (Smith, 2006) and admonished that it is a double task: improving the quality of European higher education as such, as well as the quality of the international dimension of European higher education. In this latter sense – the quality of the international dimension – much should be done to improve information on European higher education in general and the EHEA in particular.

On the other hand, enhanced attractiveness can also strengthen international *cooperation* in higher education. This issue is closely related to the promotion of partnerships in higher education – nationally and internationally, in particular close relationships that could be built through joint programmes of teaching and/or research among institutions with a strong mobility aspect, but also through dialogue and mutual learning from good practices. In this sense, cooperation can also increase competitiveness but by diminishing the “egoistic” character mentioned above. As there is no one sole key word on the “external dimension” agenda but rather a list of them, all these aspects are somehow related to one another and linked together. As a cross-cutting issue, a need for enhanced information has been clearly identified in findings and discussions so far.

68. A possible External Dimension Strategy should be developed integrally from the four horizons mentioned in the second chapter (see section 18). These horizons require concrete actions. They should be taken by all key Bologna partners: at the institutional level, by universities and other higher education institutions as well as student organisations, at the national level, by national governments and in particular responsible ministries, and at all relevant European levels, that is, by “‘Europe’, however defined” (Smith, 2006).

Why do we need a common strategy? Discussions within the External Dimension Working Group showed that a common strategy on the external dimension of the EHEA can be justified *where/when it can provide 'value-added'*, that is, where and when, by acting together in the Bologna Process, the participating countries and consultative members the Bologna Process can achieve more than if they were to act alone. It is important to take into account in what ways the *participating countries* and *consultative members* of the Bologna Process have already been developing their own “external dimension strategies”. On the other hand, intergovernmental and other international organisations have been already contributing to “external dimension strategies” that exceed the “narrow horizons” of an individual country or institution.

69. A long list of possible concrete targets has been discussed at the “external dimension” seminars and within the External Dimension Working Group. Until early September 2006, the Group had already drafted initial variants of a strategy document. The third “external dimension” seminar in Oslo will be the last check before a final proposal is drafted.

So far, there has been broad consensus that a Strategy document should be concrete, specific and ambitious. It should also include measures to be taken in e.g. the next two to three years (e.g. improving accessibility of the EHEA, including such issues as visa regulation, work permits, etc.), primarily at the national level, as well as a limited number of clear benchmarks (e.g. "every country should have designated by 2008 an organisation as having responsibility nationally for the coordinating the promotion of the country's higher education across the world") to make it possible to check progress in this field in the remaining period until 2010. Different contexts and aspects should be taken into account, as argued already above, and recommendations to the different Bologna partners and stakeholders are also a necessary part of such a document.

The foreseen Strategy would form a part of the Bologna higher education policy; therefore, policy implementation – an implementation in partnership – will be a crucial issue in the following years. It is important to consider that higher education policy influences other policy measures and that the implementation of the External Dimension Strategy will demand the close cooperation of not only Bologna partners and stakeholders but also within national governments, intergovernmental organisations as well as international non-governmental organisations. Some demanding issues have also been opened that should not remain unanswered if the Strategy is really intended to be implemented - increasing the attractiveness of the EHEA is not possible without funding. There was a lot of debate on this issue within the Working Group and despite certain dilemmas the Group always came to the conclusion that this issue deserves appropriate attention in the further process of drafting the Strategy.

In addition to all that has already been said and without prejudicing further steps in drafting the External Dimension Strategy, the following themes seem to belong among its key issues:

- *attractiveness* of the EHEA depends on its distinctiveness from higher education provision in other regions: transparent quality, accessibility, recognition, mobility enhanced by structural (transparency, compatibility, recognition, etc.) and social means (support and scholarship schemes, visa regulations, etc.), non-exclusiveness, cultural diversity (but without the obstacles of a linguistic Babylon), etc.. The promotion of intercultural and interreligious understanding, traditional values of European universities and higher education institutions in general are of particular importance;
- *competitiveness* among European countries and third countries as well as among individual higher education institutions is needed to strengthen the quality of higher education, research and teaching potentials in order to broaden access and to promote flexible learning paths, to attract more international students, to make higher education more efficient, etc.. On the other hand, higher education should substantially contribute to the competitiveness of the European economy, trade, and centres of excellence as the point where academic, economic and political interests should coincide;
- *cooperation* aims firstly at the mutual potential benefits of the EHEA and other world regions and should be based on traditions of academic cooperation between Europe and these regions. It is also dependent on promoting the two-way flow of information and knowledge, as well as two-way mobility. It should aim at achieving higher critical mass through incentives for international research teams and joint study programmes. The improvement of mutual recognition of study and study periods on a global scale, solidarity and support for higher education systems in less developed

parts of the world and the political importance of global higher education cooperation are also high on the cooperation agenda;

- *information on the EHEA and promoting its image in a wider world* demands a common information system (e.g. common portal; European higher education fairs, coordinated information campaigns, etc.), which should not be seen in opposition to specific national (institutional) information systems. Guidance for students and staff from third countries (other regions), institutions and institutional frameworks, capacity- building, language policy, etc. are also on this list.

70. A number of far-reaching statements on the end goal of the External Dimension Strategy have been collected while compiling this report. Let us conclude it with just one of them:

“This must be our ambition for the European Higher Education Area: free movement of students, graduates, and staff that will not have to leave any of their real qualifications at the border between education systems because of unreasonable or protectionist recognition procedures and practices. For this ambition to become reality, we need further policy development, and we need to do so, not with a view to the ‘external dimension’, but in a dialogue and cooperation with partners – and competitors – on all continents.” (Bergan; in Mucche, eds., 2005, p. 52).

ANNEX 1

The “external dimension” in a historical perspective

A selection of pages on the “external dimension” from documents 1988-2006

Excerpts from documents are edited chronologically and classified into three categories: relevant pre-Bologna documents (see light blue shadowed headings), documents produced within the Bologna Process (see light yellow shadowed headings with a Bologna logo) and the European Union documents (see headings with a European flag). Short bibliographical references are added. – See also Chapter 1, sections 14. - 17.

1. Magna Charta Universitatum, 1988

Magna Charta Universitatum. Bologna, 18 settembre 1988. Roma: [Universita di Bologna], 1991.

Fundamental Principles

4. A university is the trustee of the European humanist tradition; its constant care is to attain universal knowledge; to fulfil its vocation it transcends geographical and political frontiers, and affirms the vital need for different cultures to know and influence each other.

The Means

4. Universities - particularly in Europe - regard the mutual exchange of information and documentation, and frequent joint projects for the advancement of learning, as essential to the steady progress of knowledge. Therefore, as in the earliest years of their history, they encourage mobility among teachers and students; furthermore, they consider a general policy of equivalent status, titles, examinations (without prejudice to national diplomas) and award of scholarships essential to the fulfilment of their mission in the conditions prevailing today.

2. Tempus programme, 1990



Council Decision of 7 May 1990 establishing a trans-European mobility scheme for university studies (Tempus) Official Journal L 131, 23/05/1990 P. 0021 – 0026 (90/233/EEC)

The objectives of Tempus are the following:

- (a) to facilitate the coordination of the provision of assistance to the eligible countries in the field of exchange and mobility, particularly for university students and teachers, whether such assistance is provided by the Community, its Member States or the third countries referred to in Article 9;
- (b) to contribute to the improvement of training in the eligible countries, and to encourage their cooperation with partners in the Community, taking into account the need to ensure the widest possible participation of all the regions of the Community in such actions;

(c) to increase opportunities for the teaching and learning in the eligible countries of those languages used in the Community and covered by the Lingua programme, and vice versa;

(d) to enable students from the eligible countries to spend a specific period of study at university or to undertake industry placements within the Member States of the Community, while ensuring equality of opportunity for male and female students as regards participation in such mobility;

(e) to enable students from the Community to spend a similar type of period of study or placement in an eligible country;

(f) to promote increased exchanges and mobility of teaching staff and trainers as part of the cooperation process.

[...]

ACTION 1

Joint European projects

1. The Community will provide support for joint European projects linking universities and/or enterprises in eligible countries with partners in the Community.

Joint European projects will as far as possible comprise at least one university or enterprise from an eligible country and partner institutions in at least two Member States.

Such projects may be linked, as appropriate, to existing networks, notably those funded in the framework of the Erasmus, Comett and Lingua programmes.

2. Joint European project grants may be awarded for a wide range of activities according to the specific needs of the institutions concerned, including notably for curricular development and overhaul, integrated study courses, development of teaching materials, training and retraining of teachers, particularly in the field of modern European languages, the provision of short, intensive programmes, the development of language and area studies and of distance learning.

Support equipment and documentation necessary for the implementation of a joint European project could also be eligible for funding.

ACTION 2

Mobility grants

1. (a) The Community will introduce a scheme for direct financial support of students up to and including doctorate level from eligible countries, irrespective of their age or the subject of their studies, for a period of study at a university in a Member State. Such grants will be awarded to students for full-time study at a university for a period of normally between three months and one academic year.

Priority will be given to students whose studies are part of a joint European project, or who intend to become teachers or trainers on their return. Grants will also be awarded to enable

teachers in modern European languages to carry out further academic training in the Member States or in an eligible country.

3. Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, 1991



Commission of the European Communities, *Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community*. Brussels: Commission of European Communities, December 1991.

Higher Education and External Relations

35 There are historic linkages and relationships between higher education institutions in the different Member States and various countries of the world. These relationships are reflected in student and staff exchanges, joint projects with counterpart institutions, the enrolment of foreign students and the participation of the European higher education sector in the provision of technical assistance to projects in many developing countries. In a number of European institutions there are departments devoted to the special study of languages, cultures, economies, political systems and developmental needs of third countries. *These historic relationships provide an excellent basis through which the Community can build its relationships with the countries concerned.* There is also a growing interest in European studies courses in institutions outside the Community.

[...]

37 An enhanced role for education and training in the external relations of the Community is evolving for a number of reasons:

- *education and training, through interactive exchanges at staff and student level and through study abroad schemes, help to cultivate the mutual understanding, respect and knowledge on which successful political and trading relationships can be based;*
- *education and training provide an instrument for wider dissemination of knowledge concerning the European Community and its institutions and policies and help therefore in defining its position on the world scene;*
- *education and training must provide the skills that are necessary for economic development and for political and social progress;*
- *no nation, or group of nations, has a monopoly of ideas and knowledge and learning from and drawing comparisons with other countries is an important component of the Community's own development and that of its Member States;*
- *educational institutions of the Member States of the Community are the custodians of much that is valuable in European culture and civilization and they can become, therefore, the instruments of cultural exchange on a global basis.*

[...]

The International Role of Higher Education

148 [...] There has always been an extra-European Community dimension in the relationships between higher education institutions. An illustration of the scale of this relationship may be gleaned from the fact that in all Member States (Luxemburg excluded)

the percentage of extra-Community foreign students enrolled for full courses of higher education is greater than that of other EC nationals and in some cases many times greater. Evidence of these relationships is also found in the substantial movement of students to the United States for postgraduate studies. *While it is vital to the future of the Community that the European dimension in higher education be emphasised and strengthened, this extra-EC dimension is of fundamental importance to an open European Community, deriving strength from cooperation and interaction across the world.* It is necessary, too, to consider its importance in the overall interests of higher education.

149 In the field of higher education and training *European expertise is widely recognised and appreciated and this is an asset which can and should be used to support the growing world role of the Community.* European culture is highly valued throughout the world and the institutions of higher education should be deeply involved in programmes of cultural exchange with extra-Community countries. Europe's global role and the necessity for the European economy to interact with the world economy requires a two-way flow of information and knowledge. *Europe must not only strengthen its own identity, but it must do so in a political, economic and cultural equilibrium with the rest of the world.*

4. Lisbon Recognition Convention, 1997

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region [Lisbon Recognition Convention] (11 April 1997).

The Parties to this Convention,

[...]

- Considering that higher education should play a vital role in promoting peace, mutual understanding and tolerance, and in creating mutual confidence among peoples and nations; [...]
- Having regard also to the International Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and European States bordering on the Mediterranean (1976), adopted within the framework of Unesco and partially covering academic recognition in Europe;
- Mindful that this Convention should also be considered in the context of the Unesco conventions and the international recommendation covering other Regions of the world, and of the need for an improved exchange of information between these Regions [etc.].

5. Sorbonne Joint Declaration, 1998



Harmonisation of the architecture of the European higher education system. Joint declaration of four ministers in charge of higher education in Germany, France, Italy and United Kingdom on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the University of Paris [Sorbonne Declaration]. Paris, Sorbonne, 25 May 1998.

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

Most countries, not only within Europe, have become fully conscious of the need to foster such evolution. The conferences of European rectors, University presidents, and groups of experts and academics in our respective countries have engaged in widespread thinking along these lines.

A convention, recognising higher education qualifications in the academic field within Europe, was agreed on last year in Lisbon. The convention set a number of basic requirements and acknowledged that individual countries could engage in an even more constructive scheme. Standing by these conclusions, one can build on them and go further.”

6. Bologna Declaration, 1999



The European Higher Education Area. Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education. [Bologna Declaration.] Convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999.

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

7. Towards a European Research Area, 2000



Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Towards a European research area. Brussels, 18 January 2000 COM(2000) 6 final

Even more so than the century that has just finished the XXIst century we are now entering will be the century of science and technology. More than ever, investing in research and technological development offers the most promise for the future.

In Europe, however, the situation concerning research is worrying. Without concerted action to rectify this the current trend could lead to a loss of growth and competitiveness in an increasingly global economy. The leeway to be made up on the other technological powers in the world will grow still further. And Europe might not successfully achieve the transition to a knowledge-based economy. [...]

It cannot be said that there is today a European policy on research. National research policies and Union policy overlap without forming a coherent whole. If more progress is to be made a broader approach is needed than the one adopted to date. The forthcoming enlargement of the Union will only increase this need. It opens the prospect of a Europe of 25 or 30 countries which will not be able to operate with the methods used so far.

[...]

6.3. Making Europe attractive to researchers from the rest of the world

Research institutes do not have the same magnetic attraction on researchers from all over the world that American laboratories, companies and universities do. Europe does not offer researchers from third countries particularly advantageous (material and administrative) conditions.

The formalities to be completed are generally unwieldy. The regulations and languages also vary from one country to another. And the "brain drain", which some have claimed is being held in check, has not stopped. Between 1988 and 1995, 8760 Europeans students took a doctorate in the United States. Five years after obtaining their diplomas about half of them were still in the United States.

To attract the best researchers from all over the world to European laboratories a European system of grants for scientists from third countries might be set up. National and European research programmes could also be more open to researchers and teams from countries outside the Union.

In the case of developing countries, to guarantee the development of local research potential, this system should be such as to encourage the beneficiaries to return to their countries in order to take advantage of their experience and to spread the knowledge they have acquired.

Measures should be taken at national and European level to encourage the return to European laboratories of researchers who have left to complete their training or pursue their careers in the United States.

The possibilities provided by the science and technology cooperation agreements between the Union and a number of third countries should be maximised in these respects.

Finally, it is especially necessary to improve appreciably the environment provided for researchers in Europe. An effort should be made in particular to simplify and harmonise regulations and administrative conditions more. Rules have recently been adopted in France, for example, to shorten the procedures for granting visas to researchers from third countries.

8. Lisbon Strategy, 2000



7.1 Council of the European Union, *Presidency Conclusions*. Council of European Union, Lisbon, 23-24 March 2000.

5. The Union has today set itself a ***new strategic goal*** for the next decade: *to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.*

[...]

13. The European Council asks the Council and the Commission, together with the Member States where appropriate, to take the necessary steps as part of the establishment of a European Research Area to: [...]

- take steps to remove obstacles to the mobility of researchers in Europe by 2002 and to attract and retain high-quality research talent in Europe.

7.2 Commission of the European Communities (2001), *Report from the Commission. Concrete Future Objectives of Education Systems*. Brussels: Commission of European Communities, 31 Jan. 2001.

4.4. Openness

Most Member States stress the need for schools, training centres and universities to be open to the world: to increase their links with the local environment (with businesses and employers in particular, so as to increase their understanding of the needs of employers and thus to increase the employability of learners); to ensure an openness of spirit towards foreign countries, Europe and the wider world (e.g. through foreign language learning and mobility).

7.3 Council of the European Union, *Detailed work programme on the follow-up of the objectives of educational and training systems in Europe*. Brussels, 20 February 2002.

3. Pursuing ambitious but realistic goals

3.1 Beyond answering the invitation of the European Council to work on common objectives for education and training systems and to present a joint detailed work programme, the Council and the Commission are determined to take all initiatives required for a comprehensive response to the challenges of the knowledge society and globalisation, as well as of EU enlargement.

3.2 The Council and the Commission therefore set themselves ambitious but realistic goals which should also be shared by the countries joining the EU in the coming years. For the benefit of citizens and the Union as a whole the following should be achieved in education and training by 2010:

- 1) *the highest quality will be achieved in education and training and Europe will be recognised as a world-wide reference for the quality and relevance of its education and training systems and institutions;*
- 2) *education and training systems in Europe will be compatible enough to allow citizens to move between them and take advantage of their diversity;*
- 3) *holders of qualifications, knowledge and skills acquired anywhere in the EU will be able to get them effectively validated throughout the Union for the purpose of career and further learning;*
- 4) *Europeans, at all ages, will have access to lifelong learning;*
- 5) *Europe will be open to cooperation for mutual benefits with all other regions and should be the most-favoured destination of students, scholars and researchers from other world regions.*

9. Strengthening cooperation with third countries in the field of higher education, 2001



Commission of the European Communities, *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on Strengthening Co-operation with Third Countries in the Field of Higher Education*. Brussels: Commission of European Communities, 18 July 2001. COM(2001) 385

5. Community programmes in education, and particularly ERASMUS, have had a substantial impact in boosting the capacity for international co-operation among European universities. In addition to changes in the design of education programmes and new possibilities offered for study in other Member States, many universities have set up or reinforced their offices for international relations. To a large extent this is a response to the increased volume of international activities that has resulted from their involvement in Community programmes. A further effort is required at EC level, to encourage institutions systematically to integrate new co-operation with third countries into a wider partnership framework.

6. This effort is also needed because there is an ever-increasing demand for international education and student mobility. The number of international exchange students has never been greater; but they flock mainly to the US (over 500,000 international students in 1999/2000). Over 3/4 of the approximately 400,000 students from non-European countries studying in the EC go to the UK, France and Germany.

7. While there may be healthy competition between Member States countries to attract international students, the role of the EC should be primarily to encourage co-operative approaches so that the benefits can be shared more widely within the EC and partner countries. In doing so, the EC must acknowledge that Europe's status as a centre of excellence in learning is not always appreciated or understood by third country universities, or by students looking for an international education.

8. [...] Increasing the attractiveness of our universities requires an assurance of quality that is widely understood in the world. The absence of such an assurance means that Europe will not perform as well as the other leading providers of education services. From another angle, Europe's political and commercial success in the world is dependent on future decision-makers in third countries having a better understanding of, and closer ties with, Europe.

9. Many third countries see potential benefits in systematic co-operation with European higher education institutions, especially within multilateral networks involving institutions from more than one Member State. Such co-operation enhances the value of bilateral education arrangements with individual Member States. This is the reason why in almost all agreements between the EC and third countries, education is mentioned as a field for potential co-operation. In practice the follow-up to these commitments is contingent on availability of resources.

10. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- * The Community should ensure that its education activities include the international dimension in a more systematic way;
- * The Community should give greater visibility to its action in this field in order to promote Europe as a centre of excellence, and to attract students seeking an international education.

10. Message from Salamanca, 2001



Message from the Salamanca Convention on European Higher Education Institutions. Shaping the European Higher Education Area. Salamanca, 29-30 March 2001.

Attractiveness

European higher education institutions want to be in a position to attract talent from all over the world. This requires action at the institutional, national and European level. Specific measures include the adaptation of curricula, degrees readable inside and outside Europe, credible quality assurance measures, programmes taught in major world languages, adequate information and marketing, welcoming services for foreign students and scholars, and strategic networking. Success also depends on the speedy removal of prohibitive immigration and labour market regulations.

European higher education institutions recognise that their students need and demand qualifications which they can effectively use for the purpose of study and career all over Europe. The institutions and their networks and organisations acknowledge their role and responsibility in this regard and confirm their willingness to organise themselves accordingly within the framework of autonomy.

Higher education institutions call on governments, in their national and European contexts, to facilitate and encourage change and to provide a framework for co-ordination and guidance towards convergence, and affirm their capacity and willingness to initiate and support progress within a joint endeavour

- to redefine higher education and research for the whole of Europe;
- to reform and rejuvenate curricula and higher education as a whole;
- to enhance and build on the research dimension in higher education;
- to adopt mutually acceptable mechanisms for the evaluation, assurance and certification of quality;
- to build on common denominators with a European dimension and ensure compatibility between diverse institutions, curricula and degrees;
- to promote the mobility of students and staff and the employability of graduates in Europe;
- to support the modernisation efforts of universities in countries where the challenges of the European Higher Education Area are greatest;
- to meet the challenges of being readable, attractive and competitive at home, in Europe and in the world; and
- to keep considering higher education as an essential public responsibility.

11. Prague Communiqué, 2001



Towards the European Higher Education Area. Communiqué of the meeting of European Ministers in charge of Higher Education [Prague Communiqué]. Prague, May 19th 2001.

Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

Ministers agreed on the importance of enhancing attractiveness of European higher education to students from Europe and other parts of the world. The readability and comparability of European higher education degrees world-wide should be enhanced by the development of a common framework of qualifications, as well as by coherent quality assurance and accreditation/certification mechanisms and by increased information efforts.

Ministers particularly stressed that the quality of higher education and research is and should be an important determinant of Europe's international attractiveness and competitiveness. Ministers agreed that more attention should be paid to the benefit of a European Higher

Education Area with institutions and programmes with different profiles. They called for increased collaboration between the European countries concerning the possible implications and perspectives of transnational education.

12. Towards European Research Area, 2002



12.1 Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission. *More Research for Europe. Towards 3% of GDP.* Brussels, 11.9.2002. COM(2002) 499 final

The analyses contained in this communication confirm that it is necessary not only to improve the effectiveness of the European R&D and innovation system, but also to address the EU's under-investment in R&D. The current trends in R&D investment must be reversed urgently in order to approach 3 % of GDP by 2010, with an increased share of business funding that should reach two thirds of total R&D expenditure. Such a change is essential to reach the Lisbon objective of making Europe the leading knowledge economy in the world. It will require joint efforts involving the European institutions, all Member States and the Candidate Countries, as well as the enterprise sector.

12.2 Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission. *The European Research Area: Providing New Momentum. Strengthening - Reorienting - Opening up new perspectives.* Brussels, 16 October 2002 COM(2002) 565 final

4.9. The international dimension of the European Research Area⁸⁵

Following on from the Commission Communication on this topic, several initiatives had been undertaken to take account of, benefit from and exploit the international dimension of the European Research Area and its openness to the world.

Developments in this field include in particular:

- In the Sixth Framework Programme, the unrestricted opening up of the "thematic" part to all third countries, with possible access to the relevant funding in some cases, the introduction of a double fellowship scheme for researchers coming from third countries to the EU and for EU researchers going to third countries, and the redefinition of EU research activities in the field of nuclear fusion on the basis of full EU participation in the ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) project;
- The creation of an electronic information system on entry and residence requirements for researchers from third countries going to Member States;
- In addition to the integrated action concerning co-operation with Russia, undertaken in the framework of the INTAS association and the international ISTC⁸⁶ initiative, the development of concerted and coordinated approaches between the Community and the Member States in the EU's scientific and technological dialogue with the major regional

⁸⁵ European Commission, Communication entitled "The international dimension of the European Research Area", COM(2001) 346, 25.6.2001.

⁸⁶ International Science and Technology Centre.

groupings of third countries: Mediterranean countries, Latin American countries and ASEAN countries;

– Closer ties between the EU and the ACP countries in the field of research, with an ACP-EU Forum on research into sustainable development held in Cape Town in July 2002.

Actions planned or for consideration

– The setting up, based on the model of the European Forum on Infrastructures, of a Concertation Forum on international scientific cooperation, which will make it possible to strengthen the coherence and coordination of Member State participation in international cooperation initiatives at world level: international programmes on global change and to support the Kyoto agreements; actions undertaken in the framework of the G8; international initiatives on ethical matters.

– Putting in place more powerful mechanisms for the exchange of information and concertation on international scientific cooperation policies, e.g. networks linking scientific and technological attachés posted to Member State (or, where appropriate, EU) representations in third countries, drawing on the model of the initiatives taken in some third-country capitals, such as the FEAST Forum in Australia.⁸⁷

– Exploration of the scope for the combined use of national and EU financial support schemes for the mobility of researchers from third countries coming to the EU: one possibility could be the payment of an extra EU grant to top up national fellowships for a period of attachment to laboratories in several EU countries, for example, making it possible to attract particularly high-calibre researchers while strengthening the ties between the laboratories concerned.

11.3 Commission of the European Communities. Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. More Research and Innovation - Investing for Growth and Employment: A Common Approach. Brussels, xxx COM(2005) 488 final{SEC(2005) 1253}

World-wide competition to attract research and innovation investment is growing. In addition to attractive locations such as the US and Japan, new competitors have emerged, such as China, India and Brazil. For the EU to remain competitive and sustain its model of society, far-reaching reforms are needed urgently. Moreover, the scale of competition is such that no Member State can succeed in isolation. Transnational synergies should be fully exploited. This is the only way to boost research and innovation performance and to turn it effectively into more growth and jobs in the EU. A high level of R&D spending and a good innovation performance contribute to more and better jobs. In addition research and innovation are needed to make the EU economy more sustainable, by finding win-win solutions for economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

13. ESIB and the Bologna Process, 2003



[ESIB]. ESIB and the Bologna Process – Creating a European Higher Education Area for and with students. Berlin, 18-19 September 2003.

8. Promoting the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

⁸⁷ Forum for European-Australian Science and Technology Cooperation.

ESIB believes that the shift of focus towards attractiveness is a positive development, as the term competitiveness can have a very negative meaning, especially when it comes to competing at all costs, which undermines academic values such as co-operation.

ESIB further believes that attractiveness can best be reached by a high quality of education and research and by a good international network of co-operation with various partner institutions around the globe.

When discussing the attractiveness of the EHEA, the problems of brain drain need to be tackled and resolved. Although ESIB believes in the freedom of each student, researcher and member of teaching staff to choose their place of study, work and life, special attention must be paid to the following points. Making Europe one of the most attractive higher education areas, countries have to act responsibly in relation to the problem of brain drain, both between Bologna signatory countries and outside. Since a lot of talented students, researchers and teaching staff in developing countries and countries in transition are emigrating, the creation of a cohesive higher education area is endangered, as is the economic and social development of the countries encountering brain drain. Signatory countries should respond to the fact that the process of brain drain also has highly negative implications for the development and quality of higher education and research. Guaranteeing safe employment and working conditions for students, staff and researchers in the qualification phase can reduce the problem of brain drain and enhance the attractiveness of the EHEA. This also means that PhD candidates should be employed by the universities, and enough full time jobs have to be provided for young researchers to make the academic workplace an attractive option for them.

With regards to the GATS, ESIB reaffirms its strong opposition against making any further commitments in education. ESIB calls upon governments to not make further commitments in education while at the same time reviewing existing commitments and legally assessing their impact on the public system. ESIB further calls upon governments to engage in a constructive dialogue with teachers, students and universities about the issues surrounding trade in education services, as the existing trade in the framework of TNE arrangements has to be steered to make it beneficial. Generally, ESIB reaffirms its commitment to education as a public good not a tradable commodity.

14. BFUG Working Group on the External Dimension, 2001



Bologna Follow up Group, Attractiveness, Openness and Co-operation. The European Higher Education Area and third countries. Report by the Danish Presidency. 4th draft, Athens, 20 June 2003.

The idea of regional cooperation in higher education “a la Bologna” should be promoted to other parts of the world. It is the European experience or conviction that quality in higher education can be enhanced through regional cooperation. Higher education systems in other parts of the world should have the same opportunity to make the same experience. For Europe this means stronger partners.

It has to be said that not all regions in the world may be prepared for this kind of cooperation.

In the first place the countries in the region should have an interest in the benefits of regional cooperation “a la Bologna”:

- Mobility for cultural contact, mutual understanding and confidence building
- Mobility for enhancing quality in higher education

- Creation of a coherent regional labour market with transparency in qualifications

In the second place such cooperation can only be established under certain conditions:

- Possibility for peaceful governmental cooperation in the region
- Existence of a civil society with free associations of students and academics
- Autonomous institutions of higher education (in line with the European Magna Carta Universitatum of 1988)
- Acceptance of a lingua franca, existence of a common language or a common ability to work in several languages
- Commitment of governments and institutions to reform

There are of course many ways to promote the Bologna idea and they should all be used.

- Existing cooperative frameworks whether they are regional organisations as such or partnerships between Europe and the region
- Contact to UNESCO regions
- Inviting a leading country as promoter in the regions
- Organising regional conferences about the Bologna Process
- General information in publications and on the internet

[...]

Conclusions

The Berlin communiqué should contain the following elements:

- Ministers agree that the attractiveness and openness of the European higher education should be reinforced through cooperation with regions in other parts of the world.
- They confirm their readiness to further develop scholarship programmes for students from third countries.
- They undertake to win acceptance, within the relevant frameworks, for the need to base all international cooperation as any trade in higher education on academic values and on clear and transparent standards for quality.
- They encourage the promotion of the idea and the good practice of the Bologna Process by inviting representatives of other regions of the world to Bologna seminars and conferences.

15. Berlin Communiqué, 2003



Realising the European Higher Education Area. [Berlin Communiqué]. Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in Berlin on 19 September 2003.

Ministers welcome the interest shown by other regions of the world in the development of the European Higher Education Area, and welcome in particular the presence of representatives from European countries not yet party to the Bologna Process as well as from the Follow-up Committee of the European Union, Latin America and Caribbean (EULAC) Common Space for Higher Education as guests at this conference.

[...]

Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

Ministers agree 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.

Ministers declare 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 all appropriate circumstances such fora should include the social and economic partners.

They encourage the co-operation with regions in other parts of the world by opening Bologna seminars and conferences to representatives of these regions.”

16. Erasmus Mundus Programme (2003)



Decision No 2317/2003/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 December 2003 establishing a programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries (Erasmus Mundus) (2004 to 2008), OJ L345/1 of 31 December 2003.

Objectives of the programme

1. The programme's overall aim is to enhance the quality of European higher education by fostering cooperation with third countries in order to improve the development of human resources and to promote dialogue and understanding between peoples and cultures.
2. The programme's specific objectives are:
 - (a) to promote a quality offer in higher education with a distinct European added value, attractive both within the European Union and beyond its borders;
 - (b) to encourage and enable highly qualified graduates and scholars from all over the world, to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union;
 - (c) to develop more structured cooperation between European Union and third-country institutions and greater European Union outgoing mobility as part of European study programmes;
 - (d) to improve accessibility and enhance the profile and visibility of higher education in the European Union.

**17. ACA Conference:
Opening up to the Wider World (2004)**



Recommendations for inclusion in the Bergen Communiqué. Opening up to the Wider World? The External Dimension of the Bologna Process. ACA Conference, Hamburg, Germany, 17 to 19 October 2004

The conference “Opening up to the Wider World: The External Dimension of the Bologna Process” took place in Hamburg, Germany from 17 to 19 October 2004. The event was

organised by the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), in cooperation with the University of Hamburg, and supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the European Commission. The conference was guided by the overarching question if and in which way exactly the Bologna reforms would help to improve the reputation and attractiveness of European higher education in the world. The impact of the Bologna reforms on cooperation and competition between Europe and other world regions was addressed and investigated by both European and non-European experts. The conference attracted about 200 participants from higher education institutions, governments, and associations active in the field of internationalisation of education and training.

What are the outcomes of the conference?

Speakers and participants confirmed that the Bologna reforms were a step in the right direction. But they also underlined that structural reforms were not enough for the continent's ambitions to become a worldwide reference in higher education. True excellence in teaching and research was at least as much, if not more, dependent on the presence and commitment of high-quality teachers and researchers. Europe's ability to attract or to keep these high achievers critically depended on whether or not it was able to provide them with the resources and working conditions they needed.

Speakers from other world regions confirmed that the reform agenda was being perceived outside of Europe, though at different degrees by the different target academic groups. While higher education leaders and managers were probably best informed, there were clear deficiencies on the side of the faculty. The fact that word about the reforms had travelled beyond the confines of Europe does not mean, however, that non-European observers had a detailed knowledge of the aims and the elements of the reform process. There was therefore a clear need for the provision of targeted information on the Bologna Process outside of Europe.

Recommendations to the Bergen Ministerial Meeting:

- *Ministers should encourage the provision of better and more comprehensive information about the Bologna Process to the relevant academic stakeholders outside Europe.*
- *Structural reforms alone will not suffice to make Europe a global higher education leader. Ministers should therefore ensure adequate resources and working conditions, in order to keep or attract high-quality teachers and researchers.*

18. Mobilising the brainpower of Europe (2004-2005)



18.1 Kok, Wim (2004), *Facing the Challenge. The Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment. Report from the High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok. November 2004 [pp. 20-21].*

Attracting and retaining world-class researchers

Europe needs to dramatically improve its attractiveness to researchers, as too many young scientists continue to leave Europe on graduating, notably for the US. Too few of the brightest and best from elsewhere in the world choose to live and work in Europe.

Further developing a system of mutual validation of national quality assurance and accreditation processes would be an important step in the right direction. It would reduce the administrative obstacles to mobility within the EU that European researchers continue to face. Obstacles relate to social security entitlements and the recognition of qualifications. More also needs to be done to facilitate the entry of researchers and their dependants from outside the EU through simplified, fast-track work permit and visa procedures.

In order to increase attractiveness, there are also financial questions requiring attention. Member States need to urgently address the problem of funding for universities. If Europe wants to attract more of the world's best researchers, the question of improving their research environment and remuneration needs to be addressed now.

Creative interaction between universities, scientists and researchers on the one hand and industry and commerce on the other, which drives technology transfer and innovation, is necessarily rooted in the close physical location of universities and companies. There is already ample evidence around the world that high-tech clusters are built on this interaction, but 'ideopolises' – for example, Helsinki, Munich and Cambridge – go further. They have an array of other supporting factors – notably a sophisticated communications and transport infrastructure, financial institutions willing to provide the necessary risk capital to entrepreneurs and specialists in technology transfer, supportive public authorities that facilitate the network structures driving creative interaction – and are attractive environments for knowledge workers. 'Ideopolises' are emerging as the cities at the heart of dynamic, high-growth knowledge-based regions.

Key recommendations

The EU needs to draw more of the best and brightest researchers in the world by raising its attractiveness. Therefore, the 2005 Spring European Council should agree to prepare an action plan to reduce the administrative obstacles for moving to and within the EU for world-class scientists and researchers and their dependants.

This action plan should be implemented by spring 2006.

Fast-track work permit and visa procedures should be introduced for researchers and the mutual recognition of professional qualifications must be improved.

18.2 Commission of the European Communities (2005b), Communication from the Commission. Mobilising the brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy. SEC(2005)518. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, 20 April 2005.

3.1. Attractiveness: the imperative of quality and excellence

Raising quality and attractiveness requires major transformations at universities. Those who drive these transformations within universities require specific support (including funding) from their environment. Universities failing to undertake these changes - for want of drive, power to act or available resources – will create a growing handicap for themselves, their graduates and their countries.

[...]

3.1.2. Factors to raise attractiveness to learners

More flexibility and openness to the world in teaching/learning

If universities are to become more attractive locally and globally, profound curricular revision is required - not just to ensure the highest level of academic content, but also to respond to the changing needs of labour markets. The integration of graduates into professional life, and hence into society, is a major social responsibility of higher education. Learning needs to encompass transversal skills (such as teamwork and entrepreneurship) in addition to specialist knowledge. European and interdisciplinary aspects need to be strengthened. The potential of ICT should be fully exploited in teaching/learning, including for lifelong learning. The bachelor-master divide allows more diverse programme profiles and learning methods (e.g. research-based learning and ICT delivery).

Broader access

With new types of learners, greater programme diversity and more mobility across Europe, improved guidance and counselling (before and during higher education), flexible admission policies and customised learning paths are of growing importance. They are key determinants for broadening access, supporting student commitment and increasing success and efficiency - whether admission is competitive or not. Grant/loan systems, affordable accommodation and part-time work or assistantships are also important for universities to be attractive and accessible to a suitably wide range of learners – thus breaking the link between social origin and educational attainment.

Better communication

While academia tends to assume that good quality is its own advertisement, attractiveness is about perceptions. The development of a coherent structure of degrees, ECTS credits, the Diploma Supplement and trustworthy quality seals will enhance the recognition of European degrees. But it will not suffice: universities need better to communicate with society about the value of what they produce, and to invest more in their presence and marketing at home and abroad. Not all are well prepared for this.

[...]

Annex

54. The comparative analysis of higher education has shown that the EU is a world quality reference as concerns total number of PhD graduates as well as number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology. It also performs well as regards public investment in higher education.

55. However, the analysis also shows that the EU needs to improve access to higher education, to increase higher education attainment levels, and increase total investment in higher education.

19. Bergen Communiqué, 2005



The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals. [Bergen Communiqué]. Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005.

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

The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.

We see the European Higher Education Area as a partner of higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of intercultural understanding and respect. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions. We stress the need for dialogue on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify partner regions and intensify the exchange of ideas and experiences with those regions. We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.

[...]

Preparing for 2010

Building on the achievements so far in the Bologna Process, we wish to establish a European Higher Education Area based on the principles of quality and transparency. We must cherish our rich heritage and cultural diversity in contributing to a knowledge-based society. We commit ourselves to upholding the principle of public responsibility for higher education in the context of complex modern societies. As higher education is situated at the crossroads of research, education and innovation, it is also the key to Europe's competitiveness. As we move closer to 2010, we undertake to ensure that higher education institutions enjoy the necessary autonomy to implement the agreed reforms, and we recognise the need for sustainable funding of institutions.

20. European Institute of Technology, 2006



20.1 Commission of the European Communities. Commission Staff Working Document. Annex to the Communication from the Commission to the European Council Implementing the renewed partnership for growth and jobs. Developing a knowledge flagship: the European Institute of Technology. Results of the Public Consultation on a Concept of a European Institute of Technology. Brussels, 13.3.2006. SEC(2006) 368

The idea of establishing a European Institute of Technology (EIT) was put forward by the Commission in its Mid-Term Review of the Lisbon Strategy. Subsequently, the March 2005 European Council asked the Commission to explore the idea further. To support this process, a public consultation was held from 15 September to 15 November 2005. The questionnaire, which did not directly address the relevance of an EIT, comprised four questions on what the mission, added value, structure and priorities of the EIT should be.

20.2 Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission to the European Council. The European Institute of Technology: further steps towards its creation. Brussels, 8.6.2006 COM(2006) 276 final

Further to a first Communication on the European Institute of Technology (EIT) adopted on February 22, 2006, the March 2006 European Council recognised that the European Institute of Technology will be an important step to fill the existing gap between higher education, research and innovation, and invited the Commission to submit by mid June 2006 a proposal on further steps to undertake.

As a European organization able to promote excellence, to attract talent globally, and to provide a European working environment to students, researchers and innovation managers, the EIT will constitute a European symbol of a renewed effort towards the creation of a competitive, knowledge based society.

[...]

1. Introduction

The Commission first drew attention to the need for a European Institute of Technology in its Spring Report 2005. The European Council took note, and the Commission launched a process of reflection and consultation, which resulted in its presenting on 22 February 2006 a first Communication on the European Institute of Technology (EIT).

The conclusions of the March 2006 European Council state that:

“The European Council notes the significance of the Commission's communication on the European Institute for Technology and will further examine the ideas in order to enhance together with other actions networking and synergies between excellent research and innovation communities in Europe. The European Council recognises that a European Institute for Technology – based on top-class networks open to all Member States – will be an important step to fill the existing gap between higher education, research and innovation, together with other actions that enhance networking and synergies between excellent research and innovation communities in Europe. The European Research Council should have a guiding role in this context. The European Council invites the Commission to submit a proposal on further steps by mid June 2006.”⁸⁸

[...]

4. Degrees

The EIT should be able to award degrees and diplomas. They would constitute a visible manifestation of the EIT brand and an incentive to attract students and researchers to participate in its programmes. The EIT must act as a pole of attraction for the best minds from around the world. Awarding high quality degrees would strengthen its identity and help it to become widely recognized, and thus to act as a model for promoting change across the European Higher Education Area.

[...]

7. Global Attractiveness

One objective of the EIT is to be attractive to students and researchers worldwide. Only by establishing a global reputation will it attract students and researchers from across Europe and

⁸⁸ Presidency conclusions, par. 25.

act as a flagship for change. Experience also shows that institutions with a global reputation can attract a significant proportion of students and researchers from outside the EU. This would be both a measure of success and a chance for the EU to benefit from the skills which non-EU citizens bring with them – in much the way that the US has done. However, the EIT should be conscious of the need to avoid triggering a brain drain from less developed countries and aim instead to promote research and innovation in third countries through appropriate links.

Two main issues would drive the global attractiveness of the EIT to non-EU students and researchers at all stages of their careers. The first is the academic credibility of the courses, degrees and research programmes. The way its degrees are recognised internationally, the quality of the research, outcomes and the innovation developed would be major elements to attract students and researchers from abroad. The second is the ease with which it would be possible for foreign Masters or Doctoral candidates and researchers to join the EIT and for the EIT to employ third country citizens in the Knowledge Communities. Accelerated and simplified national admission and visa procedure for non-EU students and researchers have been agreed⁸⁹ and should be rapidly transposed. Special visa agreements might also be needed. Providing financial support for non-EU students and researchers would reinforce the global attractiveness of the EIT. The EIT Governing Board should consider the issue of bursaries and research grants to outstanding students and researchers from abroad. The criterion, as always for the EIT, should be the excellence of outcome.

21. Modernisation agenda for universities (2005, 2006)



21.1 Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. *European values in the globalised world. Contribution of the Commission to the October Meeting of Heads of State and Government. Brussels, 03.11.2005 COM(2005) 525 final/2*

Europe must reform and modernise its policies to preserve its values. Modernisation is essential to continue keep Europe's historically high levels of prosperity, social cohesion, environmental protection and quality of life.

