

bologna process

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1. Main achievements since Berlin

1.1. Give a brief description of important developments, including legislative reforms

- On 18 December 2003 the House of Representatives approved the law which governs the establishment of the Technological University of Cyprus. The Interim Governing Board of the University was appointed in March 2004, by the Council of Ministers and is taking the necessary measures for the establishment of the University. According to the law, the University will include the fields of study already existing in public institutions of higher education (HTI, HHIC and others) with the possibility of future development and probably the establishment of additional faculties. The Technological University of Cyprus is expected to commence operation with the following faculties: Technological Applications, Health Services, Administration and Finance, Earth Technologies and Science, Applied Arts and Communication.
- The procedures for the establishment of the Open University of Cyprus proceeded as the Interim Governing Board is taking the necessary measures to commence the operations of the university in January 2006. The Interim Board has convened in 12 sessions and has dealt with issues regarding the preparation of all budgetary, legal and functional problems for the operation of the university.
- The University of Cyprus has introduced its Engineering faculty in September 2003 and is in the process of implementing the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) for its curricula. The ECTS comprises of 60 credits for a full academic year, and 30 credits per semester. The use of the ECTS will be made obligatory for all courses at the University of Cyprus in the academic year 2005-2006. Already, a number of courses apply ECTS at the University of Cyprus. A proposed amendment of “The Institutions of Tertiary Education Laws of 1996 to 2004”, includes the requirement for the adoption of the ECTS system and of the Diploma Supplement by all public and private institutions of tertiary education, is at present under discussion.

- Upgrading the private institutions of higher and tertiary education also constitutes a priority of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The legislation which will govern the establishment and operation of Private Universities in Cyprus is now in front of the House of Representatives for approval.
- The Ministry of Education and Culture has taken measures for the quality assurance in higher education and along with other interested parties, is discussing the establishment of a National Quality Assurance Agency.

2. National organisation

2.1. Give a short description of the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their competencies (For example, do higher education institutions report to different ministries?)

The competent authority for higher education in Cyprus is the Department of Higher and Tertiary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its responsibilities include:

- The University of Cyprus which is an autonomous self-governed institution operating in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- The Private Institutions of Tertiary Education are registered and closely controlled by the Ministry of Education and Culture, including the process of accreditation of their programmes of study.
- The Open University of Cyprus and the Technological University of Cyprus are autonomous self-governed universities in the process of establishment and will operate in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Other public institutions of tertiary education operate under the auspices of other Ministries and government departments as follows:

Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources is responsible for:

- The Cyprus Forestry College which offers a two-year diploma course, a six-month post-diploma course, and a short training course in Forestry.

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance is responsible for:

- The Higher Technological Institute (H.T.I.) which offers courses in civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, marine engineering and computer studies. The Institute also offers medical equipment courses lasting ten months. It is a Regional Training Centre and has been designated as a WHO collaborating Centre for Training and Research in Management, Maintenance and Repair of Hospital and Medical Equipment.
- The Higher Hotel Institute offers: a three-year diploma programme in hotel and catering (specialization in food and beverage and room division); a three-year diploma programme in culinary arts; a one-year diploma programme in front office; and an one-year diploma programme in housekeeping.
- The Mediterranean Institute of Management offers a post-graduate management diploma programme lasting eleven months which is repeated annually between September and July. The programme offers the possibility for specialization in general management, production management and marketing management.

Ministry of Health is responsible for:

- The School of Nursing which offers basic courses lasting three years and three months in general nursing and psychiatric nursing (registered nurses), and a one-year post-diploma

course in nursing administration, midwifery, intensive care and other specialized fields.

- The Public Health Inspectors School trains public health inspectors. Its medium of instruction is the English language. The school offers a three-year course which leads to the award of the Diploma of Public Health Inspector and operate whenever there is a need for this staff.

Ministry of Justice and Public Order is responsible for:

- The Cyprus Police Academy which offers a three-year course leading to the acquisition of the Diploma of Probationary Police Officer.

Cyprus Tourism Organization is responsible for:

- The Tourist Guides' School: offers a one-year course which leads to the award of the Diploma of the Tourist Guide.

2.2. Give a short description of the institutional structure

(For example, number of public/private universities/other HE institutions or numbers/percentage of students in public/private sector. To what extent are private and State higher education institutions covered by the same regulations?)

Tertiary education is provided in three different types of institutions: university, public tertiary institutes, and private tertiary institutes. At the University level the institutions are autonomous and are governed by their own laws. Law 144/1989 regulates the establishment and operation of the University of Cyprus which at present is the only university in operation. Law 198(I)/2003 regulates the establishment and Operation of the Technological University of Cyprus and Law 234(I)/2002 governs the establishment and operation of the Open University of Cyprus. The last two universities are in the process of establishment.

