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Higher Education and the Bologna Process
Role of Student Bologna Experts

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Dublin Institute of Technology

Madrid April 2013
Commencement

• Bologna Declaration signed in June 1999 by Ministers for Education of 29 countries
• Included all EU countries (then 15)
• Overall aim was a coherent European Higher Education Area by 2010
• Although noting the autonomy of universities, this was a reform process led by Ministers
Objectives

• A system of easily readable and comparable degrees
• Adoption of system based on two cycles, undergraduate and graduate
• A system of credits such as ECTS
• Promotion of mobility
• European co-operation in QA
• Promotion of European Dimension in HE
Other Objectives

• Introduction of shorter cycle Bachelor degrees in countries where they were not a feature e.g. Germany, Italy
• Improved competitive position vis a vis USA in attracting non-European students
• Bachelor degree to be relevant to European labour market
Prague Communiqué, 2001

• Now 32 countries in process
• Three new points added:
  - Need for Lifelong Learning Policies
  - Role of students and student representative bodies
  - Importance of enhancing attractiveness of European HE to students from Europe and other parts of world
Berlin Communique, 2003

- Membership now 40 countries including Russia
- Set objectives for next 2 years for:
  - Quality Assurance
  - Degree Structure: all countries to have 2-cycle system by 2005
  - Diploma Supplement to be issued to all
- Recognised Doctoral level as 3rd Cycle
Bergen Communique, 2005

• Five new members, total now 45
• Commitment to adoption of national frameworks of qualifications by 2010
• Adoption of standards and guidelines for QA
• Urged action on recognition of degrees and study periods
• Emphasised importance of research and structured doctoral programmes
London Communique, 2007

- Reviewed progress on mobility, degree structure, recognition, Qualification Frameworks (latter to be completed by 2010)
- Sought to align Bologna with European Research Area
- Set priorities for 2007-09 to complete 3-cycle system, QA and recognition
- Requested more work on data collection, mobility, employability and stock-taking
Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009

• 46 countries participated
• Delegates from 15 non-participating countries included China, Japan, USA.
• Emphasised need to widen participation in HE via Lifelong Learning including part-time studies and Work-Based Learning
• Development of NFQ and compatibility with over-arching Framework by 2012
• Next meetings arranged for Bucharest 2012 then 2015, 2018, 2020
Budapest Vienna Declaration 2010

• Welcomed Kazakhstan as new member

• Launched the EHEA as envisaged in Bologna Declaration

• Cited Bologna Process as an unprecedented example of regional, cross-border cooperation in higher education that made European Higher Education more visible on global map.

• Recommitted to academic freedom as well autonomy and accountability as principles of EHEA.
Budapest-Vienna 2

• Acknowledged the key role of institutional leaders and teachers, researchers and administrative staff and students in making EHEA a reality. They fully supported staff and student participated in decision-making structures.

• Re-affirmed that higher education is a public responsibility and is a major driver for social and economic development and for innovation.

• Asked the Bologna Follow-Up Group to propose measures to facilitate full implementation of Bologna principles including peer learning and study visits.

• New website www.ehea/info/
Ministers agreed to focus on 3 main goals:

• To provide quality higher education to more students
• To better equip students with employable skills
• To increase student mobility (at least 20% of European graduates in 2020 should have been on a study or training period abroad)
National Qualification Frameworks

• All countries were supposed to publish NFQ by 2010 but some slippage
• NFQ must be compatible with Bologna Framework; Ireland was first to demonstrate this (in 2006)
• NFQ must also be compatible with EQF
• NFQ benefits learners by making explicit where qualifications stand
Frameworks of Qualifications

**EQF and Bologna Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQF Levels</th>
<th>Bologna Framework</th>
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Ireland’s NFQ: Titles of Awards

Level

10 – Doctoral Degree
9 – Master’s Degree & Post-graduate Diploma
8 – Honours Bachelor Degree & Higher Diploma
7 – Ordinary Bachelor Degree
6 – Advanced Certificate & Higher Certificate
5 – Level 5 Certificate
4/5 – Leaving Certificate
4 – Level 4 Certificate
3 – Level 3 Certificate & Junior Certificate
2 – Level 2 Certificate
1 – Level 1 Certificate
The National Framework of Qualifications – award-types and awarding bodies
Bologna Process: Participating countries

Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belgium
Bosnia-Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Holy See
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Kazakhstan
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Moldova
Montenegro
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
"the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom
Impact of Major Initiatives

• The Bologna Process has had major impact in the areas of:
  • Degree Structures
  • A System of Credits (ECTS)
  • Quality Assurance
  • Student Mobility
  • National Qualifications Frameworks
  • Recognition of Qualifications
Degree Structures

• Implementation of a structure of degrees at Bachelor, Master’s and Doctoral level hugely important
• It did not involve much change for UK or Ireland
• It helps to provide a transparent system for learners, especially those outside Europe
• It aids transferability and mobility
Quality Assurance

• Bologna Process has led to the agreement of Standards & Guidelines for QA in Europe
• ESG now being revised
• There is now a European QA Register for Higher Education
• Irish Higher Education Quality Network established to share best practice [HEA, IUQB, DIT, HETAC, USI, DES]
Student Mobility

• BP facilitated greater mobility by students
• Easier to transfer credits when all HEIs use the same system (ECTS)
• Mutual recognition of awards makes it easier for students to move
• New target for mobility is 20% of all graduates to have studied abroad for at least part of programme by 2020 (very challenging for many countries)
Recognition

- Within countries, NFQ is an important tool of recognition of learning
- Between countries, compatibility of frameworks with EQF and Bologna framework is an aid to recognition
- Diploma Supplements for all graduates are meant to aid recognition of awards throughout Bologna region (47 countries)
- Lisbon Recognition Convention sought to allow professionals to practise in other countries. New unit in many countries to assist those seeking recognition.
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<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
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Student Role at International Level

• Critical role of the four Es:
  - ENQA (European Association of QA)
  - EUA (European Universities Association)
  - EuraShe (European Association for Institutions in Higher Education)
  - ESU (European Students Union)

• Liaise with four Es to ensure full student participation in all Bologna initiatives
Student Role at National Level

- Membership of higher education funding/policy body
- Membership of National Bologna Committee
- Membership of national QA agency
- Membership of higher education quality network (see www.iheqn.ie)
- Ensure students union fully involved
Student Role at Institutional Level

• Membership of Governing Body of university
• Membership of Academic Council/Senate
• Membership of QA Committee
• Membership of programme review panels and institutional review panels
• Student Bologna Experts to work with students’ union to ensure participation
Student Role at Programme and School Level

• Appointment of class representatives
• Training of class representatives
• Membership of programme committees for speedy resolution of problems
Role of Student Bologna Experts

- Ensure student interests are represented at international, national, institutional and programme/school level
- Ensure that student issues are considered by national teams of Bologna Experts
- Ensure student representatives are trained for their roles
- Establish good contacts with employer bodies and other stakeholders
Possible Future Developments

- New objectives flagged at Leuven/Louvain
- Issues include Access, LLL, Employability, Student-centred learning, Research, Mobility, Funding, Better Career Services
- Access Targets; a National Access Office to set targets and monitor
- LLL: to be an integral part of education systems; requires strong partnerships with employers; see EUA Charter on LLL
- Employability improved by work placements: relations with employer bodies
Useful websites

• Bologna Communiques: www.ehea.info/
• NFQ: www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/
• HEA website: www.eurireland.ie
• ESU: Bologna With Student Eyes 2007, 2009 and 2012 on www.esu-online.org/
• Irish Higher Education Quality Network www.iheqnn.ie/publications/
Questions

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