The need for change is widely recognised; for example in the reform process launched in Lisbon in March 2000. But this analysis has not yet been fully translated into action. Europe can no longer afford to wait; because what is different five years on is the added sense of urgency. Global competition, particularly from Asia, has intensified. Cutting-edge knowledge is no longer confined to Europe or North America. Indian universities are turning out more than a quarter of million engineers every year. Research spending in China is set to catch that in the EU by 2010.

⁸⁹ The directive on specific procedures for admitting third country nationals for the purpose of scientific research (Directive 2005/71/CE, 12 October 2005) and the two recommendations on short-stay visas and on admission of researchers from third countries traveling within the community for the purpose of carrying out scientific research (Recommendations 2005/761/CE and 2005/762/CE) were published in OJ L 289 of 3 November 2005.

21.2 Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. *Interim report on the follow up to the informal meeting of Heads of State and Government at Hampton Court. Brussels, 7.12.2005 COM(2005) 645 final*

1. Introduction

At Hampton Court on 27 October 2005 the Heads of State and Government of the European Union had a fruitful discussion on Europe's response to globalisation. The Communication of the Commission 'European values in the globalised world' helped to focus the discussion on the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. All agreed that Europe needs economic reforms and social modernisation to safeguard its values. At the end of the informal meeting the Commission was asked to take the lead in further work on research and development, universities, demographic challenges, energy, migration and security. It was agreed that this work will not lead to new processes or structures but will be mainstreamed into existing channels. President Barroso announced that he will present a concept paper on the external projection of the European Union in the world. Swift and firm efforts in all these areas are essential to boost Europe's response to globalisation.

[...]

PART 2

1. The Hampton Court work streams

Building on the information already provided in the Information Note of 9 November, the following paragraphs describe the state of play regarding the main issues to be addressed in every Hampton Court work stream. They list the main initiatives at European level recently tabled or planned for 2006.

2. Research and Development

A new impetus is needed to increase significantly Europe's research and development and innovative capacity. It is especially important to have more leading companies working in areas like ICT, space, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. A major impetus will be given if we have agreements on the 7th Research Framework Programme and the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme. However, more needs to be done if Europe is to become a more attractive place to invest in research and development. It is crucial to get the financing for small high-potential companies right and to address the brain drain of Europe's best and brightest.

The Commission is working on a number of initiatives which are directly relevant to the above issues. Building on the 7th Framework Programme, the communication on state aid, i2010, the strategic guidelines for cohesion policy, etc., the Commission will table a communication in the first quarter of 2006 identifying priority actions to increase investment in R&D financing, to create attractive markets and to contribute to growth of European innovative firms, in particular SMEs. The Commission will try to specify concrete examples of public R&D funding where it has been possible to facilitate access to finance, to remove obstacles to cross-border investments, to increase the leverage effect on private sector R&D financing and to foster public-private partnerships. In this respect, the Commission will look into aspects of the application of state aid legislation and competition rules in order to facilitate R&D and innovation. The Commission will also present a Communication on

defence industries and markets, aiming to encourage the competitiveness of the European defence sector through appropriate market legislation and R&D programmes.

3. Universities

Universities are the locus where education, research and innovation meet. The conditions must be put in place to enable them to maximise their potential. This means addressing questions on funding levels and sources, on regulatory frameworks and management systems, on ensuring access to higher education and, crucially, on how universities transfer innovation and skills to the market. Universities now operate in a global market for higher education and research. European universities stand a good chance to benefit from the opportunities this market offers, for example through partnerships with higher education and research centres in third countries as well as with business. European universities could reinforce their position if they can attract and keep the best brains – in terms of teachers, students and researchers – and better exploit the knowledge they generate. Specifically, more needs to be done to improve ⁷⁷ the training of post-graduates. Also, better and more diversified funding and closer university/business cooperation is needed.

Building on the work done so far, the Commission will seek the views of experts on the concrete steps that must now be taken.

In this context, the Commission intends to come forward with a Communication on European higher education systems and in particular universities. It will look into ways of enhancing the research and innovation performance of European Universities. Further to its recent public consultation, the Commission will table a proposal in the first quarter of 2006 to establish a European Institute for Technology with the aim of enhancing Europe's top-rank university capacity.

21.3 Commission of the European Communities. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. *Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation*. Brussels, 10.5.2006 COM(2006) 208 final

Introduction

Modernisation of Europe's universities, involving their interlinked roles of education, research and innovation, has been acknowledged not only as a core condition for the success of the broader Lisbon Strategy, but as part of the wider move towards an increasingly global and knowledge-based economy. The main items on the agenda for change have been identified and given added momentum by the European Council: at the informal meeting at Hampton Court in October 2005, R&D and universities were acknowledged as foundations of European competitiveness; the 2006 Spring European Council agreed on stronger action at European level to drive forward this agenda in universities and research, which should be implemented by the end of 2007 in the context of the renewed partnership for growth and employment. In the National Reform Programmes based on the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs, Member States refer generally to these issues, but few address them as a national priority. Yet these changes are necessary to regenerate Europe's own approach, not to replicate any imported model. They are equally necessary in order to reinforce the societal roles of universities in a culturally and linguistically diverse Europe.

[...]

9. Make the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area more visible and attractive in the world

The development of extensive cooperation, mobility and networks between European universities over the past decades has created the right conditions for broader internationalisation. Most universities now have experience with multilateral consortia and many are involved in joint courses or double degree arrangements. The Erasmus Mundus Masters have demonstrated the relevance of these initiatives - which are unique to Europe - in the global arena. Continuing globalisation means that the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area must be fully open to the world and become worldwide competitive players.

This will, however, only be possible if Europe makes a serious effort to promote the quality of its universities, and to increase their attractiveness and visibility worldwide.

One possibility, at European and Member State level, would be to develop more structured international cooperation, supported by the necessary financial means, with the EU's neighbouring countries and worldwide, through bilateral/multilateral agreements. This also entails that Member States, acting within the EU's commitment not to promote brain drain, should open up their funding schemes to non-Europeans and provide opportunities for interuniversity staff exchanges as well as opportunities for non-European researcher and academic staff to carry out professional activities. "Brain circulation" should also be promoted for European students, teachers and researchers who have decided to spend part of their working life outside Europe.⁹⁰ People undertaking a temporary assignment abroad are both an asset for the sending and/or hosting country as they constitute a reserve of professional contacts abroad, acting as bridgeheads for sharing knowledge. This in turn, will increase Europe's visibility in education and research and as a reliable partner in the development of third countries' human capital.

One fundamental point is to simplify and accelerate legal and administrative procedures for the entry of non-EU students and researchers. Concerning admission and residence of third country researchers, the "researchers' visa" package - a directive and two recommendations on the admission of third-country nationals to carry out scientific research in the European Community⁹¹ was adopted in 2005 and will have to be transposed into national law during 2007.

Building an attractive image for European universities in the world also calls for a serious effort to make European degrees more easily recognised outside Europe. However, first, cross-recognition has to be fully achieved within the EU itself; the recent Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications has already made it simpler for professional purposes. More effort is still necessary as far as academic recognition is concerned. The coherent framework of qualifications and of compatible quality assurance systems currently under development⁹² will contribute to this. The existence of more "European" courses,

⁹⁰ See European Researchers Abroad (ERA-Link) pilot initiative, <http://www.eurunion.org/legislat/ste/eralink.htm>

⁹¹ The three instruments were published on 3 November 2005 in the Official Journal O.J. L 289 of 3 November 2005. The two recommendations immediately entered into force, while the Member States will have two years (e.g. by November 2007) to implement the directive as well as Council Directive 2004/114/EC of 13 December 2004 (OJ L 375, 23.12.2004).

⁹² For example, through the recent European Parliament and Council Recommendation on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (OJ L64 of 4.3.2006) and through the consultations on a European Qualifications Framework.

offered jointly by consortia of universities and leading to joint or double degrees at Master or Doctorate level, would also help to make Europe more attractive to students, teachers and researchers from the rest of the world.

[...]

Universities are key players in Europe's future and for the successful transition to a knowledge-based economy and society. However, this crucial sector of the economy and of society needs in-depth restructuring and modernisation if Europe is not to lose out in the global competition in education, research and innovation.

[...]

The Hampdon Court meeting also called for urgent action to promote excellence in both research and education, particularly world-class universities with adequate funding streams and closer links with business. (Moving up a gear; 2006, p. 9 – point 3.1)

ANNEX 2

Recommendations from the Bologna Official Seminars on the “external dimension”

Vatican seminar (Vatican City, 30 March – 1 April 2006)

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

*From Archbishop J. Michael Miller’s Summary and Synthesis of the seminar;
Synod Hall, Vatican, 1 April 2006*

II. Recommendations of Discussion Groups

The participants in this Seminar are convinced that the commitment of the Bologna Process to strengthening the external dimension of European higher education depends in large measure on reaffirming the relationship between Europe's cultural heritage and its universities and on fostering its common academic values.

Now is the time to hear directly from the discussion groups which met yesterday morning. The reporters of the various discussion groups will read a summary of their conclusions and recommendations. All of these suggestions will be integrated into a few specific recommendations to be handed over, as the fruit of our labours, to those preparing for the Ministerial Meeting in London in May of next year. Before each of the four topics, I will make a few observations drawn from our general discussion.

1. Basic Values of Academic Freedom

The theme treated in the first two discussion groups was academic freedom. Proper to a university's institutional autonomy is the guarantee of academic freedom that it offers its members. In the great European tradition, freedom in research and teaching have been recognized and respected according to the principles and methods of each discipline. Academic freedom guarantees that scholars may search for the truth wherever analysis and evidence lead them. Moreover, it ensures that they may teach and publish the results of this research, keeping in mind the need to safeguard the common good of the community. It is not only *freedom from* undue constraint and interference, but *freedom for* service to society. The European university should ensure that all teachers are accorded a lawful freedom of inquiry and of thought, and of freedom to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence.

In the past, this value was often threatened by totalitarian regimes of left and right. Sadly, the European university itself has, at times, complied with such bullying and compromised its institutional autonomy and thus the academic freedom of the professoriate. As was noted by more than one intervention, today there are still threats to the university's autonomy but they usually come from other quarters, such market and technological forces or the widespread cultural presupposition which regard teachers and researchers as "producers" and students as "consumers."

I would now ask each of the groups, in turn, to present their recommendations to the assembly. [...]

2. Foundations for Interdisciplinary Dialogue

The second theme dealt with in the Seminar's discussion groups was that of interdisciplinary dialogue. In his introduction to the second session, Dr. Jan Sadlak spoke about the vocation of the European university to be a kind of open forum - an *agora* - where scholars from all disciplines "can actively meet and match their ideas against one another." While honouring the integrity and method of each academic discipline, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary conversations based on a common search of truth enrich the Academy, enabling it to become a community of wisdom rather than a cacophony of competing individual voices.

One practical consequence of insisting on interdisciplinary dialogue is the space it creates within the university community to meet the challenges posed by increasing fragmentation and specialization. In many instances we have a high level of compartmentalized information but little capacity for synthesis.⁹³ Indeed, we now face the possibility that the university will be reduced to a complex group of academic areas that produce only factual results which in the end are unrelated. Whenever this is the case, then the university will be able to offer an adequate professional formation, but will no longer be able to attain the purposes of a rich and full human formation.⁹⁴

According to several of our speakers, Europe's universities, in line with their origins and heritage, are called to meet the challenge of integrating knowledge. This is an ever more difficult process given contemporary scepticism about the possibility of such an undertaking, coupled with the explosion of information now made available to anyone connected to the internet. Nonetheless, the university has the task of fostering a synthesis of knowledge, resisting the fragmentation of knowledge into merely quantifiable and commodifiable information.

To this "horizontal" interdisciplinarity, which relates the various disciplines, the European university will promote what might be called a "vertical" interdisciplinarity. Such verticality asks that the academic community be engaged in a constant effort to determine the relative place and meaning of each of the various disciplines within the context of a vision of the human person and the world inspired by transcendent values. An organic vision of reality, a higher synthesis of knowledge, is what is proposed.

I now ask the second discussion to present us their conclusions and recommendations as ways to foster the "external dimension" of the Bologna Process. [...]

3. Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue

As we heard in this Hall, the increasing pluralism of European societies and globalization has brought intercultural and interreligious dialogue to the fore as topics of concern to institutions of higher learning. Such topics are no longer taboo. Indeed, it was asserted from this podium that the ability of Europe's universities to attract students and professors in the future will depend to no small extent on how well they foster such dialogue within their communities and in society at large. It is an intrinsic value, an essential factor of Europe's heritage that the university aims, as John Henry Newman wrote, "to effect the intercommunion of one and all."⁹⁵

By its very nature, the European university develops culture through its research, helps to

⁹³ Cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, Pontifical Council for the Laity, and Pontifical Council for Culture, *The Presence of the Church in the University and in University Culture* (1994), I: 2, 8.

⁹⁴ Cf. John Paul II, *Address to the Third International Meeting of Catholic Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning* (25 April 1989), 4.

⁹⁵ John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1931), 457.

transmit its local culture to each succeeding generation through its teaching, and fosters cultural activities in diverse ways. As a learning community, the university is open to all human experience and is always ready to dialogue with, and learn from, any culture.⁹⁶ Given today's circumstances, the European university must become more attentive to different cultures, especially to the various cultural traditions within Europe, so that it can promote a profitable dialogue within modern society, and receive those from other cultures who wish to study and carry out research in the various countries which adhere to the Bologna Process.

In the climate of increased cultural and religious pluralism which increasingly marks Europe at the beginning of the 21st century, it is clear that this dialogue will be especially important in establishing a sure basis for stability and warding off the dread spectre of those wars of religion which, in the past, have stained the continent's history.⁹⁷ It was observed that the university, precisely as a community of scholars, cannot remain on the sidelines of such dialogue. A university's identity, whatever its particular inspiration, is *strengthened* when it fosters interreligious dialogue by introducing students to knowledge of religious traditions unfamiliar to them and by encouraging research in this field. The way of dialogue is the way of the European university.

Respectful conversation and cooperation enables the academic community to be enriched by the insights of others, challenged by their questions, and impelled to deepen their knowledge of their own convictions truth. Within Europe's universities such dialogue involves concern, respect, and hospitality toward those of other religions. Every university, which receives students of all faiths, should honour their identity, modes of expression, and values.

In order to strengthen the attractiveness of the European university, two groups discussed both intercultural and interreligious dialogue, reached the following conclusions and made the recommendations which we shall now hear. [...]

4. *Scientific Research and Ethical Responsibility*

The last discussion group dealt with the pressing question of scientific research and ethical responsibility. Unfortunately, as Peter Scott recently remarked - and this was echoed in different ways by many of our Seminar participants - "ethical issues are in danger of becoming second-order issues in the modern university - or, to be more accurate, ethical issues have tended to be redefined essentially procedural issues rather than as fundamental issues directly connected to the core mission of the university. This shift can easily be observed in the context of research. Research ethics are no longer debated in terms of the morality of military or commercial sponsorship of research programmes; [...] Instead research ethics concentrate on much narrower, often technical, issues such as exposing research malpractice and upholding the rigour of research methodologies (including the need to avoid exploitation of, or unnecessary intrusion into the lives of, research subjects)."⁹⁸

The participants in this discussion group, however, were convinced that scientific research in the European university should always be carried out with a concern for the ethical and moral implications of its methods and its discoveries. In reaching this conclusion they affirmed, perhaps unknowingly, what Pope John II said in an address to UNESCO in 1980: "It is essential that we be convinced of the priority of the ethical over the technical, of the primacy of the person over things, of the superiority of the spirit over matter. The cause of the human person will only be served if knowledge is joined to conscience. Men and women of science will truly aid humanity only if they preserve 'the sense of the transcendence of the human

⁹⁶ Cf. John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, 43.

⁹⁷ Cf. John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 55.

⁹⁸ Peter Scott, "Ethics 'in' and 'for' Higher Education," *Higher Education in Europe* 29:4 (December 2004), 439-440.

person over the world and of God over the human person".⁹⁹

The flourishing of the European university will depend on its ability to reclaim the ethical high ground in its research and programmes. We hope that we will not be accused of "knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing."

The recorder of the last discussion group will now present their conclusions and recommendations about how the ethical responsibility entailed in scientific research can promote the attractiveness of the European university. [...]

Final Recommendations

Convinced as we are that the external dimension of the Bologna Process must take seriously its responsibility to make the European university attractive to its own nations as well as the rest of the world, we suggest that intelligent marketing strategies be adopted to ensure that this take place.

This Seminar, therefore, would like to propose that, in creating the European Higher Education Area as a driving force in making Europe strong, stable and sustainable and taking a leading role in the *world* of higher education, the Ministers at the 2007 London meeting affirm:

1. the indispensable and irreplaceable role played by the European university, despite the increasing presence of other instruments of education, in contributing to the integration of Europe and the formation of a wisdom society;
2. their commitment to the cultural heritage of Europe as a living and expanding tradition which the university receives, enriches and transmits to succeeding generations; moreover, this tradition is rich in humanistic values that go together with, and do not contradict, the scientific and technological demands of advanced democratic societies;
3. the need to foster increased accessibility in order to increase capacity, without sacrificing excellence, especially in research, an excellence proper to not just a few elite institutions but distributed in numerous centres of excellence in different areas of study and research;
4. the core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation among institutions as necessary components of the European university's competitive advantage in the global marketplace and thus instruments at the service of society;
5. the positive value of unity and diversity and diversity in unity - the humus of the European university - as a way to foster interaction and dialogue among different cultural and religious traditions;
6. due recognition be given to the fact 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 ultimate significance should be recognized within the university's programs and research projects;

I would like to add one personal recommendation: that every Minister and staff member entrusted with developing and implementing the strategies for creating the EHEA purchase and read John Henry Newman's *Idea of University!*

Such affirmations will enable the EHEA to make a significant impact on the world of higher education on this continent and around the world.

⁹⁹ John Paul II, Address at UNESCO (2 June 1980), 22: AAS 72 (1980), 750.

Athens seminar (Athens, 24-26 June 2006)
Putting European Higher Education Area on the Map:
Developing Strategies for Attractiveness

From Pavel Zgaga's Report from this seminar;
 Athens, 26 June 2006

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Seminar

On bases of reach plenary discussions and reports from working groups (these reports include an even more extended list of proposals and recommendations), the following conclusions and recommendations were synthesized:

A) The possible contents of the *external dimension strategy* (in 7 points), drafted by the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process and presented to participants of the Seminar, is seen as a very good basis for elaboration of "the external strategy for the EHEA".

B) Further on, BFUG and the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process are asked to consider the following recommendations and to include them into working documents for the London ministerial conference in 2007:

1. *At the competitiveness and attractiveness horizon*, actions should be taken to improve the performance of European higher education. Competitiveness in higher education aims at developing diverse, quality, efficient and well performing universities; only such universities can really attract European and international students. Competition should not be necessarily seen in opposition to cooperation: a firm academic cooperation, e.g. through quality networks and projects that strengthen critical mass of higher education institutions, can importantly increase the competitiveness of European higher education as a whole. On the other side, competition in a global context should be also seen as an incentive to strengthen institutional cooperation further.

Concrete measures should be taken to attract international students as for example to organise European higher education fairs and media campaigns on one side as well as to create European study centres and centres of excellence on the other. Good practice from some countries suggests that extra budget provided for international students' scholarships as well as for accommodation of international students and researchers could slightly improve the existing situation. On the systemic side, a European standard of acceptance for international students should be developed and a code of good conduct for dealing with visa problems. Europe also needs to strengthen its alumni-networks worldwide. Last but not least, a network of ambassadors of European higher education or »Europe promoters« in major third countries could be established.

2. *At the partnership and cooperation horizon*, different aspects and approaches – also the regional ones – have to be developed and supported because Europe is not a homogenous whole and it can't be understood as such in other world regions. Approaches with the developed world have to differ from approaches to the developing countries. Cooperation with the developing world regions should be based on partnership and solidarity and be considered in particular with the goal of sustainability.

European universities have a long tradition of partnership and cooperation with universities in other parts of the world; today, the European Commission's programmes (e.g. Erasmus Mundus, Jean Monnet etc.) along the existing national schemes enable universities to open new pages in the history of their international cooperation. Existing networks should be used to connect European Higher education Area and higher education areas in other parts of the world. The creation of consortia of universities and higher education stakeholder organizations in the EHEA and third countries for systematic and integrated cooperation activity would be an important improvement of existing practices. Activity to take place inside such consortia could be the joint delivery of graduate-level study programmes with integrated mobility phases of study in the other continent (joint and double degrees, etc.), measures aiming at institutional development and capacity building, human resource development, and curriculum development. Joint research activities should be an integral part of this agenda. Last but not least: the complex area of mutual recognition of higher education qualifications within a global context should be also addressed within this horizon.

3. At the dialogue horizon, countries of the Bologna Process can share their practice and experiences with other regions of the world which encounter similar challenges and tendencies in the development of higher education systems. Interested countries and/or organizations from abroad should have possibility to join Bologna events and to use European good practices as well as to share their comments as well as their own good practices in a common global forum. Enhanced cooperation with other world regions can be a new stimulus for a greater integration.

Wherever possible, the policy dialogue should be based on existing fora, such as the EU-LAC Follow-up Committee or the EU-China Policy Dialogue. Policies should be tailor-made for each region and take due account of relevant EU policy (for example the EU Neighbourhood Policy). In addition, new concrete measures can be taken to open further possibilities, e.g. to create a "Bologna Visitor Programme" (to fund participation in selected Bologna-related conferences and seminars in Europe) or a higher education policy forum, involving representatives of European and third-country governments and higher education stakeholders; etc.

4. Last but not least, at the information horizon, the establishment of a comprehensive EHEA portal is unanimously recommended, under certain rules and conditions which should be carefully considered and developed. The content should be general and easy to understand. Different target groups (students, academics, policy makers, other higher education stakeholders) should be addressed in different ways. Working Group on the External Dimension could make a first investigation on this issue. Greece, through the Minister of Education, has already expressed its willingness to host such a portal. In addition, a concise description of the Bologna Process for other parts of the world is needed (prepared by the BFUG) as well as a set of Bologna information points could be established worldwide.

Oslo seminar (Oslo, 28-29 September 2006)

"Looking out! Bologna in a Global setting"

The external dimension of the Bologna Process

Forthcoming...

ANNEX 3

PROPOSAL FOR A BFUG WORKING GROUP ON THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

A. Bergen Communiqué

In the Bergen communiqué the following is said on the external dimension under the headline “*The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world*”:

“The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.

We see the European Higher Education Area as a partner of higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of intercultural understanding and respect. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions. We stress the need for dialogue on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify partner regions and intensify the exchange of ideas and experiences with those regions. We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.”

There are proposals for three seminars on this theme in the period Bergen – London: The Holy See seminar in April 2006, Greece in June 2006 and seminar arranged by the Nordic countries in September 2006 (see separate documents). In *this* document, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), propose to link these three seminars to **an overarching Working Group** with the mandate to elaborate upon a strategy for the external dimension, as asked for by ministers in Bergen.

B. Terms of Reference

The Working Group are responsible for developing a strategy document on the external dimension of the Bologna Process. To be in a best possible position to do so, three seminars will be arranged during 2006 in order to give significant input to their work.

1. A seminar in April 2006 with focus on attractiveness, hosted by the Holy See
2. A seminar in June 2006 with focus on information, hosted by Greece
3. A seminar in September 2006, discussing the draft report, with emphasis on areas that has not been focused on in the previous seminars, e.g. competitiveness and capacity building. The seminar is hosted by the Nordic countries.

An expert will, in collaboration with the Working Group, prepare a report to the Nordic seminar in September. This report must be available to the seminar participants in August 2006 at the latest. The outline of the report is proposed to be as follows:

- A. European students into the world**
- B. Competitiveness/attractiveness of European Higher Education**
- C. Capacity building**
- D. Cross border provisions**
- E. Bologna Process as such**
- F. Role of EU**
- G. Role of other international organisations (CoE, OECD, UNESCO)**

(for more details, see Annex 1 [see p. 91])

Together with the outcomes from the three seminars, the report will found the basis for the strategy work of the Working Group.

The Working Group will report regularly to the Bologna Follow Up Group. Before it finalises its work, a draft strategy document shall be discussed in a full BFUG-meeting.

The Working Group will be provided with secretarial assistance from the Bologna secretariat and from the country chairing the group.

C. Members of the Working Group

The Bologna Follow Up Group are invited to approve the establishment of a working group to develop and report on a strategy for the external dimension of the Bologna process.

Members of the Working Group are BFUG-representatives from the following countries:

1. Norway (chair)
2. Denmark
3. Sweden
4. The Holy See
5. Greece
6. Germany
7. Portugal
8. France
9. Spain
10. Malta
11. Austria

Consultative members:

1. EUA
2. EU
3. ESIB
4. UNESCO
5. The Council of Europe
6. ACA

The Working Group will submit progress reports to BFUG and a final proposal for a strategy on the external dimension of the Bologna process to the London Conference through BFUG.

Annex 1: Working Group on the External Dimension: The outline of the discussion paper in more detail:

H. European students into the world

- a) Transparency
- b) Recognition abroad

I. Competitiveness/attractiveness of European Higher Education

- a) High quality
- b) Transparency, understanding and information
- c) Diversity
- d) Scholarship schemes

J. Capacity building

- a) Information
- b) Recognition
- c) Quality
- d) Competences

K. Cross border provisions

- a) Sustainability
- b) Public responsibility
- c) Academic values
- d) European HE outside Europe

L. Bologna Process as such

- a) Promoting the idea of regional cooperation
- b) Collaboration between regions
- c) Information

M. Role of EU

- a) Erasmus Mundus
- b) Interregional agreements

N. Role of other international organisations (CoE, OECD, UNESCO)

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Plan of Action Project 2002-2004 to build common ground for higher education in the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean http://www.aneca.es/present/docs/plan_accion_0204_ing.pdf and http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/Plan_of_Action_Project_2002_2004.pdf

Formatert: Engelsk
(Storbritannia)

Formatert: Engelsk
(Storbritannia)

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[UNESCO]. *Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century. Vision and Action. Final Report.* World Conference on Higher Education. UNESCO, Paris, 5-9 October 1998.

F. Links used or referred to in the text

AC21 – The Academic Consortium 21

<http://www.ac21.org/Portal/>

Established June 2002 at the first International Forum at Nagoya University, the Academic Consortium 21 (AC21) plans active exchanges of students, faculty members and administrative staff, provides shared access to information on research interests and academic activities, develops cooperative education programs and supports international exchange of culture between local communities.

AC21 – International Forum 2006: Global Education Universities in the 21st Century

<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/globalled/>

An international platform for discussion and debate on some of the most challenging issues facing universities across the world.

ARWU – *Academic Ranking of World Universities*

<http://ed.sjtu.edu.cn/ranking.htm>

The Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) has been published by the Institute of Higher Education, Shanghai Jiao Tong University (IHE-SJTU).

The ASEAN University Network (AUN)

<http://www.aun.chula.ac.th/home.htm>

AUN was established in November 1995 under the mandate of *Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (ASEAN) Ministers responsible for higher education; it operates under the umbrella of ASEAN, as a mechanism to help promote human resource development in the region.

ASEAN-EU University Network Programme

<http://www.deltha.cec.eu.int/aunp/>

The ASEAN-EU University Network Programme (AUNP) is a higher education co-operation programme, jointly financed and implemented by the *ASEAN University Network* (AUN) and the European Commission

Asia-Link (European Commission)

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-link/index_en.htm

The Asia-Link Programme is an initiative by the European Commission to promote regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions in Europe and developing countries in Asia.

AULP – Associação das Universidade de Língua Portuguesa

<http://www.aulp.org/>

The Association of the Portuguese Speaking Universities.

AVVC – Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee

<http://www.avcc.edu.au/>

The Council of Australia's University Presidents

Barents Education Network

<http://www.arcticcentre.org/?deptid=19576>

Barents Region Higher Education network.

The Bologna Secretariat

Berlin to Bergen (2003 – 2005)

<http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

Bergen to London (2005 – 2007)

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/>

CEPES – The European Centre for Higher Education

<http://www.cepes.ro/>

CEPES was established in 1972 with a view to promoting co-operation in higher education among Member States of the UNESCO Europe Region (the countries of Europe, North America, and Israel).

Council of Europe – Higher Education and Research

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

The work of the Council of Europe in the field of higher education and research focuses on issues related to the recognition of qualifications, public responsibility for higher education and research, higher education governance and other fields relevant for the establishment of the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

CPLP – Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa

<http://www.cplp.org/>

The Community of the Portuguese Speaking Countries, established in 1996; its members being Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissao, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe and, since its independence, East Timor.

CUIB - Iberoamerican University Council

<http://www.cuib.org/>

CUIB is an institutional group of networks of universities in the Iberoamerican countries.

La documentation Française

<http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/rapports/actualite/etudiants-etrangers.shtml>

L'accueil des étudiants étrangers en France : la sélection de la Bibliothèque des rapports publics.

EAIE - European Association for International Education

<http://www.eaie.org/>

The EAIE is a non-profit organisation whose main aim is the stimulation and facilitation of the internationalisation of higher education in Europe and around the world, and to meet the professional needs of individuals active in international education.

EDB – The Economic Development Board

http://www.sedb.com/edb/sg/en_uk/index/about_us.html

The EDB is Singapore's lead agency responsible for planning and executing strategies to sustain Singapore's position as a compelling global hub for business and investment.

EHEF – European Higher Education Fairs

<http://www.ehefs.org/>

Implemented by EduFrance, DAAD, Nuffic and British Council; funded by the European Commission's Asia-Link Programme.

EI – Education International

<http://www.ei-ie.org/>

Education International represents more than 29 million teachers and education workers; 348 member organisations operate in 166 countries, from pre-school to university.

Education New Zealand

<http://educationnz.org.nz/>

The site for the NZ Export Education Industry

Éducation & Politiques

http://ep.inrp.fr/EP/r_a_venir/colloque_reformes_universitaires_afrique/

L'Unité Mixte de Recherche "Éducation & Politiques" rassemble des chercheurs de l'Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique et des chercheurs de l'Université Lumière Lyon2. Elle travaille dans le domaine de la recherche en éducation et formation, avec une perspective de sociologie politique.

ENQA – the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

<http://www.enqa.eu/>

ENQA disseminates information, experiences and good practices in the field of quality assurance (QA) in higher education to European QA agencies, public authorities and higher education institutions.

ESIB – the National Unions of Students in Europe

<http://www.esib.org/>

ESIB is the umbrella organisation of 44 national unions of students from 34 countries and through these members represent over 10 million students.

EUA – The European University Association

<http://www.eua.be/>

The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe.

EURASHE – The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

<http://www.eurashe.be/>

Members of EURASHE are national and professional associations of colleges and polytechnics and individual institutions.

Eurocadres – Council of European Professional and Managerial Staff

<http://www.eurocadres.org/>

Eurocadres is a recognised and active social partner uniting more than 5 million professional and managerial staff in Europe.

EUROMED, Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures

<http://www.euromedalex.org>

The Foundation, based in Alexandria, Egypt, is the first common institution jointly established and financed by all 35 members of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

Europa – Gateway to the European Union

http://europa.eu/index_en.htm

EC – European Commission

http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm

EC – Education and Training

http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.html

EC – Research

http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.html

European Neighbourhood Policy

http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was developed in the context of the EU's 2004 enlargement, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours.

ERASMUS-MUNDUS

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/mundus/index_en.html

The Erasmus Mundus programme is a co-operation and mobility programme in the field of higher education which promotes the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning around the world.

TEMPUS

http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/index_en.html

The trans-European mobility scheme for university studies enables universities from EU Member States to cooperate with those in Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the Mediterranean partner countries in higher education modernisation projects.

EURYDICE – The Information Network on Education in Europe

<http://www.eurydice.org/>

Eurydice has since 1980 been one of the strategic mechanisms established by the European Commission and Member States to boost cooperation, by improving understanding of systems and policies.

GMAC® Bologna Project Blog. Looking at progress towards the Bologna Accord

<http://www.gmacbolognaproject.com/>

In 2003, GMAC (the Graduate Management Admission Council) established a task force of education and business leaders to study the potential effects of the Bologna Accord on European graduate management education.

IAU – International Association of Universities

<http://www.unesco.org/iau/>

UNESCO-affiliated organization which was formally established in 1950 to encourage links between universities throughout the world.

IHEC - International Higher Education Clearinghouse

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/ihec/

IHEC provides scholars and practitioners with sources of current online resources and research in the field of international higher education.

INHEA – International Network for Higher Education in Africa

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/inhea/

The purpose of this Network is to strengthen and foster interest in African higher education through information sharing.

The Magna Charta Observatory

<http://www.magna-charta.org/home.html>

The Magna Charta Observatory of Fundamental University Values and Rights is a non-profit organisation based in Bologna, founded by the University of Bologna and the European University Association (EUA).

Mercosur Educativo

<http://sicmercosul.mec.gov.br/>

Mercosur higher education network; the initial phase of this concept foresees the establishment of a higher education institutions network in the border regions of Brazil and Argentina. The next step would be to transfer the idea to Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela.

moveonnet - the European Forum for International Relations Offices

<http://www.moveonnet.eu/>

moveonnet aims to supply useful information in the area of internationalisation and simplify the exchange of information among International Relations Offices throughout Europe.

NAFSA Bologna Web Site

<http://www.nafsa.org/practiceres/bologna/bologna-Background.htm>

NAFSA Bologna Process Task Force

<http://www.nafsa.org/practiceres/bologna/bologna-taskforce.htm>

NTEU – National Tertiary Education Industry Union (Australia)

<http://www.nteu.org.au/home>

NTEU is a specialist national union solely representing staff in tertiary education.

NUS – National Union of Students (Australia).

<http://www.unistudent.com.au/>

The National Union of Students (NUS) is the peak body for higher education students in Australia.

OSCE – The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

<http://www.osce.org>

The OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization whose 56 participating States span the geographical area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

El Proyecto 6x4 UEALC / The 6x4 EULAC project

<http://www.6x4uealc.org/english/index.htm>

The 6x4 EULAC Project is a specific project that seeks to analyze six professions in four axes with the goal of suggesting operative conditions that foster a stronger compatibility and convergence of the higher education systems in Latin America and the Caribbean and their comparison and closer relationship to those in the European Union.

Tuning Latin America Project / Projeto Tuning América Latina / Proyecto Tuning América Latina

<http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningal/>

The ALFA Tuning Latin America Project seeks to 'fine tune' the educational structures that exist in Latin America, initiating a debate whose aim is to identify and improve co-operation between higher education institutions, so as to develop excellence, effectiveness, and transparency. It is an independent project, promoted and co-ordinated by universities in many different countries, both Latin American and European.

UNICE – Union des Industries de la Communauté européenne

<http://www.unice.org/>

In 2006 there are 39 members from 33 countries, including the EU countries, the European Economic Area countries, and some central and Eastern European countries.

Universitas 21 – The International Network of Higher Education

<http://www.universitas21.com/>

Universitas 21, established in 1997, is an international network of 20 leading research-intensive universities in eleven countries.

The U.S. Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education

<http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/index.html>

The new commission (formed on September 19, 2005) is charged with developing a comprehensive national strategy for postsecondary education that will meet the needs of America's diverse population and also address the economic and workforce needs of the country's future.

WUN – Worldwide Universities Network; the global research alliance

<http://www.wun.ac.uk/>

WUN is an international alliance of leading higher-education institutions.

Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area ? Official 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, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, an official Bologna seminar on questions and strategies related to the awarding of “Joint Degrees” in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was held on September 21-22, 2006 in Berlin.

Background

The ministers responsible for higher education of the 45 Bologna member states gave the following mandate for this Bologna seminar in their Bergen Communiqué¹ under chapter IV which is entitled “Taking stock on progress for 2007”.

In this chapter they said:

“..In particular, we shall look for progress in:

..- the awarding and recognition of joint degrees, including at the doctorate level.”

There is already a “joint” history of endeavours to clarify what joint degrees are and how they could best be put into practice. This history has to be taken into account.

This concerns primarily the Stockholm Conclusions of May 31, 2002², the final report on the Mantova seminar of April 11-12, 2003³ and the Stockholm seminar “Joint Degrees – Further Development” of May 6-7, 2004⁴.

The Stockholm 2002 Conclusions make explicit reference to the Lisbon Recognition Convention of 1997⁵ on the recognition of degrees and study phases in higher education with a proposed amendment to include joint degrees dating from 2004⁶.

In the Bergen Communiqué under the chapter entitled “Recognition of degrees and study periods” the ministers state:

“...We express support for the subsidiary texts to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and call upon all national authorities and other stakeholders to recognise joint degrees awarded in two or more countries in the EHEA.”

The Stockholm 2002 Conclusions also contain a list of 9 criteria which could be useful as common denominators for the design of joint (or integrated) study programmes (this list is very much compatible with the criteria that TAUCH and RAUHVARGERS listed in their survey on master degrees and joint degrees⁷).

Three of these nine criteria should be mentioned here again, namely:

- the duration of study outside the home institution should be substantial, e.g. 1 year at bachelor level
- joint study programmes require to be settled on by cooperation, confirmed in a written agreement, between institutions
- full use should be made of the Diploma Supplement (DS).

¹ „The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals“, Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen (Norway), 19-20 May 2005 (www.bologna-bergen2005.no)

² Ministry of Education and Science, Stockholm, Sweden: "The Stockholm Conclusions – Conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar on Joint Degrees within the framework of the Bologna Process", Regeringskansliet, Stockholm, 31 May 2002

³ Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca: Seminar on "Integrated Curricula – Implications and Prospects", Final Report, Mantova, 11-12 April 2003

⁴ Ministry of Education and Science, Sweden: "Bologna Follow-up Seminar Joint Degrees – Further Development", Stockholm, May 6-7, 2004

⁵ "Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region", Lisbon, April 11, 1997

⁶ The Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region: „Recommendations on the Recognition of Joint Degrees“, adopted on 9 June 2004

⁷ Tauch C. / Rauhvargers A. (2002). Survey on Master Degrees and Joint Degrees in Europe. Genf: European University Association. Siehe: http://www.unige.ch/eua/En/Publications/Survey_Master_Joint_degrees.pdf

From the Mantova Final Report 2003, two statements might be worth being highlighted:

“..Joint degree programmes based on integrated curricula are one of the major priorities for the building of a European identity” (including cultural, linguistic and social aspects) *and*

“..Joint doctoral programmes educating for research professions in Europe are a cornerstone for greater co-operation between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the European Research Area (ERA). Synergy between the two areas is viewed as an essential prerequisite for the creation of a Europe of Knowledge.”

The Stockholm 2004 Report and Conclusions⁸ stress the need to map the experience of higher education institutions and students and to anchor the possibility of awarding joint degrees in the national legislation on higher education.

Summary of the Berlin Seminar

The discussions and contributions at the Berlin seminar made clear that all over Europe there are various models of joint study programmes with different types of degrees in place (integrated programmes with double, multiple or joint degrees). Irrespective of the type of the final degree, in all models of joint programmes students have to spend a substantial part of their study programme at a host university abroad.

The seminar participants agreed that it might be useful to distinguish more precisely between joint or integrated study *programmes* as a procedural work on the one hand and the awarding of a *degree* that recognises and reflects the new contents and the added European value on the other hand.

There are already some definitions of what a joint degree is or within what framework it can be defined. We have definitions of this kind on the Bologna-Bergen homepage, provided by the Council of Europe (CoE) and UNESCO within the framework of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and by ESIB (these definitions are wider) and one by the ERASMUS Mundus programme (which is narrower and closer to a “true” joint degree of the *one certificate or – diploma type*).

These definitions are partly contradictory, even though all of them were officially agreed upon at different points in time. Since there are obviously concerns in some countries of too narrow definitions of joint degrees being integrated in their national legislation, it could be advisable to start with a wider and more liberal definition of the Lisbon/UNESCO/ CoE type.

The Lisbon/ UNESCO /CoE-definition of a joint degree is:

“A joint degree should be understood as referring to a higher education qualification issued jointly by at least two or more higher education institutions or jointly by one or more higher education institutions and other awarding bodies, on the basis of a study programme developed and/or provided jointly by the higher education institutions, possibly also in cooperation with other institutions. A joint degree may be issued as

- *a joint diploma in addition to one or more national diplomas*
- *a joint diploma issued by the institutions offering the study programme in question without being accompanied by any national diploma,*
- *one or more national diplomas issued officially as the only attestation of joint qualification in question.”*

However, universities should be encouraged to implement “true” joint degrees (being understood as single certificates jointly awarded by more than one university) as recommended by the Mantova Bologna Seminar (2003) and implemented by many countries and universities in the framework of ERASMUS Mundus.

⁸ Pavel ZGAGA: „Bologna Follow-up Seminar Joint Degrees – Further Development. Report by the Rapporteur”, 7 pages, Stockholm/Ljubljana, May 2004 (www.bologna-bergen2005.no)

However, reality has proven e.g. in the ERASMUS Mundus programme that a real joint degree can be realised only as a single certificate jointly awarded by two or more universities.

In any case, it is important that ministers commit themselves to making the necessary legal steps to allow the awarding of joint degrees in their respective national legislation.

It might perhaps be helpful to compile the legal provisions for joint degrees of those countries which already have them and present them to all ministers, perhaps with a brief additional (legal) comment. This would be a task to be initiated by the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG).

In the Berlin seminar five working groups discussed specific aspects of joint degrees:

1. Recognition
2. Quality Assurance
3. Designing Legal Frameworks
4. Mobility
5. Financing and Funding

Some of the working groups' results are taken into consideration in the conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The seminar agreed on the following conclusions and recommendations.

- (1) There is already evidence that joint (integrated) programmes are a step forward to a truly bottom-up process in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and thus largely contribute to the establishment of a European identity of a specific, higher-education-related kind. They combine international experience, enhanced linguistic, cultural and social competence. If these contributions to the coherence of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) are in fact considered as valuable and appreciated, there must be some kind of specific funding for them, either on the national or on the European level or perhaps even as a combination of the two. This demand is justified because – at least in the initial phase – there are additional (overhead) costs that are specific to such programmes. On the other hand, there is an added value of these programmes and in the long run and with more experience gained, there could even result lower costs or greater capacity options by (international) pooling of resources.
- (2) Since there are still comparatively few joint degree programmes with a small number of students and there seems to be a recruitment problem in terms of attracting the “right” students, additional funding is needed to ensure the desperately needed enhanced marketing and information campaigns on the added benefit of joint degree programmes which are still virtually unknown.
- (3) Competent authorities at the national and the European level should be asked to compile a survey and describe existing double, multiple and joint degree programmes to better illustrate the benefit of these programmes and their European value both in terms of globally competitive academic education and employment perspectives. Such studies could be initiated simultaneously at national and European level.
- (4) There are different criteria proposed for the design and development of integrated European (joint) *programmes*. It is suggested to set up a final list of “good criteria” (or “golden rules”) that can be derived from the Stockholm, Mantova and Berlin seminars and other relevant documents in this connection. Such a list should then be published as a Bologna document of reference and relevance.

- (5) As regards the legal definition of a “true” joint degree there is no broad consensus and it may be difficult to achieve it with a formula that covers all aspects; it is probably not even necessary. All ministers whose countries have already ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention (currently amounting to 39) have at least in general agreed to the formulation chosen for the Lisbon Subsidiary Documents⁹ of UNESCO and the Council of Europe (which is broader in terms of the design and description of joint integrated programmes). Therefore, the ministers are asked to incorporate in their national legislation on higher education at least the written option for the awarding of joint degrees with a reference to the Lisbon Convention descriptions and make sure that they are quality-assured according to national standards and European principles and guidelines already agreed upon.
- In addition to legal provisions allowing for joint degrees it is also of utmost importance to make extensive use of a precise and informative Diploma Supplement. The single or multiple diploma document could also be combined with a joint diploma supplement in such a way that the different parts or sheets cannot be separated any more.
- In the meantime, the ministers should encourage institutions to continue and enhance their work for the preparation and design of integrated joint programmes.
- (6) Ministers should encourage institutions engaged in joint study programmes to make use of mutual tuition waivers for study periods spent at the foreign partner institution.
- (7) Ministers are asked to make sure that the procedures for obtaining visas and other necessary documents or permissions will not produce obstacles for the development of joint study programmes.
- (8) In terms of quality assurance, the implementation of the ENQA Standards and Guidelines passed in Bergen and the further development of a European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies facilitating mutual recognition of QA decisions in the Bologna signatory countries remain essential in order to make quality assurance of joint degrees easier and more transparent within the Bologna context and to avoid multiple QA procedures. Furthermore, specific criteria aiming at the assessment of the added value of joint degrees as opposed to national degrees need to be developed.

Prof. Hans R. Friedrich, Rapporteur General,
Berlin and Bonn, October 2006

⁹ Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region: „Recommendations on the Recognition of Joint Degrees“, adopted on 9 June 2004

HRK German Rectors' Conference
The Voice of the Universities

DAAD Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

Official Bologna Seminar "Joint degrees- A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area?"

Results of questionnaire sent to Bologna Follow-Up Group members

Compiled by:
German Rectors' Conference

Edited by:
Stefan Bienefeld
Magdalena Gruszka
Peter Zervakis

Summary of Results

A questionnaire on the institutionalisation of Joint Degrees in the Bologna member states has been prepared to supply the conference with additional empirical insights.

Furthermore, we wanted to get an overview on the progress achieved since the last Bologna Seminar on Joint Degrees in Sweden in 2002. The questionnaire was sent to the members of the Bologna Follow-Up Group by the German representative Dr. Birger Hendriks.

14 countries responded positively to it. The majority has already taken considerable measures to facilitate the awarding of joint degrees. Additionally, they legally accept both double and joint degrees. As a result, a number of legal changes were introduced after the last seminar in 2002 as can be seen in table 5, summarizing the legal provisions passed in the individual responding Bologna states. However, concerns are also voiced regarding the award of a joint degree without issuing a national degree at the same time to accompany it. Especially, the question of how to exercise effectively state authority causes some worries.

Concerning recognition issues, they do not seem to be a major problem to the award of joint degrees, neither for employment in the public sector (table 7) nor for academic recognition (table 9).

The same picture evolves regarding quality assurance issues (table 11), though here more concerns have been voiced (table 13). But in the majority of cases, QA mechanisms are comparable to those employed in national degrees. Unanswered questions and issues remain the assessment of the study period abroad (here are also differences between partner countries from EU and non EU countries in this respect).

For the majority of responding countries the award of joint degrees is part of their national Higher Education strategy (table 17), even though there are still very few special funding mechanisms foreseen (table 18)

When asked about their view on the three major concerns regarding the issue of joint degrees, answers range from a general awareness about challenges among the HEIs in countries and problems in funding, specifically in terms of quality assurance mechanisms and some recognition issues. In general, there still seems to be a need to increasing the legal compatibility in the Bologna countries to facilitate the award, quality assurance provisions and recognition procedures of joint degrees (table 21).

Finally, it is not overstating to note that at least some (in few cases even considerable) progress has been achieved since 2002. But a number of problems and challenges continue to press. The seminar's organising team hopes that our discussions in Berlin will move these issues forward and that the data compiled in this short questionnaire will give some useful background information thus causing some thought-provoking statements.

We would like to extend our warm thanks to all those taking the time to answer the questionnaire and wish all participants a successful seminar and a nice stay in Berlin.

Answers

Question

How many joint degree programmes exist in your country:

Table 1

Country	Answer
Poland	no answer
Cyprus	1
Norway	4 part of Erasmus Mundus, 2 accredited by our National Quality Assurance Agency. There are more but the Ministry does not have the number.
Sweden	no answer
Czech Republic	approx. 30 including double degree program
Italy	310 (survey completed in 2004)
Lithuania	no answer
Austria	30+
Netherlands	7 Erasmus Mundus, Several at transnational and cross border.
France	No overall statistical data are currently available for all the FR HEI. 296 Joint masters, 254 double Masters (Data based an answer rate 50%)
Spain	very few
UK	no answer
Germany	No answer
Lichtenstein	Zero

Question I: Legal situation

I.1 Has your country taken explicit legal measures to facilitate joint degrees?

Table 2

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	11	78,6
No	2	14,3
No Answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

I.2 Is it legally permitted in your country to award

a. Double or multiple Degrees (i.e. students receive two or more degrees for one programme, which is run by an institution in your country and another institution in another country)

Table 3

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

b. Joint degrees (i.e. students receive **one single** degree for a programme which is run by an institution in your country in co-operation with at least one other institution in another country)

Table 4

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	10	71,4
No	2	14,3
No answer	2	14,3
Total	14	100

Please outline briefly the legal provisions for the awarding of joint degrees:

Table 5

Country	Answer
Poland	Base is Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym (Law on Higher Education) – art 167 ust 3 pkt 3 and Decree of Minister for higher education (now in the preparation).
Cyprus	The awarding of joint degrees is not, at the time, regulated by national law. At the University of Cyprus. However, the rules and regulations governing the operation of the University, provide for the awarding of joint degrees. Main points include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An integrated or a joint programme of study is expected to attest additional value than the same programme conducted under normal circumstances at the University of Cyprus - Mobility is a compulsory element in the implementation of such programmes unless infrastructure and other means are provided for distance learning - For the implementation of a coherent integrated or joint programme of study the signing of a consortium agreement between the two parties is required.
Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act relating to Universities and University Colleges of 1 April 2005, chapter 3, section 3-2 (1) "The Ministry may issue regulations concerning the institutions' right to award degrees and professional training qualifications in cooperation with other institutions." • Regulation No. 1040 of 8 September 2005 relating to Accreditation, Evaluation and Recognition under the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges, chapter 4.
Sweden	In answering these questions we have understood that you by "joint degree" mean one single degree for a programme which is run by an institution in your

Country	Answer
	<p>country in co-operation with at least one other institution in another country, without being accompanied by any national diploma (Council of Europe definition). Sweden has been aiming for the possibility to award joint degrees according to this definition for several years but we have run into problems concerning the legal person of our higher education institutions. Our institutions are state authorities and to award a degree is an exercise of state authority. It is probably not possible for two authorities to exercise joint authority in relation to an individual. All officially recognised Swedish degrees are also included in the Degree Ordinance, decided by Government. In order for a degree to be officially recognised it needs to be included in the Swedish Degree Ordinance or be an officially recognised degree in another state that has ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention.</p> <p>There is no problem, however, for the institutions to arrange joint programmes or courses with other institutions nationally or internationally and to award a double degree <u>or</u> one officially recognised degree from one of the participating countries based on mutual recognition of the programme.</p> <p>Parliament and Government have decided to implement a new structure for higher education starting July 1 2007. The new structure will be divided into three cycles along the lines of the Bologna Process. This will facilitate the cooperation with other countries concerning joint programmes and courses. When presenting the reform the Government also said that it will investigate the issue of joint degrees further, and that – in the meantime – the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education should formulate the Diploma Supplement so as to describe more clearly national degrees awarded following joint programmes between two or more institutions. Diploma Supplement is issued for all degrees automatically, in English and free of charge for the student.</p>
Czech Republic	<p>The awarding of joint degrees is regulated by Act no. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions and on the Amendment and Supplement to Some Other Acts (the Higher Education Act), particularly by section 47a:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Section 47a</p> <p>(1) Studies in Bachelor’s, Master’s and doctoral programmes may also be carried out in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions that offer degree programmes with related contents.</p> <p>(2) The conditions for cooperation are specified in an agreement between the higher education institutions involved, pursuant to subsection 47a (1) and pursuant to the provisions of the Act.</p> <p>1) Graduates of studies in degree programmes offered in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions are awarded academic titles pursuant to subsections 45 (4), 46 (4) and 47 (5) and in addition, according to the circumstances, academic titles of the foreign higher education institutions pursuant to current legislation in the relevant country. The diploma includes the name of the foreign higher education institution with which the cooperation was carried out and may include the information that the foreign academic title is a joint title also awarded simultaneously at the foreign higher education institution.”</p>
Italy	<p>a) „Further to agreements in this regard, Italian universities may award first and second degrees (as well as all of the other qualifications envisaged by the new rules) also in conjunction with other Italian or foreign universities“(Art. 3, paragraph 9 of Ministerial Decree-MD 509/1999, and Art. 3, paragraph 10 of Ministerial Decree 270/2004).</p> <p>b) The rules governing the „procedures for the award of joint qualifications “are delegated to the general academic regulations of individual universities (Art. 11,</p>

Country	Answer
	<p>paragraph 7, letter h) of DM 509/1999, and Art. 11, paragraph 7, letter o) of DM 270/2004].</p> <p>c) In the case of joint degrees with foreign universities, the procedures for the award of the qualifications concerned should be expressly regulated in the respective inter-university agreements, given the differences in the national rules among the various countries.</p> <p>d) The same legal provisions have been adopted also by H.Ed. institutions (HEIs) of the non-university sector ranking at university-level (institutions of the AFAM System (system of higher education in the arts, dance, and music) [Art. 3, paragraph 8 of Presidential Decree 212/2005).</p>
Lithuania	<p>General requirements for joint study programmes are outlined in the Minister's of Education and Science Order No. ISAK-85 (January 17, 2006). The main provisions are connected with general provisions, requirements for preparation, implementation and awarding of joint studies programmes and final provisions.</p>
Austria	<p>Universities Act, definitions:</p> <p>"Joint diploma programmes" mean degree programmes which are jointly conducted under agreements between one or more Austrian universities and one or more recognised post-secondary educational institutions abroad. Such agreements must specify the work to be performed by the students concerned at the institutions which are parties to them."</p> <p>Analogously in the Fachhochschule Studies Act and the Act on Schools of Teacher Training.</p>
Netherlands	<p>The new legislation sent to Parliament in June explicitly mentions the possibility of joint degrees. Up to the present the concept of joint degrees is not mentioned in the law. Some legal advisors in the institutions interpret that it is forbidden, which it is not.</p>
France	<p>Specific legal provisions were made by the 11th May decree published in 2005 just before Bergen. Indeed, in the French system where the State guarantees the quality of degrees by entitling French institutions to award them after a cyclical national evaluation every 4 or 6 years, the notion of joint degrees between a French institution and a foreign institution didn't exist.</p> <p>The new legal provisions which make the award of genuine joint degrees possible can be summed up as follows :</p> <p>The principle is simple ; when a French institution is recognized by the French system as competent to award a State-guaranteed degree at a given level and in a given field, from now on, it can make an agreement with a foreign institution which in its own country can also award a degree at the same level and in the same field, in order to organize the training courses together and to award a genuine joint degree (ie : a single degree). But HEI could still stick to the double-degree formula if they wish so. The quality of the partnership will be assessed during the next cyclical national evaluation.</p> <p>This approach is based on trust in arrangements for the quality assurance organization in the different countries without having to make these arrangements uniform. Conclusions from this new policy will be of course drawn by the Ministry of national education, higher education and research.</p> <p>The 2005 May 11th decree sets this new overall framework. It is completed by a specific decree for the doctorate (that is, the co-supervision of thesis > 2005 January 6th decree).</p>
Spain	<p>In terms of "university diplomas", Institutions are free to enter into arrangements with other Institutions with a view to issuing a joint diploma in a single documents. However, regarding "official degrees" until the approval of Royal Decree 56/2005 in January 2005, it was not legally possible to award a joint degree. Article 7 of this rule opens, for the first time, this possibility. Nonetheless this will require complementary legislation regulating all necessary details before joint degrees can become a full reality. This legislation which will likely take the form of a Ministerial Order is presently being prepared and is expected to be approved before the end of 2006.</p>

Country	Answer
UK	The ability to award a joint degree depends on each institution's degree awarding powers and the provisions made in its Charter, or other founding document. UK institutions that have a royal charter have no in principle difficulty in collaborating with other institutions with similar powers to jointly award a degree, but there is a view that even so the power might need to be expressly written into their charter. Universities established under the 1988 and 1992 statutes are subject to ultra vires. Whilst the FHE Act 1992 does provide for the award of a joint degree between two institutions it is not clear whether this extends to awards made jointly with two or more institutions, and to awards made jointly with one or more overseas institutions. The legal issues are not entirely resolved.
Germany	Legal provisions differ from land to land in the federal system of Germany. The students have to spend a substantial time at one university in each country (one year or 60 ECTS for the Bachelor, only 30 for the Master). The whole study program has to be accredited in advance.
Lichtenstein	Die Verleihung solcher Grade ist in Lichtenstein gesetzlich nicht geregelt, aber dadurch nicht ausgeschlossen, sofern die liechtensteinischen Bedingungen erfüllt sind, die für die entsprechenden Grade per Gesetz bestehen.

Question II: Recognition

II.1 Are transnational joint degrees recognised by your government (in case your country is not involved in the JD) as equivalent to national degrees?

Table 6

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

Are they recognised for employment in the public sector?

Table 7

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

Are they recognised for employment in a state regulated profession?

Table 8

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	13	86,7
No	1	6,7
No answer	1	6,7
Total	15 ¹	100

Are they recognised for academic purposes (further studies)?

Table 9

Answer	Score	In %
Yes	13	92,9
No	0	0
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

please outline briefly the major issues concerning the recognition of joint degrees:

Table 10

Country	Answer
Poland	There are no formal obstacles to recognise joint degrees. It is, however difficult to say how they will be recognise in the labour market.

¹ One country has given yes and no as an answer as the situation is different for different state regulated professions.

Country	Answer
Cyprus	The issue of quality is of paramount importance as regards to the recognition of joint degrees. The establishment of quality assurance mechanisms in all participating countries is, for that reason, imperative.
Norway	The joint degrees must be in accordance with the national regulations, and in state regulated professions, they must follow the regulations set by the national authorisation agency for the specific profession. At present, there are not many joint degrees in state regulated professions.
Sweden	The answer to all the questions above is that it all depends on whether the degree is officially recognised by the authorities in the countries concerned (the countries that the issuing institutions belong to). If it doesn't concern a state regulated profession it is up to the employer to judge the qualification. When it comes to academic recognition it is both a questions about the recognition of the degree in the countries concerned and the level and content of the degree. This is to be decided by the individual institution evaluating the degree.
Czech Republic	It is necessary for academic purposes to have certificate of equivalence, it is possible to ask for it at particular higher education institution in the Czech Republic. This certificate is not obligatory for employment (neither for public sector nor state regulated professions). The certificate can be issued by the Czech institution participating in the respective joint degree or if there is no Czech participation by a HEI providing a similar degree programme.
Italy	a) When a joint degree is awarded by an Italian HEI in the respect of the legislation mentioned above under point I, letter a), no recognition problem should arise: the attached certification should mention the specific corresponding degree (e.g. Laurea, or Laurea Specialistica, etc.) of the Italian H.Ed. system. b) When no Italian HEIs is involved in the awarding of a joint degree, its recognition takes place by applying the Lisbon Convention, which since July 2002 has been the common rule for the evaluation and/or recognition of all foreign academic qualifications.
Lithuania	No answer
Austria	A recognition of joint degrees in the meaning of foreign degrees is not necessary, because the concept is that joint degrees are Austrian ones or, resp., have an Austrian component. In case that the Austrian degree involved is sufficient for any legal purpose (e.g. admission to regulated professions), the character of the programme as a joint degree programme does not in any way disturb this right.
Netherlands	No answer
France	2 main issues should be addressed from this point of view : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ how to assess a joint degree involving a country from UE and another out of UE ? ✓ the duration of a valid accreditation necessary for the automatic recognition of a joint degree by all the partner countries involved.
Spain	Since they are in legal terms foreign degree, they need to go through the system of recognition of foreign degree following the same conditions as other degree issued by foreign institutions. Once recognises they will have same validity as national degree as determined by our legislation.
UK	No answer
Germany	No answer
Lichtenstein	Solche Grade sin dim Rahmen der bestehenden Zulassungsbedingungen anerkannt.

Question III: Quality Assurance

III.1 Are there any legal measures/provisions for the quality assurance of joint degrees?

Table 11

Answer	score	in %
Yes	9	64,3
No	4	28,6
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

If yes, please outline them briefly:

Table 12

Country	Answer
Poland	The same as in the case of regular degrees
Spain	Once become a reality will have to follow regular evaluation procedures in the same way as other national degrees. Evaluation guidelines may require small adaptations in order to take into account their specific nature.
Norway	Regulation No. 1040 of 8 September 2005 relating to Accreditation, Evaluation and Recognition under the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges, chapter 4.
Czech Republic	If the Czech HEI participates directly in the joint degree it has to have the study programme accredited. Up to now there were no special provisions for JDs. At present there are special measures concerning joint degree study programmes discussed.
Netherlands	It is in the task of NVAO to attune internationally.
Austria	The universities are obliged to introduce a quality assurance system for each programme of studies.
Lithuania	Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education evaluates foreign qualifications giving access to higher education in Lithuania as well as all types of higher education qualifications acquired abroad.
Germany	Same as for national degrees
Italy	Joint degrees awarded by Italian universities have to go through the same accreditation process as all other Italian degrees of the same cycle and typology (bachelor-level, master-level, etc.), under the control of the CNVSU (Italian NQA).

If no, please outline the major concerns:

Table 13

Country	Answer
Cyprus	Outline the main concerns: At the time being only the educational evaluation-accreditation of programmes of study offered by private institutions, constitutes a means of quality assurance. The Ministry of Education and Culture, however, has taken significant steps for the establishment of a National Quality Assurance Agency which is going to be dealing with both institutional and programme evaluation (for public and private institutions of higher education). Within this framework, mechanisms concerning quality assurance of joint degrees are going to be discussed and examined.
Sweden	No such measures have been taken since the Swedish institutions are not allowed to issue "real" joint degrees. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (the quality assurance agency) has, however, led an EUA project concerning methods for the quality assurance of joint degrees.
France	Our main concern currently is how and who should evaluate the educational part which is provided abroad, for example with Erasmus Mundus ? Indeed Erasmus Mundus is built on the mutual trust which is given for granted from the start, as long as with double or multiple degrees, the degree eventually awarded in a country 'X' is recognized by this country 'X'. In other words, each country can guarantee the quality of the learning path provided at home for its own degree but nobody actually can tell about - the genuine quality of the same courses provided in a foreign language for an Erasmus Mundus student ; - and the whole learning path an Erasmus Mundus student actually goes through in 2 or more European higher education institutions.

III.2 Are there special domestic procedures for quality assurance of joint degrees in your country?

Table 14

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	2	14,3
No	9	64,3
No answer	3	21,4
Total	14	100

III.3 In case there are special domestic procedures for quality assurance, do they take the transnational aspects (i.e. the part of the programme that is studied in another country) into account?

Table 15

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	3	21,4
No	4	28,2
No answer	7	50,0
Total	14	100

Please outline briefly how the responsible accreditation/quality assurance bodies handle the accreditation/quality assurance of joint degrees:

Table 16

Country	Answer
Poland	Accreditation/ quality assurance bodies handle joint degrees similarly as regular degrees
Cyprus	No answer
Norway	In Norway, an institution can have modules in a joint degree accredited by the National Assurance Agency. These modules are accredited in accordance with our national regulations for degrees
Sweden	No answer
Czech Republic	Czech Accreditation Commission has to accredit all study programmes.
Italy	<p>Since 1999 the Ministry of University and Research has promoted the internationalisation of the Italian H.Ed. system by cofinancing suitable international projects submitted by Italian HEIs; one of the activities eligible for funding is the design and establishment of integrated study programmes resulting in multiple or joint degrees. Here are two of the indispensable conditions for the allocation of ministerial funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the integrated curriculum and joint/multiple degree must have been approved by the evaluation unit of the Italian HEI concerned; - the whole project must envisage an external evaluation, both in progress and final.
Lithuania	Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education evaluates qualifications connected with higher education, other qualifications and partial studies; fulfils functions of the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) – gives information, consultations and recommendations for research and higher education institutions of the Republic of Lithuania, and other juridical and natural persons, when it is necessary to estimate, how diplomas of higher education, certificates or study programmes and their parts in foreign countries meet the higher education system and requirements of higher education of the Republic of Lithuania; collects and analyses information, which is necessary to evaluate and recognize qualifications acquired abroad; Providing international information exchange within the Network of European National Information Centres for Academic Recognition and Mobility (ENIC) gives information for analogous institutions abroad, fulfils functions, which are necessary that qualifications acquired in Lithuania could be evaluated and recognized abroad.
Austria	No answer
Netherlands	Programmes upon request by the institutions.
France	Currently the CNE ("Conseil national d'évaluation") and the CTI ("Commission des titres d'ingénieurs") are working with peer reviews involving international experts.
Spain	All new official degrees will have to follow quality assurance evaluation guidelines within a certain period of time. However, it is not possible to say anything concrete since it is something which has not been done up to the present time, as new degrees have only very recently been established.
UK	The Quality Assurance Agency for higher education has produced a Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 2 of this code deals with Collaborative provision, and Precept 13 of this Section says: "An awarding institution that engages with another authorised awarding body jointly to provide a programme of study leading to a dual or joint

Country	Answer
	academic award should be able to satisfy itself that it has the legal capacity to do so, and that the academic standard of the award, references to the FHEQ (the SCQF in Scotland) meets its own expectations, irrespective of the expectations of the partner awarding body.”
Germany	No special procedures available.
Lichtenstein	No answer

Question IV Promotion of JD

IV.1 Does the national strategy for higher education involve a promotion and an increase of the number of joint degrees?

Table 17

Answer	Score	In %
Yes	9	64,3
No	4	28,6
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

IV.2 Do you have special government funding schemes for the development and implementation of joint degrees?

Table 18

Answer	Score	In %
Yes	5	35,7
no	8	57,1
no answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

IV.3. Do you have public-private partnerships in the financing of joint degrees?

Table 19

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	2	14,3
No	9	64,3
No answer	3	21,4
Total	14	100

IV.4 Are the national student grants or loans in your country portable for mobility purposes?

Table 20

Answer	Score	in %
Yes	11	78,6
No	2	14,3
No answer	1	7,1
Total	14	100

Please, outline from your view the three major concerns in the field of joint degrees as well as realistic scenarios to overcome them:

Table 21

Country	Answer
Poland	<p>GENERAL COMMENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Idea of joint degrees is still not wide spread in Poland. New law on higher education and other regulations as well as promotion of joint degree study programmes should substantially increase the number of students involved in this type of education; It is difficult to say how joint degrees will be recognised on the labour market; There are financial obstacles which made difficult for students to participate in joint degree study programmes. In the moment is difficult to expect special state funds promoting joint degree. Many higher education institutions are interested in development on joint degree study programmes which gives a hope that this form of education becomes popular in Poland in near future.
Cyprus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Quality Assurance</u>: Establishment of mechanisms and transparent procedures for quality assurance and enhancement of access to information regarding the quality of institutions and programmes in participating countries are crucial for quality assurance <u>Curricula</u>: participants in joint degree programmes need to establish mechanisms for better managing any curriculum inconsistencies, safeguarding, thus, the unity and coherence of the joint degree programme as a whole. <u>Adapting to the new culture</u>: Host institutions need to provide assistance to students for easy adaptation to the new culture, avoiding thus, culture shock (i.e. special programmes, mentoring etc.)
Norway	In Norway, there are no legal hindrances for joint degrees, but there are in many other countries.
Sweden	There are no national strategies for the promotion of "real" joint degrees, but in a Government Bill from June 2005 the Government has encouraged the development of joint <u>programmes</u> and <u>courses</u> both nationally and internationally. The major concern for Sweden is the question regarding the issuing of joint degrees in relation to the exercise of state authority as outlined in question I.
Czech Republic	Increase of the number of joint degree programs is one of the priorities of "The Long-Term Plan for Educational, Scientific, Research, Development, Artistic and Other Creative Activities of Higher Education Institutions for 2006 – 2010" issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. And the same priority was also often included into long-term plans of particular HEIs. Ministry set up Development Programs, from which HEIS can gain money for preparing joint degree programs, mobility of students and other developing activities as well.

Country	Answer
	Czech HEIs are also involved in many joint degree programs created within EU programs (Socrates – Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, EU programs for cooperation with non-EU countries etc.).
Italy	<p>a) The 1st experimental phase has been characterised by the fully autonomous initiative of university institutions. There is now a need for some standard typologies defined on the basis of a few general guidelines.</p> <p>b) Quality assurance in the provisions of integrated curricula may be a matter of concern. The experiences carried out within the Erasmus Mundus Programme are especially significant and may help elaborate adequate criteria for quality evaluation and assurance.</p> <p>c) No doubts about the advantages that European H.Ed. institutions have received from their efforts to design and set up joint curricula (universities have progressed considerably in the definition of "European" curricula), but not sufficient data are available on the effectiveness of double/joint degrees from the point of view of their actual spendibility in the labour market, either national or European.</p>
Lithuania	No answer
Austria	<p>Problem of the title and its legal effects → One of the titles concerned should in any case be a national one so that the legal effects can be dependant on it</p> <p>Organizational problems to execute the curriculum → Have to be solved at institutional level.</p> <p>Financial problems for the students → Have to be solved the context of study loans.</p>
Netherlands	No answer
France	<p>✓All Bologna countries should make their own legal framework compatible with joint degrees ;</p> <p>✓In order to facilitate a mutual understanding about joint degrees, a minimum set of common references for the accreditation/evaluation of joint degrees) should be found out in Europe.</p> <p>✓The renewal of joint degrees' accreditation is also an issue to be addressed with a necessary degree of flexibility, meaning that in this case of renewal, each higher education institution needs to alert its partners well in advance and gives the right legal information before the next academic year before students get registered.</p>
Spain	No answer
UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying the legal basis for such awards • The need for clarity between the responsibilities of the various partners • The need for compatibility between institutional and national systems
Germany	Very important is a sufficient quality assurance comprising both the home university and the foreign university involved in a study program.
Lichtenstein	No answer



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ENHANCING EUROPEAN EMPLOYABILITY
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UNIVERSITY OF WALES SWANSEA

Swansea Recommendations

- **Embedding in the Curriculum – Soft/Sector Skills**
 - “Weaving” in Teaching and Learning and Assessment and the Curriculum, and the need for greater transparency which does not obstruct mobility
 - Need for Programme/Degree as well as course/module skill learning outcomes which should involve academic staff and careers service working in teams (QA)
 - European mobility scheme for academic staff and employer to develop innovation for embedding employability

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PRIFYSGOL CYMRU ABERTAWE
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Swansea Recommendations

- **Embedding in the Curriculum – Soft/Sector Skills**
 - 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 examples of good practice across Europe. Recognising the wide diversity of national systems, regional priorities and circumstances and institutional missions, the widest range of method and approaches is to be encouraged

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PRIFYSGOL CYMRU ABERTAWE
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Swansea Recommendations

- **Embedding in the Curriculum – Soft/Sector 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 guidance for students and appropriate staff development for academic and other university staff

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Swansea Recommendations

- **Embedding in the Curriculum – Soft/Sector Skills**
 - 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 institution, the geographical region and national policies. The right links can be built at many levels using Conferences and Seminars, individual contacts, work placements, alumni schemes and faculty or department boards to name but some. Careers services were seen to play a key role in this and it is recommended that such services should be visible and accessible to students, supported by academic and management staff and centrally located

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Swansea Recommendations

- **Links to Industry**
 - HEIs to assist students to recognise and articulate the employability skills developed within the curriculum and in other activities at all three cycles and linked to the Dublin Descriptors/national qualification frameworks and to future CPD needs
 - HEIs to ensure that students receive information and advice on the labour market (all sectors) and career management skills

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Swansea Recommendations

- **Links to Industry**
 - HEIs to develop as many links as possible with industry and other sectors (SME, charity, public sector) e.g. Advisory boards, staff exchanges, work placements/experience in order that students and staff are more aware of the business requirements
 - Flexibility must be maintained to ensure the diversity of learners is accommodated (lifelong learning)

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PRIFYSGOL CYMRU ABERTAWE
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Swansea Recommendations

- **Internationalisation, Including Mobility – Work Placements/Teacher Mobility**
 - Recognising the need to embed all aspects of the Bologna Process. HEIs and Governments should promote a coherent cross-departmental strategic approach and provide incentives for institutions to integrate the international dimension and particularly student mobility in institutional policy and curriculum planning

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PRIFYSGOL CYMRU ABERTAWE
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Swansea Recommendations

- **Internationalisation, Including Mobility – Work Placements/Teacher Mobility**
 - In line with the principles of the European Mobility Charter and with a view to achieving a cultural shift, seek to ensure that quality assurance at all levels (European, national and institutional) includes every aspect of internationalisation and mobility:
 - Recognition
 - Mobility of academic and administrative staff
 - Language skills
 - Information provision
 - High quality management

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BOLOGNA PROCESS OFFICIAL SEMINAR
THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS
***“PUTTING EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA ON THE MAP:
DEVELOPING STRATEGIES FOR ATTRACTIVENESS”***
Athens, 24th -26th June 2006

**TOWARDS THE “EXTERNAL DIMENSION”
STRATEGY**

*Report from the Bologna Seminar
on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process*

Prof. Pavel Zgaga, Rapporteur

Athens, 26th June 2006

A working weekend of the Bologna Process Official Seminar entitled *Putting European Higher Education Area on the map: developing strategies for attractiveness** made another step further in defining “the external dimension of the Bologna Process” and gave new contributions to drafting a strategy on the attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world. Participants coming from Ministries of Higher Education and from higher education institutions of the 25 countries of the Bologna Process (not only European Union countries), representatives of the European Commission as well as representatives of 7 non-European countries (OECD members) and 10 international organisations formed a lively discussion circle which has been broad enough to address issues of the “external dimension” from various relevant angles.

A particular advantage of this seminar lies in the fact that “the Bologna family” has an ample opportunity to present its features, dilemmas and developments to colleagues from other parts of the world as well as to listen to their presentations and comments and to discuss – to their mutual satisfaction – some crucial themes of the internationalisation of higher education of our times.

Thus, this seminar is a true contribution to fulfilling the mandate of Ministers from the Bergen Communiqué:

“The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. Our contribution to achieving education for all should be based on the principle of sustainable development and be in accordance with the ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision of cross-border higher education. We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail.

We see the European Higher Education Area as a partner of higher education systems in other regions of the world, stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between higher education institutions. We underline the importance of intercultural understanding and respect. We look forward to enhancing the understanding of the Bologna Process in other continents by sharing our experiences of reform processes with neighbouring regions. We stress the need for dialogue on issues of mutual interest. We see the need to identify partner regions and intensify the exchange of ideas and experiences with those regions. We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.”

The emerging “external dimension” agenda

The Bologna Process has been a multiple challenge from its beginning; yet it hasn’t been dealing only with new study structures, qualification frameworks and quality assurance systems, recognition issues and employability, but also with defining rather new (and not always clear) phenomena and with adoption of a new language. The new “Bologna” terminology sometimes creates problems in our understanding and

* The seminar was organized by the Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and the Managing Authority of the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training with the collaboration of the Academic Cooperation Association and the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency (Athens, 24 – 26 June, 2006). Organizers intentionally chose these days to make it possible for some participants to also join the OECD Ministerial Conference held on 27 June (or vice versa).

communicating; however, sometimes vague terminology in “European” English – in addition, they are translated and re-translated in various European languages – is only a part of a problem. The fact is that phenomena which we would like to name in order to be able to manage them, live their own dynamic life and don’t allow to close their potential into ready made definitions before they develop this potential to a full extent. Vague terms in our languages are most often a simple result of this trend.

The “*external dimension*” is probably a good case to analyse this – not only linguistic but conceptual – aspect. It started to be used broadly in the “Bologna slang” after the Prague Conference of 2001. However, it is possible to trace its roots in previous documents on higher education in Europe. Discussing the external dimension today and drafting a strategy for the external dimension should take into account previous conceptual developments: either to continue and to expand its logic or to revise it and to change it when necessary.

The story goes back to the previous decade and could be very extensive. Let’s mention only few landmarks in its trajectory. A very clear one can be found within debates on the role of the “*European dimension in higher education*” not less than fifteen years ago: the *Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community* (1991) stated that besides the “European dimension in higher education” there are also “historic linkages and relationships between higher education institutions in the different Member States and various countries of the world”. It was also said that an enhanced role for education and training in the external relations of the Community is evolving for a number of reasons and that there has always been an “*extra-European Community dimension*” in the relationships between higher education institutions. The *Memorandum* gives some important conclusions:

»*While it is vital to the future of the Community that the European dimension in higher education be emphasised and strengthened, this extra-EC dimension is of fundamental importance to an open European Community, deriving strength from cooperation and interaction across the world*”.

Europe must not only strengthen its own identity, but it must do so in a political, economic and cultural equilibrium with the rest of the world«.

As the next landmark we can quote a well known sentence from the *Sorbonne Declaration* (1998): “The international recognition and attractive potential of our systems are directly related to their external and internal readabilities. A system, in which two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate, should be recognized for international comparison and equivalence, seems to emerge”.

In the same line, the language of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999) was already much more direct: “We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European systems of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions«.

Here, the concept of the “external dimension” was not born yet; however, it was certainly conceived. As we can see, during its “pre-natal phase”, both *attractiveness* and *competitiveness* were already pronounced. At the beginning of a new millennium, numerous discussions that accompanied, on one hand, the launching of the Lisbon

strategy (2000-2001) and, on the other hand, the Salamanca European convention of universities (2001) facilitated that during their Prague follow-up meeting (2002)

»Ministers agreed on the importance of enhancing attractiveness of European higher education to students from Europe and other parts of the world. The readability and comparability of European higher education degrees world-wide should be enhanced by the development of a common framework of qualifications, as well as by coherent quality assurance and accreditation / certification mechanisms and by increased information efforts.

Ministers particularly stressed that the quality of higher education and research is and should be an important determinant of Europe's international attractiveness and competitiveness. Ministers agreed that more attention should be paid to the benefit of a European Higher Education Area with institutions and programmes with different profiles. They called for increased collaboration between the European countries concerning the possible implications and perspectives of transnational education.«

In late 2001, fulfilling the ministerial mandate from Prague, the BFUG established a *Working Group on External Dimension*. Now, the expression of "external dimension" started to be used in the "Bologna slang" openly. In its *Conclusions*, the Working Group reported to the BFUG meeting (held in Athens, 20 June 2003 – almost exactly three years ago) that the Berlin communiqué should contain the following elements:

- *»Ministers agree that the attractiveness and openness of the European higher education should be reinforced through cooperation with regions in other parts of the world.*
- *They confirm their readiness to further develop scholarship programmes for students from third countries.*
- *They undertake to win acceptance, within the relevant frameworks, for the need to base all international cooperation as any trade in higher education on academic values and on clear and transparent standards for quality.*
- *They encourage the promotion of the idea and the good practice of the Bologna Process by inviting representatives of other regions of the world to Bologna seminars and conferences«*

Indeed, in Berlin (September 2003), Ministers welcomed "the interest shown by other regions of the world in the development of the European Higher Education Area" and agreed 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". They also declared 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". Last but not least, they encouraged »the co-operation with regions in

other parts of the world by opening Bologna seminars and conferences to representatives of these regions«.

On the other hand, Ministers also agreed on a new rule on applications for membership in the Bologna process: "Countries party to the European Cultural Convention shall be eligible for membership of the European Higher Education Area provided that they at the same time declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education«.

Thus, the »external dimension of the European Higher Education Area« got also an indirect *geographical definition*: it stretches over the external borders of the 45 countries so far.

What is meant by the “external dimension”?

It is not possible to define the “external dimension of the Bologna Process” with a single definition: there are several elements interlinked in this expression. The “new” Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process (established by BFUG in late 2005) has recently identified several horizons or “agendas” in which the “external dimension” appears in Bologna documents:

- (a) *a competitiveness and attractiveness agenda*, which is to result in an inflow of non-European students and scholars into European higher education; complemented by
- (b) *a partnership and cooperation agenda*, in which collaborative activity will democratically benefit both European and non-European higher education, and from which notably commercial motives should be absent (“academic values”);
- (c) *a dialogue approach*, by means of which the EHEA would foster the exchange of experience and ideas on higher education reform issues with representatives of other world regions; and which would develop concrete mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of the “partnership and cooperation agenda” (see b) between the EHEA and the respective country/region;
- (d) *an information (didactic) approach*, by means of which the EHEA would be correctly presented and explained in other world regions.

Therefore, when we refer to the »external dimension of the Bologna Process« we should bear in mind all four »agendas«; yet, it is possible that further one(s) could be also identified.

Participants at this seminar were fully aware of the complexity of the “external dimension”. Some presenters give evidence that the existing national “external dimension” strategies can promote – and in certain cases already promote – the attractiveness of the emerging common European Higher Education Area. However, the “external dimension” strategies at a national level and at a common EHEA level can’t be the same. *The Bologna Process needs a common strategy on the external dimension on top of the national “external dimension” strategies*. Nevertheless, certain hesitation was expressed among some participants that a common EHEA “centre” and/or a common internet portal may widen the already existing gap between countries that are already close to the final goal and those just started on the Bologna road.

On the other side, it was stressed that “internal dimension” and “external dimension” agendas should not be divided, in particular not mechanically. Developing an “external dimension” strategy shouldn’t be a simple repainting of a façade; this would definitively turn foreign students and academics away and jeopardize the “internal dimension” as well. For that reason, reinforcing the “internal dimension” (e.g. transparency, compatibility, quality, recognition etc.) of the Bologna Process is the best approach to strengthen attractiveness of European higher education and its “external dimension” as a whole. Parallels were made also between the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy – not always without polemic elements – that crossed

in various issues dealing with modernisation of European universities and problems of their (under)performance.

One plenary session dealt in full with questions of quality in relation to the “external dimension”. Quality issues were not in very front of the Bologna Process during its first years but after Berlin conference they have deserved a continuously increasing attention. It is interesting to mention that in 2005, two important documents were agreed: one within the Bologna trajectory and the other within the global context.

There are several parallels between the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (adopted in Bergen) and the *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*. These parallels are in particular visible if they are observed in light of the “external dimension”. Both documents are not binding; both aim at voluntary implementation and both have been developed by educational community. Yet, it is particularly important that similar trends that have led individual European national higher education systems towards adopting common “Bologna” standards and guidelines characterise global higher education context as well.

At the seminar, the “external dimension” was considered also in relation to the role of universities and other institutions as well as students. Fast internationalisation of European universities has brought many new opportunities as well as responsibilities. Thus, international strategies entered also institutional agendas. To respond new opportunities, institutions should define strategies that correspond to their specific roles, profiles, ambitions and environments. There is a high consensus among universities that international cooperation brings, first of all, an increased opportunity for mobile students but also benefits for all students studying now in a more international environment. Also here, it is evident that promotion and attractiveness of an individual institution depends mostly on efficient implementation of the “internal dimension”: e.g. quality, transparency, autonomy and funding. In addition, students stress also the specific values of internationalisation like multicultural experience and more rich learning and research environment “affected” by international students, teachers and researchers.

As it was stated in the *Berlin communiqué* that “the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself”; it could be also argued that the primary responsibility for attractiveness of European Higher Education Area lies with higher education institutions themselves. However, it is far better if they act as academic networks that alone, fragmented and separated. Of course, systemic (e.g. legislative) and financial support within national environments is decisive for their success. Yet, there are also other important levers of a successful promotion in a global arena: these are students and their associations (e.g. ESIB, AEGEE, ESN, etc.) as well as international associations (e.g. EAIE, ACA, NAFSA, thematic networks etc.). As it was argued at the seminar, their potential is not fully used yet.

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Seminar

On basis of rich plenary discussions and reports from working groups (these reports include an even more extended list of proposals and recommendations), the following conclusions and recommendations were synthesized:

A) The possible contents of the *external dimension strategy* (in 7 points), drafted by the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process and presented to the participants of the Seminar, is seen as a very good basis for elaboration of “the external strategy for the EHEA”.

B) Further on, BFUG and the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process are asked to consider the following recommendations and to include them into working documents for the London ministerial conference in 2007:

1. *At the competitiveness and attractiveness horizon*, actions should be taken to improve the performance of European higher education. Competitiveness in higher education aims at developing diverse, qualitative, efficient and well performing universities; only such universities can really attract European and international students. Competition should not be necessarily seen in opposition to cooperation: a firm academic cooperation, e.g. through quality networks and projects that strengthen critical mass of higher education institutions, can importantly increase the competitiveness of European higher education as a whole. On the other side, competition in a global context should be also seen as an incentive to further strengthen institutional cooperation.

Concrete measures should be taken to attract international students as for example to organise European higher education fairs and media campaigns on one side as well as to create European study centres and centres of excellence on the other. Good practice from some countries suggests that extra budget provided for international students’ scholarships as well as for accommodation of international students and researchers could slightly improve the existing situation. On the systemic side, a European standard of acceptance for international students should be developed and a code of good conduct for dealing with visa problems. Europe also needs to strengthen its alumni-networks worldwide. Last but not least, a network of ambassadors of European higher education or »Europe promoters« in major third countries could be established.

2. *At the partnership and cooperation horizon*, different aspects and approaches – also the regional ones – have to be developed and supported because Europe is not a homogenous whole and it can’t be understood as such in other world regions. Approaches with the developed world have to differ from approaches to the developing countries. Cooperation with the developing world regions should be based on partnership and solidarity and be considered in particular with the goal of sustainability.

European universities have a long tradition of partnership and cooperation with universities in other parts of the world; today, the European Commission’s programmes (e.g. Erasmus Mundus, Jean Monnet etc.) along the existing national schemes enable universities to open new pages in the history of their international cooperation. Existing networks should be used to connect European Higher education Area and higher education areas in other parts of the world. The creation of consortia

of universities and higher education stakeholder organizations in the EHEA and third countries for systematic and integrated cooperation activity would be an important improvement of existing practices. Activity to take place inside such consortia could be the joint delivery of graduate-level study programmes with integrated mobility phases of study in the other continent (joint and double degrees, etc.), measures aiming at institutional development and capacity building, human resource development, and curriculum development. Joint research activities should be an integral part of this agenda. Last but not least: the complex area of mutual recognition of higher education qualifications within a global context should be also addressed within this horizon.

3. *At the dialogue horizon*, countries of the Bologna Process can share their practice and experiences with other regions of the world which encounter similar challenges and tendencies in the development of higher education systems. Interested countries and/or organizations from abroad should have possibility to join Bologna events and to use European good practices as well as to share their comments and their own good practices in a common global forum. Enhanced cooperation with other world regions can be a new stimulus for a greater integration.

Wherever possible, the policy dialogue should be based on existing fora, such as the EU-LAC Follow-up Committee or the EU-China Policy Dialogue. Policies should be tailor-made for each region and take due account of relevant EU policy (for example the EU Neighbourhood Policy). In addition, new concrete measures can be taken to open further possibilities, e.g. to create a “Bologna Visitor Programme” (to fund participation in selected Bologna-related conferences and seminars in Europe) or a higher education policy forum, involving representatives of European and third-country governments and higher education stakeholders; etc.

4. Last but not least, *at the information horizon*, the establishment of a comprehensive EHEA portal is unanimously recommended, under certain rules and conditions which should be carefully considered and developed. The content should be general and easy to understand. Different target groups (students, academics, policy makers, other higher education stakeholders) should be addressed in different ways. Working Group on the External Dimension could make a first investigation on this issue. Greece, through the Minister of Education, has already expressed its willingness to host such a portal. In addition, a concise description of the Bologna Process for other parts of the world is needed (prepared by the BFUG) as well as a set of Bologna information points could be established worldwide.

A conclusion

At the end, few words for a conclusion: Athens is not a meeting place of an official Bologna seminar for the first time. In February 2003, on the way towards the Berlin Conference, Greece hosted another important Bologna seminar dealing with the *social dimension*. Results of that seminar are obvious and widely known. This time the seminar changed a dimension – the *external dimension* – but participants expressed a hope that results will be influential and lead to success again. To support these hopes and to make them realistic, the future stocktaking exercises should encompass also implementation issues of the foreseen commonly agreed “Bologna external dimension” strategy.

The next opportunity to continue debates on the external dimension of the Bologna Process will be given already at the end of September 2006 – at the Oslo Official Seminar. The Seminar website has been already set up: <http://www.bolognaoslo.com>.

European Presidency Conference

A researchers' labour market: Europe a pole of attraction?

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their Recruitment as a driving force for enhancing career prospects

1 -2 June 2006

Main outcomes of the conference

The discussion on **how to create an attractive and competitive European researchers' labour market** needs to be embedded in the broader policy context, namely the EU's ambitious objective to become the most competitive knowledge based economy by 2010. Much effort and determination will still be needed to achieve the objectives of the Lisbon strategy and the development of the European Research Area.

Many of the discussions at the conference focused on employment in the public sector and at the universities. It is however important to remember that the gap that the Lisbon process is trying to fill is actually a serious shortfall in the beneficial translation of research know-how into enterprise activities.

So it is a gap not in any particular company but of a much more systemic nature, which is made worse, by the tendency that business moves away from Europe as markets start to grow in Asia and as North America continues to offer a better environment for business. The key question is how to create **the conditions** in Europe that will remedy this and how to create the right 'ecosystems'.

Today, the ways in which knowledge is turned into productive jobs require much more cooperation than in the past. This is because of the complexity of the process, and the need to bring products onto the market quickly and flexibly. So we need to establish ecosystems favouring density of actors who reinforce collaboration of knowledge and of ideas, as well as the capacity to implement.

Reference was made to the "Aho Report" which starts by proposing a *Pact between government, industry and public research* and which could be followed as an appropriate model.

There was consensus amongst the three final speakers that:

- We need a **structured process** to make cooperation work well and effectively.
- We need the willingness to **establish the ecosystems** that create jobs which enable a better translation of knowledge. Thus ensuring that when new knowledge is discovered, the resources in place are adequate to ensure the translation.

- The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment as well as all the ongoing work to implement these instruments by all the different actors at Member State level and at the level of the single institutions **are valuable for stimulating this process and make more visible what people are looking for in their careers.**
- There needs to be **evidence that such a process is really in place** for knowing what people want/need from their employment, then to relate this understanding to institutional objectives, then demonstrating to current/potential employees that something is happening.
- **Signing up to the principles of the Charter and Code entails the expression of a commitment to engage in a process towards common objectives**, provided by the principles laid down in the Charter and Code. Signing does not mean to apply every single word. The Charter and Code **are not legally binding texts**; they are the expression of a framework of general principles and they should and will stay like this.
- **The transparency of this process**, published on e.g. internet and **possibly linked to a label does make visible those institutions that implement good practices.** Undersigning organisations, like e.g. universities that make clear that they treat early stage researchers well will tend to attract better students, better researchers and better research co-operations, just as companies that are seen to be good employers attract good employees.
- The importance of **considering researchers, also those in their first phase of research training (doctoral candidates) as “young professionals”** is vital in this whole process. This also refers to **postdocs** – in line with the key message of workshop 5 – **as they are highly qualified researchers** who perform research independently but are often seen as ever-lasting students or cheap labour force.
- The **key-messages** presented as the main outcomes of the discussion in the **different working groups need to be taken further** by all the actors concerned so as to foster debate and introduce the needed changes.
- The many different definitions of “researchers” constitute an obstacle. **Researchers are not well organised, their voices are often not heard.** Consequently, what is needed is one definition for all of Europe what a researcher is and a structure which allows researchers to lobby, to engage in structured dialogue and to better organise themselves.
- The proposal for a European level **researchers’ organisations’ platform** put forward by the Member of the European Parliament, P.E. Locatelli and supported by R. Liberali from the European Commission and A. Dearing as the representative from industry has the potential of contributing to all this.
- Such a **platform** should be created **on the model of an open forum** bringing together industry, universities, researchers’ professional organisations, the social partners, researchers, etc.

- **The structure of the platform should allow for creating the necessary frame** for the much **needed discussion and the structured coordination**. This particularly in view of enhancing the status of researchers in Europe as well as the environment in which they produce, disseminate and transfer knowledge.
- The platform should **contribute to making the quality and variety of work more visible** - based on the examples developed in public and private sector research, thus contributing to the development of one real European labour market for researchers.

The **Austrian Presidency welcomed** the idea to set up a “strong voice for researchers” and expressed hopes that the future Presidencies would take these ideas further.

The conference chair, B. Weitgruber, also **welcomed and supported the key messages** presented in the workshops and ensured that the **outcomes would be fed into the ongoing work of the “Bologna follow-up group”**.

While thanking particularly the European University Association for specifically organising the workshop related to the 3rd cycle, she stressed the importance to continue the work started during this conference as regards **the convergence** of both the development of the **European Research Area and the European Higher Education Area**.

This is particularly relevant in view of the next “Bologna” Ministerial Conference in London, as recommendation related to the 3rd cycle will be an important part of the discussion.

The conference chair reminded all participants that in order to make progress, actions need to be taken further at all levels and **close cooperation between the higher education and research actors needs to be fostered and ensured**:

- At the national level
- At the level of the Steering Group Human Resources and Mobility and the Bologna Follow-up Group
- At the level of the European Commission

Closer cooperation will be the **necessary condition** for the development of the European knowledge area based on the knowledge triangle education, research and innovation.

The conference report including the results of the following 5 conference workshops will be made available at the internet www.eracareersaustria.at/conference in due time:

Summary of the key messages of each of the 5 parallel Workshops

Workshop 1

How to make the European researchers' labour market more attractive and competitive – legal, administrative and financial challenges

In line with the principles laid down in C&C and through a simple and feasible approach:

- *research bodies (including universities) should ensure **coherence between their research agenda and their human and financial resources management**. This includes appropriate funding (national, European), fair redundancy procedures, performance-related assessment systems. National and regional competent authorities need to provide the **appropriate legal framework** and support it through incentives.*
- ***Fair, non discriminating working conditions** (including social security coverage) should be ensured for **ALL researchers**, including doctoral candidates (according to “Bologna definition of 3rd cycle), European and non-European and independently from their legal status.*
- *Different research stakeholders need to become aware and to carry out in depth analysis of **relevant European and national legal provisions** (e.g. Proposal for a Directive on Portability of complementary pension rights, Fixed-Term Directive , entry conditions...) which have an impact on a researcher's career path and career development. **This requires a structured dialogue with competent primarily national authorities.***

Workshop 2

Transparent career appraisal system

- *We recommend the “**Minerva Code**” for good practices in the recruitment and promotion of researchers should be considered and taken up by the EC External Advisory Group on Human Resources and Mobility.*
- *The **peer review system** (and processes) should be **re-designed** to reflect the changing dynamics of the research and innovation system (Knowledge Triangle Concept). It should reflect the multiple research “outputs” now required for a successful research career and appropriate balance between individual & collective appraisal.*
- *Researchers should **take the initiative** in improving transparency in the appraisal process. They should be empowered by the greater clarity to determine their own career progression.*

Workshop 3

The added value of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers: examples of good practice and monitoring models

- A statement from the EC **clarifying** that signing the C & C does not mean full compliance on the moment of signature, but rather is understood as an intention to adhere to the principals expressed in the C & C and importantly indicating that signing up to it **will not be considered an eligibility criterion** for European funding.
- Encourage institutions and firms to create **their individual profile on the basis of the principles of C&C**.
- Find ways of **disseminating the European spirit** represented in C&C on all levels, especially among young researchers, to strengthen the bottom up process.
- **Self assessment** should be used as a monitoring model instead of external control. **Create regular platforms for exchange of best practice** on self assessment to be encouraged by the EC for a national and European audience.

Workshop 4

The European Charter and Code as a label for quality enhancement

- The C&C is a very **useful labelling mechanism for quality enhancement** in human resource management in research.
- The **practical implementation of C&C** will be based on the indication, upon signature (which constitutes a formal commitment) by a research organisation, of the actual level of compliance with the various principles, stressing possible limitations, as well as a roadmap for future improvement. This information should be made public.
- The **procedure to award the label** should be simple, non-bureaucratic, and not involving major additional costs and efforts. This will be **based on a fully transparent self-assessment process based on effectiveness, impact and transparency of the process**. An **internal ombudsperson function** would be advisable. This self-regulatory process should be complemented by an external independent assessment.

Workshop 5

Doctoral candidates as young professionals: funding and supporting mechanisms

- **Doctoral candidates** are researchers engaged in professional research training and they should **receive fair treatment, adequate funding and full social security**. This is still not the case in all countries. There seems to be an increasing tendency in Europe to award grants without any social security.

- Position of a **postdoc researcher is very unstable in Europe**. Postdocs are highly qualified researchers who perform independent research, but are often **seen as ever-lasting students or cheap labour force**. It is important to recognise the value of their work and to improve their long-term career perspectives.
- **Inter-sectorial relationship and mobility between universities and industry** has to be improved. Institutions and governments should develop **clear policies and strategies** to support and increase mobility between universities and industry and vice-versa.



CONGREGATIO
DE INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA

General Conclusions and Propositions

BOLOGNA PROCESS OFFICIAL SEMINAR
30 March – 1 April 2006
Vatican City

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

ORGANIZED BY THE HOLY SEE

IN COLLABORATION WITH:

ASSOCIATION OF RECTORS OF PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITIES

PONTIFICAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES

UNESCO—CEPES

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Persuaded as they were that the external dimension of the Bologna Process must take seriously its responsibility to make the European university attractive to the nations of the continent as well as the rest of the world, the Seminar participants suggested that intelligent marketing strategies be adopted to ensure that this take place.

This Seminar, therefore, proposed that, in creating the European Higher Education Area as a driving force in making Europe strong, stable and sustainable and preparing it to take a leading role in the *world* of higher education, the Ministers at the 2007 London meeting affirm:

- (1) the indispensable and irreplaceable role played by the European university – despite the increasing presence of other delivery systems of education – in contributing to the integration of Europe and the formation of a wisdom society;
- (2) their commitment to the cultural heritage of Europe as a living and expanding tradition which the university receives, enriches and transmits to succeeding generations; moreover, this tradition is rich in humanistic values that support the scientific and technological demands of advanced democratic societies;
- (3) the need to foster increased accessibility in order to increase capacity, without sacrificing excellence, especially in research, an excellence proper not to just a few elite institutions but distributed in numerous centres of excellence in different areas of study and research;
- (4) the core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation/exchange among institutions as necessary components of the European university's competitive advantage in the global marketplace and thus instruments at the service of society;
- (5) the positive value of unity in diversity and diversity in unity as a way to foster interaction, interdisciplinary studies and dialogue among different cultural and religious traditions;
- (6) 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 recognized within the university's programmes and research projects.

If the affirmations of the Seminar are implemented, the EHEA will be in the position to attract the best scholars and students from this continent and around the world.



CONGREGATIO
DE INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA

Final Report

Summary and Synthesis

of the

BOLOGNA PROCESS OFFICIAL SEMINAR

30 March – 1 April 2006

Vatican City

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

ORGANIZED BY THE HOLY SEE

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UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

By Archbishop Dr. J. Michael Miller, CSB, Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education

Introduction

Stimulating lectures, vigorous discussion and lively debate characterized the official Bologna Follow-up Group Seminar on “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”, held at the Vatican from 30 March through 1 April 2006. The Congregation of Catholic Education of the Holy See, hosted this event in collaboration with the Association of Rectors of the Pontifical Roman Universities, the Pontifical Academies of Science, UNESCO-European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES), the Council of Europe, and with the patronage of the European Commission. The generous collaboration and willing cooperation of these various bodies bear witness to the genuine spirit of the Bologna Process. This Process entails more than strengthening structural relationships in the world of European higher education; rather, it is aimed at building bridges, the kind of bridges founded on knowledge and friendship that are enabling significant changes in the continent’s systems of higher education to be smoothly introduced.

As was pointed out several times during the discussion, this Conference took place at a timely moment on the way to the creation of the European Higher Education Area projected for 2010. Moreover, it was held in a fitting place – the Vatican. As is well known, all major European universities in the middle ages – from Oxford, to Paris, to Cologne, to Prague, to Bologna, to Krakow and many others – were established with close ties to the Church, especially to the Holy See.

The initial seminars of the Bologna Follow-up Group dealt for the most part with the practical and organizational matters necessary to launch the Bologna Process. But challenges other than administrative are also on the horizon. This Seminar at the Vatican allowed these challenges to be brought into the open: to make the conversation about educational reform more inclusive, expanding the discussion to include matters often left aside. The time together was well spent. These days provided an opportunity to pose serious questions about the cultural heritage which formed and continues to influence the European university and, in turn, was shaped by that same institution. It was worthwhile to step back from the necessary practical concerns of the Bologna Process and bring to light some of the deeper considerations at the foundation of the hoped-for reform of the European university.

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 organizations, this meeting of minds was successful in achieving the objective set out in the final communiqué released at Bergen, Norway, by the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, in May 2005. That document stated:

The European Higher Education Area must be open and should be attractive to other parts of the world. . . . We reiterate that in international academic cooperation, academic values should prevail. . . . We ask the Follow-up Group to elaborate and agree on a strategy for the external dimension.

The Seminar took to heart the Ministers' mandate and discussed at length ways in which the European university can and should be an increasingly preferred destination of students, scholars and researchers from around the world.

The flow of students, professors and scholars from one country in Europe to another is rising annually, not to mention the increased flow from other continents. The Seminar participants accepted the need for the European university to be ever more competitive in a world where the number of students studying abroad will quadruple within a generation, with 75% of these students coming from India and China.

The participants were also convinced that European centres of higher education, precisely because of their history as guardians of culture and as custodians of academic values, have available the necessary instruments which, if made more widely known and strategically marketed, can give their institutions a genuine competitive advantage in the world of globalized higher education. This awareness of Europe's unique cultural identity and the common academic values embedded in that identity are crucial factors to be taken into account in any future discussion that deals with ways of strengthening the attractiveness of the European university.

Indeed, Europe's future – in the economic, political, social, cultural and spiritual domains – is inextricably linked to the flourishing of its universities. A common European destiny, one open to the rest of the world, cannot be forged unless universities play their role. The heritage and values of the European university underlie and inform the continent's destiny.

I. Synthesis of Major Themes

The Bologna Follow-up Seminar at the Vatican recognized that the process of globalization is accompanied by increasing competition, interconnection and

interdependence among the continent's tertiary educational institutions. Europe cannot turn in on itself if it wishes to play a leading role in the world of higher education in the future. From the outset, European universities were "international" institutions to which students from various nations went to study and to which academics travelled great distances to pursue their scholarship. Today new challenges face the European university: the integration of the world economy, the competition of the open market, mass culture, the desire for lifelong education, pressures for increased enrollment and sophisticated technology – to name just a few. To ensure that European universities maintain their competitive advantage in tomorrow's world, many speakers pointed to their distinctive, if not unique, qualities. This led to discussion on the nature of the European university: its identity as an institution which embodies the continent's memory, houses its intellectual curiosity and shapes its future. Some participants expressed concern about the university's ability to find fresh and creative ways to hand on the core of this heritage, a patrimony which is a living tradition ever seeking new structures and forms for transmitting it to future generations.

1. Europe's Cultural Heritage

In its first session the Seminar looked to the past, to the formation of the European university in its particular historical and cultural context, in order to have a clear idea of its identity as an institution intimately related to the continent's culture. The cultural patrimony of Europe – rooted in traditions of faith, primarily Christianity and Judaism, and to a lesser extent Islam – especially as that heritage has been received and enriched in the university and continues to be fostered there, must be taken into account in constructing a European Higher Education Area which will interact positively and constructively with other parts of the world.

The European university, in the many forms it has assumed over the centuries, has directly or indirectly influenced the development of systems of higher education in nearly every part of the world. If it is to continue to live up to this vocation, the European university must be well rooted in its own identity, one bequeathed to it by its own history. Thus, in the course of this conference, the participants discussed the specific cultural patrimony of the European university as the foundation for securing its identity so that this institution can be increasingly attractive to students, professors and researchers from around the world and so that it can more readily foster international cooperation among institutions of higher learning.

In his welcoming address, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, Prefect of the Congregation of Catholic Education – the Holy See’s ministry of education – recalled that, from its origins, the European university has been characterized by its passion for truth, a passion which opens ever new horizons, upholds the discipline of reason, and seeks to integrate the various branches of knowledge into a higher wisdom. The mediaeval tradition of the *lectio*, *disputatio* and *summa* reflected the university’s confidence in pursuing every path of knowledge, a search rooted in tradition but always open to the future. Universities everywhere fostered creativity in their study and research, without breaking the unity of faith and reason, and encouraged striving for the unity of knowledge, while respecting the specific epistemology of the various disciplines.

Except for the Church, no institution has contributed more to the development of each nation’s culture than the university whose roots are anchored in early medieval Europe and whose initial legitimation entailed, among other factors, juridical recognition by the Holy See. Particularly significant in the origin of the European university is the role played by the Benedictine monks. Their motto *ora et labora* inspired the insight that learning and action belong together, indeed in the same person and institution, a principal one of which was the university.

Many speakers mentioned the birth of humanism in the European university, a humanism that recognized and promoted values integral to higher education: the inalienable dignity of the human person, the role of reason and science in fostering a more just world, respect for empirical knowledge, belief in progress and the conviction that the search for truth included the study of theoretical questions without any concern for immediate practical application. The European tradition of higher education provided the foundation of modern science and fostered a humanism in which the human person was at the centre of every formative process and the common good was the measure of every research endeavour.

At various points different speakers drew attention to dimensions of the cultural heritage of the European university which were less directly related to its specifically intellectual contributions. Student access to university (Europe, for the most part, lags far behind Japan and the United States in the number of university-age students enrolled in institutions of higher education) and lifelong learning fit into this category. Both of these are themselves grounded, however, in an anthropological vision, nurtured by humanism, which recognizes the dignity and rights of the person

and the social value of ensuring the development of each individual's potential.

2. Academic Values of the Contemporary European University

The Seminar's second principal area of discussion focussed on the European university as the origin and bearer of specific academic values in the world of higher education, a heritage to be preserved, fostered, and sometimes purified. These values, the most important of which were present from the university's foundation, form a bridge not only between institutions in Europe but also with those in the rest of the world. As several interventions emphasized, universities are places where common values are promoted through teaching and research. These values affect not only the academic community itself – such as scholarly integrity and common standards – but also society as a whole. The Seminar participants judged that greater attention must be given to these academic values as the Bologna Process moves into the final stages of implementing the European Higher Education Area.

Within the European university, institutional autonomy and academic freedom are the specific ways in which freedom of expression and association are guaranteed, while collegial governance is the Academy's specific expression of subsidiarity, interdisciplinarity is its ongoing challenge and respectful dialogue is its mode of conversation. The university's institutional autonomy entails the right to establish institutions of higher learning and for them to be free from undue State intrusion. Many participants noted that, despite the reluctance to discuss academic values or attempts to reduce them to merely procedural issues, the European university has a patrimony of values which both establishes its identity and enables it to make a significant contribution to higher education worldwide.

2.1 Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom

The institutional autonomy of the European university is an essential academic value to be vigorously reaffirmed. At the same time, however, this traditional autonomy might well profit from new ways of explaining it to the various stakeholders involved in higher education.

Proper to a university's institutional autonomy is the guarantee of academic freedom that it offers to the academic community. In the great European tradition, freedom of research and teaching are recognized and respected according to the principles and methods of each specific discipline, protecting the rights of individual professors by means of peer review and due process. Academic freedom guarantees that scholars may search for the truth wherever analysis and evidence lead them.

Moreover, it also ensures that professors may teach and publish the results of this research, provided that they keep in mind the need to safeguard the common good of the various communities of which the university forms an integral part. Academic freedom is not only freedom *from* undue constraint and interference of extrinsic authority, but also freedom *for* service to the wider society.

As part of its long-range strategy for furthering its competitive advantage, the European university should ensure that all teachers are accorded a lawful freedom of inquiry and of thought: that they are freed to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence.

In the past, totalitarian regimes of Left and Right often threatened both institutional autonomy and academic freedom. Sadly, at times the European university itself has complied with such bullying and pressure, thereby compromising its institutional autonomy and the academic freedom of the professoriate. As more than one intervention noted, threats to the university's institutional autonomy still exist. Today they usually come from non-political quarters, such as market forces, advanced technology or the widespread cultural presupposition that regards teachers and researchers as "producers" and students as "consumers" of information and knowledge.

2.2 Collegiality

Another important value integral to the university is one bequeathed to it from its origin in the guilds and corporations of medieval Europe. Within that hierarchical world, the corporative structures of the university were nonetheless guaranteed. In the second session the university was often referred to as a particular kind of *community*. It is collegial in its internal governance, which includes students as stakeholders, and it fosters respectful dialogue between students and teachers and among scholars themselves. Yet, much to the detriment of the university, this value of community is endangered today. A major threat comes from the enormous size of many European campuses, which make collegial governance and the fostering of a community of learning and scholarship very difficult. This growth is frequently abetted by State-planned demands for increased enrollment of university-age young men and women. Other challenges are presented by the inordinate proliferation of tertiary educational institutions in Europe – many of which are narrowly focussed on professional training alone – and by the imposition of models of decision making and governance taken from the world of business. These latter models stress efficiency and speed over the

participation and thoughtful reflection of stakeholders, a value prized by the European university from its beginning.

The participants also emphasised the strategic importance of academic values not only within the university but for society as a whole. Academic values are to be considered among a society's most precious cultural values. In particular, they affirmed, the search for truth, a necessary factor in any broad cultural context, cannot be laid aside in favour of teaching and applied research aimed only at short-term benefits.

2.3 Interdisciplinarity and Synthesis of Knowledge

In his introduction to the second session Mr. Jan Sadlak spoke about the vocation of the European university as an open forum – an agora – where scholars from all disciplines can actively meet and discuss their ideas with one another. While honouring the integrity and method of each academic discipline, interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary conversations based on a common search for truth enrich the university, enabling it to become a community of wisdom rather than a cacophony of competing individual voices. It is precisely as a community that the university best contributes to the common good.

One practical consequence of insisting on interdisciplinary dialogue is the space it creates within the university community for meeting the challenges posed by the increasing fragmentation of knowledge. In many instances, institutions produce a high level of compartmentalized information but demonstrate little capacity for synthesis which involved different disciplines. Indeed, the possibility exists that the university will become a complex group of academic areas that produce factual results which, in the end, are unrelated. Whenever this is the case, the university can offer an adequate professional formation for the immediate needs of the job market, but it will be unable to fulfill its traditional responsibility of providing for the rich and full human formation of its students and professors, handing on to them the patrimony of ideals and values that have shaped the continent.

According to several speakers, Europe's universities, in line with their origins and heritage, cannot abandon the challenging task of integrating knowledge from different disciplines. This is an ever more difficult undertaking, given contemporary scepticism about the possibility of such an endeavour, coupled with the explosion of information now made available to anyone connected to the internet. Nonetheless, the European university has the task of fostering a synthesis of knowledge, resisting its

fragmentation into merely quantifiable information serving narrow – and, frequently – economic interests.

As well as fostering this horizontal interdisciplinarity, which relates the various disciplines, the European university should also promote what is called vertical interdisciplinarity. Such verticality engages the academic community in a constant effort to determine the relative place and meaning of each of the various disciplines within the context of a vision of the human person and the world inspired by transcendent values. An organic vision of reality, a higher synthesis of knowledge, is what the participants of this Seminar vigorously proposed as a worthy purpose of the European university.

2.4 Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue

Interventions and discussion pointed to yet another academic value which, if fostered in the European Higher Education Area, would serve to attract and retain high quality students, teachers and researchers: intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The Seminar participants were convinced that the increasing pluralism of European societies and the process of globalization have brought intercultural and interreligious dialogue to the fore as concerns of institutions of higher learning. Such topics cannot be taboo in the university. Indeed, it was asserted that the ability of Europe's universities to attract students and professors in the future will depend to no small extent on how well they foster such dialogue in their communities and in society at large. Dialogue is an intrinsic academic value, an essential factor of Europe's heritage, that the university aims, as John Henry Newman wrote, "to effect the intercommunion of one and all?"¹

It belongs now, as in the past, for the European university to develop culture through its research, to help pass on its local culture to each succeeding generation through its teaching, and to foster cultural activities in diverse ways. As a learning community, the university is open to all human experience and is always ready to dialogue with and learn from any culture. Given today's circumstances, the European university must become more attentive to those students and scholars who come from different cultural backgrounds. In this way it can promote a profitable dialogue within contemporary society and receive those from other cultures who wish to study and

¹ John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1931), 457.

carry out research in the countries which adhere to the Bologna Process.

In the climate of increased cultural and religious pluralism that increasingly marks Europe at the beginning of the 21st century, it is clear that this dialogue will be a crucial element in establishing a sure basis for political and economic stability and warding off the dread spectre of wars of religion which, in the past, have stained the continent's history. The Seminar participants agreed that the European university, precisely as a community of scholars, cannot remain on the sidelines of intercultural dialogue and its sister, interreligious dialogue. A university's identity, whatever its particular inspiration, is strengthened when it fosters interreligious dialogue by introducing students to unfamiliar religious traditions and by encouraging research in this field. The way of dialogue is the way of the European university.

Respectful conversation and reasonable discourse enable the academic community to be enriched by the insights of others and challenged by their questions, as well as to deepen their own convictions. Within Europe's universities such dialogue involves respect, esteem, and hospitality toward those of other religions. Every university, which receives students of all faiths, should honour their identity, modes of expression and values.

3. Role of the University in Constructing Europe

The Seminar's third session, which took place at the Matteo Ricci Centre at the Pontifical Gregorian University, concentrated on the cultural legitimacy of the university and its role in constructing the new Europe. It moved discussion from the *identity* of the European university to that of its *mission* in building Europe. In "constructing" Europe, it was said, a blind eye cannot be turned to the rest of the world, leading the continent to recoil upon itself in splendid isolation. Rather, it was pointed out, Europe and its universities have developed a strong respect for unity in diversity and diversity in unity, for openness to the rest of the world, without compromising their own identity.

If European institutions of higher education continue to embody and foster their heritage, they will play a crucial role in building a Higher Education Area that will be fascinating and attractive to those from other regions. Indeed, universities can contribute to overcoming that sense of malaise in Europe about the continent's future – a malaise that is unappealing to those from abroad. If, however, European institutions of higher learning fail in this regard, they will no longer be beacons for students and scholars from the continent and around the world but a fossil unable to

recruit the best minds. Europe's spiritual and economic vitality depends on the ability of its universities to adapt to new situations, while at the same time retaining the values that have made them great and universally admired.

Participants noted that research and new discoveries must be used for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole. Universities are immersed in culture – both integrating it into their own life as well as fostering its particular values. Their vocation is to be effective instruments of cultural progress. This means that, to remain creatively faithful and attractive in the future, the university's research activities should pay serious attention to contemporary problems in areas such as the dignity of human life, the protection of the environment, the search for peace and a political order that will better serve the human community, and the promotion of justice that will foster a more equitable sharing in the world's resources.

The Seminar dedicated some discussion to the pressing question of scientific research and ethical responsibility. Unfortunately, as Peter Scott recently remarked, and his observation was echoed in different ways by many Seminar participants, “ethical issues are in danger of becoming second-order issues in the modern university – or, to be more accurate, ethical issues have tended to be redefined as essentially procedural issues rather than as fundamental issues directly connected to the core mission of the university. This shift can easily be observed in the context of research. Research ethics are no longer debated in terms of the morality of military or commercial sponsorship of research programmes; . . . Instead research ethics concentrate on much narrower, often technical, issues such as exposing research malpractice and upholding the rigour of research methodologies (including the need to avoid exploitation of, or unnecessary intrusion into the lives of, research subjects)”.²

The Seminar participants, however, maintained that scientific research in the European university should always be carried out with a concern for the ethical and moral implications both of its methods and of its discoveries. In reaching this conclusion they affirmed, albeit implicitly, what Pope John Paul II said in his address to UNESCO in 1980: “It is essential that we be convinced of the priority of the ethical over the technical, of the primacy of the person over things, of the superiority of the

² Peter Scott, “Ethics ‘in’ and ‘for’ Higher Education,” *Higher Education in Europe*, 29:4 (December 2004), 439-440).

spirit over matter. The cause of the human person will only be served if knowledge is joined to conscience. Men and women of science will truly aid humanity only if they preserve ‘the sense of the transcendence of the human person over the world and of God over the human person’”.³

The flourishing of the European university will depend on its ability to reclaim the ethical high ground in its research and programmes.

II. Recommendations of Discussion Groups

The participants in this Seminar were convinced that the commitment of the Bologna Process to strengthening the external dimension of European higher education depends in large measure on reaffirming the relationship between Europe’s cultural heritage and its universities and on fostering the university’s common academic values.

In the sections which follow the salient conclusions of the Seminar’s six discussion groups on the four different topics are presented, as they were submitted at the Seminar’s final meeting on 1 April 2006.

1. Basic Values of Academic Freedom

The observations and conclusions included the following points:

- Academic freedom is essential for the development of knowledge and the pursuit of the university’s goals. Academic freedom has, however, some limitations. The first comes from the fundamental or basic values fostered by the university. Academic freedom cannot in any way undermine these values. The second limit comes from the needs expressed by students. Teachers must serve these needs, but they cannot forget that the university is a place where different opinions can and should be expressed. Moreover, academic freedom means that within the university there is an unqualified orientation to truth and reason, which cannot yield to militant expressions. Indeed, it is reasonable discourse that gives the university its rightful role in society.
- Academic freedom should not be understood in a merely defensive way, as freedom *from*. Indeed, a positive understanding of academic freedom underpins the university, a freedom *for*. This latter freedom links academic freedom to responsibility: responsibility to the academic community as well as

³ John Paul II, Address at UNESCO (2 June 1980), 22: AAS 72 (1980), 750.

to society at large. True knowledge – fundamental knowledge as well as practising knowledge (professions) – has always been intertwined with human virtue.

- The mission of the university should be understood as one that is *sui generis*. It cannot and should not be subjected to external pressures of an ideological, political or economic nature. The European university's institutional autonomy, as elaborated in the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988), is still the most central value to be protected, developed and promoted.
- Genuine concern about academic freedom exists because of the power that can be exerted by interests external to the university community. The extent of such pressure is a matter of debate. Realism demands that the European university take account of the way in which universities are financed, with all that entails.
- Today the main threat to academic freedom and related values seems to be the “commodification” of higher education and the increasingly instrumental treatment or narrowing of the university's traditional academic mission. This threat is frequently linked to globalization – a process with both distinctively negative but also positive consequences.
- The way in which academic freedom is practised differs to some degree according to the place where the university is located. In this regard, a distinction must be made between academic freedom and institutional autonomy. This autonomy ought to be fostered by governments themselves and by members of the academic community who work at the national level and define the institution's orientation. However, the university should neither shut itself in an ivory tower nor be absorbed by the State. Institutional autonomy remains a challenge to teachers and students, since it is the framework within which every university carries out its responsibility for intellectual formation and research.
- The university's institutional autonomy is not an end in itself. It guarantees a self-critical approach to teaching and research but, at the same time, it also enables the university to contribute to the defence and development of human dignity and society's cultural heritage.
- Today, no less than in earlier times, universities should provide intellectual leadership and critical reflection of society. They should transcend routine

instrumental knowledge and reaffirm the importance of permanent questioning and human wisdom built on the solid foundation of previous generations. The extent of this contribution can be evaluated by others, and the university should accept this need to be accountable to stakeholders external to itself, provided that its academic freedom and institutional autonomy are not compromised.

- The time has arrived to make academic values more visible on the Bologna agenda. Until the meeting in Bergen, structural issues dominated the concerns of the Process, but now that the *Bologna tools* have been for the most part finalised, the focus can now shift to *Bologna values*. Without a clear understanding of the values that characterise the European university, it will be impossible to make the case for the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

2. Foundations for Interdisciplinary Dialogue

- The observations and conclusions of the second discussion group included the following points.
- Interdisciplinary studies and dialogue need to be encouraged as a means of fostering communication among academic disciplines that are in danger of fragmentation and isolation. Such studies can offer students and faculty precious opportunities to broaden their horizons and supplement their limited and/or specialised knowledge.
- Interdisciplinary work has a crucial role to play in raising and investigating larger questions of meaning, values and ethical responsibility in society. Perhaps the most important contribution of interdisciplinary studies, from a social perspective, is how it fosters ethical analysis and the responsible use of knowledge.
- Interdisciplinary studies are valued by employers who hope for and expect employees to have a broad and basic knowledge, as well as that in a more specific area of competence. Moreover, some very specialised training is better left to companies to provide. The university cannot and should not try to prepare its graduates for the competencies demanded by every future job. On the other hand, only universities can give the broadly humanistic formation so integral to the European cultural legacy.
- Interdisciplinary studies could be fostered by the reintroduction of the “liberal arts” and “core” humanistic programmes as part of every university curriculum. In this way the integration of knowledge would be promoted. A broader

curriculum is especially necessary in view of the generally lower level of cultural and historical awareness on the part of incoming students, compared to those of thirty or forty years ago.

- The call for a renewed emphasis on humanistic and ethical studies confronts what appears to be a limitation of the Bologna Process; namely, that its emphasis to date has been on professional competence and competitiveness, on training students effectively in their narrow fields. It is necessary to broaden this perspective so that interdisciplinary studies, the liberal arts, and a mere reflective, “philosophical” approach to learning can take their rightful place. The participants in the group discussion were convinced of the need to persuade both politicians and academic leaders, as well as students themselves, of the value of interdisciplinary learning so that all graduates have some familiarity with the ethical, philosophical and religious questions that touch upon their specific area of study and society’s future welfare.
- The promotion of interdisciplinary research and dialogue is key to the mission of today’s European university and necessary to its continued appeal. This interdisciplinary approach is demanded for three reasons: anthropologically, by the unity and integrity of human being; socially, by the interdependence of the various components of society; and ethically, by the need to foster values of responsibility, solidarity and critical thinking.

3. Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue

The conclusions of the two discussion groups included the following observations.

- While taking into account the differences between the two types of dialogue, certain threats that affect them can be identified:
 - (i) the growth of professional and economic competitiveness among students themselves and the fact that such motivations often prevail over all other considerations; unemployment which constitutes a barrier between cultures; the privatisation of educational systems which increasingly affects the quality of teaching and its “free” transmission of cultural and religious values;
 - (ii) the widespread ignorance of other cultures and religions is often coupled with a superiority complex and nationalistic attitude within European institutions;
 - (iii) the widespread social acceptance of the logic subsequent to 9/11 and the growth of confrontational ideas concerning the relationship of the two principal civilizations; the confusion between religion and capitalism on the one hand,

- and religion and fanatical terrorism on the other;
- (iv) the great majority of young people are victims of a kind of spiritual schizophrenia when faced with the low intellectual level of school text books which treat religion and the experienced richness of their own cultural heritage;
- (v) on a practical level, the lack of scholarships and the administrative difficulties often entailed in recognizing studies and diplomas acquired elsewhere inhibit the possibility of religious and cultural dialogue.
- Through its academic activities, the university can contribute to dialogue between cultures and religions in the following ways:
 - (i) sponsoring conferences and colloquia among professors;
 - (ii) introducing into the curriculum programmes which provide a systematic introduction to different religious traditions and to theoretical models of cooperation between religions;
 - (iii) fostering, as properly educational objectives, values such as solidarity and peace;
 - (iv) providing curricular opportunities for students to understand cultural and religious differences which go beyond the use of speculative reason to include, for example, the aesthetic.
 - The university can help in the discernment of values present in different cultures and religions by:
 - (i) drawing up a common charter of values which ought to animate the university as such;
 - (ii) studying the foundations of cultural and religious traditions so as to open ways for other, complementary expressions;
 - (iii) identifying positively the universal values present in different cultures.

It is crucial that the university encourage dialogue at all levels. Nor can it ignore that religion is an integrating and integral element in culture and it belongs to the academic community as a proper object of study.
 - The challenge for the European university is to integrate individuals and groups coming from non-European countries and/or from different religious traditions. The university must create suitable structures of welcome which will enable students to be truly immersed in their new environment. Special attention must be given to the “person” of the foreign student who must be accorded the possibility of mixing with the host culture. At the same time they

must also have the opportunity of sharing their own cultural and religious traditions with those in the receiving country – a sharing which allows mutual enrichment to take place.

- In order to promote dialogue between cultures and religions, the European university should promote student mobility, including that of theology students, and it should set up clear quantitative and qualitative goals in this regard.
- Fostering intercultural and interreligious dialogue depends on learning well the language, culture and history of the host country; further efforts by the European university are required in this area.

4. Scientific Research and Ethical Responsibility

The observations of group four included the following points.

- The scientific method is based on analysis, synthesis and the ability to duplicate what has been analysed. Since such reproduction is not always possible, scientists must accept the principle of probability. Consequently, they have no right to be dogmatic in their assertions.
- Despite this element of probability, scientists have the obligation to carry out further research. They must do so in an ethical way; but, to do that, they need freedom to conduct their research. At the same time, suitable controls should be in place to guide ethically their applied research.
- The European university should stand for certain values, since moral relativism can become a dictatorship which makes dialogue impossible. Society has the right to provide ethical guidelines for scientific research. Indeed, it is these very values that make the European university attractive to scholars and students.
- In the area of research, ethical guidelines are not to be identified with legal prescriptions. Rather, they are founded on the inviolable dignity and ultimate truth of the human person. The contribution of religion to an ethics based on reason should not be understood as an undue imposition but as a service to the dignity of the human person.
- In the European university, authorities should create appropriate ethical committees that oversee scientific research and include the teaching of ethics in the curriculum.

General Conclusions

Persuaded as they were that the external dimension of the Bologna Process must take seriously its responsibility to make the European university attractive to the nations of the continent as well as the rest of the world, the Seminar participants suggested that intelligent marketing strategies be adopted to ensure that this take place.

This Seminar, therefore, proposed that, in creating the European Higher Education Area as a driving force in making Europe strong, stable and sustainable and preparing it to take a leading role in the *world* of higher education, the Ministers at the 2007 London meeting affirm:

- (1) the indispensable and irreplaceable role played by the European university – despite the increasing presence of other delivery systems of education – in contributing to the integration of Europe and the formation of a wisdom society;
- (2) their commitment to the cultural heritage of Europe as a living and expanding tradition which the university receives, enriches and transmits to succeeding generations; moreover, this tradition is rich in humanistic values that support the scientific and technological demands of advanced democratic societies;
- (3) the need to foster increased accessibility in order to increase capacity, without sacrificing excellence, especially in research, an excellence proper not to just a few elite institutions but distributed in numerous centres of excellence in different areas of study and research;
- (4) the core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation/exchange among institutions as necessary components of the European university's competitive advantage in the global marketplace and thus instruments at the service of society;
- (5) the positive value of unity in diversity and diversity in unity as a way to foster interaction, interdisciplinary studies and dialogue among different cultural and religious traditions;
- (6) 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 recognized within the university's programmes and research projects.

The Chair added a final personal recommendation which met (laughingly) with the Seminar's approval: that, given the frequency of citations by various speakers to John Henry Newman, every Minister and staff member entrusted with developing and implementing the strategies for creating the European Higher Education Area be required to purchase and read *The Idea of a University!*

If the affirmations of the Seminar are implemented, the EHEA will be in the position to attract the best scholars and students from this continent and around the world.

+J. Michael Miller, CSB
Secretary
Congregation for Catholic Education