All the higher education institutions at the non-university level, both public and private are governed by Laws 67(I)1996 and their amendements, which regulate their establishment, control and operation. There are 23 private and 8 public tertiary institutions. Some of the public institutions operate as government departments under their corresponding Ministries.

According to the government statistics during the academic year 2003-2004 the total number of Cypriot students studying in Cyprus was 15,313, while at the same time an additional number of 5,482 international students were attending courses in Cyprus, mainly in the private institutions. The percentage ratio of the Cypriot students attending courses in public higher education institutions is about 40% as compared to those attending courses in private institutions. At the same time 17,365 Cypriot students are attending courses abroad mainly in Greece, UK and USA. Thus more than 50% of the Cypriot students are attending courses outside Cyprus.

2.3. Give a brief description of the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country

(National Bologna group, thematic working groups, composition and activities, stakeholder involvement)

The authority responsible for the implementation of the Bologna Process in Cyprus is the Ministry of Education and Culture and in particular, the Department of Higher and Tertiary Education. The specific Working Groups have examined the individual objectives set by the Bologna process and made their recommendations for improvements. In these groups are involved members of the Ministry of Education and Culture as well as academic staff from

the higher education institutions. The Bologna Promoters Group has been set up with members from the public and private institutions and has already organised a seminar to outline the objectives of the Bologna process.

3. Quality assurance

The following questions have been included in the template at the request of the Working Group on Stocktaking.

3.1. National quality assurance systems should include a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.

Please specify the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.

At present the following bodies are in operation:

- The Council of Educational Evaluation-Accreditation (CEEA) is the competent authority responsible for the Educational Evaluation-Accreditation of the Programmes of Study offered by Private Institutions of Tertiary Education. The Council is an autonomous body, appointed for this purpose by the Council of Ministers, upon the recommendation of the Minister of Education and Culture and consists of 7 members from academia from Cyprus and abroad.
- The Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (KY.S.A.T.S) is the competent authority responsible for the recognition of Titles (or Degrees) which are awarded from institutions of Higher Education recognized in the country they operate. It serves the role of the National Academic Recognition Information Center (NARIC) for Cyprus.

Further to the above the Ministry of Education and Culture, in close cooperation with the public universities and institutions as well as the private institutions of tertiary education and the other stakeholders, is formulating the necessary framework for the establishment of a National Quality Assurance Agency. The aim of this agency is to promote quality assurance in both the public and the private institutions of higher education through various measures which include external accreditation and development of internal quality culture.

3.2. National quality assurance systems should include a system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.

Describe the system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures, if any.

The Council of Educational Evaluation-Accreditation (CEEA) has the overall responsibility for organizing and overseeing the Evaluation-Accreditation Process for Private Institutions of Tertiary Education. To accomplish this goal it:

- Appoints Visiting Teams of experts for the evaluation of Programmes of Study of Private Institutions or Tertiary Education. The Visiting Team consists of academicians from the University of Cyprus, the other public institutions and at least one member from overseas. The Visiting Team examines the application which includes also a Self Evaluation report submitted by the applicant. For the evaluation of a programme the Team visits the institution and based on its findings issues its initial report. This report is submitted to the institution involved for its comments before the final report of the Visiting Team is produced.
- Considers the final recommendations of the Visiting Teams of Educational Evaluation and, taking these recommendations along with other pertinent information into account decides: (a) the approval of the application or (b) the rejection of the application or (c) deferment of a decision for a specified period of time, during which the institution shall

attempt to remedy the specific deficiencies that have been identified or (d) the approval of the application subject to specific conditions.

The Council and/or the Visiting Teams of Evaluation may have consultations, if considered necessary, with the Director of Higher and Tertiary Education and with officials, faculty and students of the Institution of which the Programmes are under evaluation.

Once a programme of study is evaluated-accredited by the Council of Educational Evaluation – Accreditation and after it is endorsed by the Minister of Education and Culture the Ministry issues the appropriate certificate of registration in the Record of Educationally Evaluated – Accredited Programmes of Study of Private Institutions of Tertiary Education, which is kept at the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Ministry publishes the registration of the programme of study in the Record, in the Official Gazette of the Republic. The initial accreditation is valid for four years and then a re-accreditation is necessary which lasts for 10 more years.

3.3. National quality assurance systems should include international participation, co-operation and networking.

Are international peers included in the governing board(s) of the quality assurance agency(ies)?

Among the member of the Council of Educational Evaluation-Accreditation are members from overseas and the Law requires the presence of an international member in the Visiting Team.

The Council of Educational Evaluation-Accreditation is a member of the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA), the Association of European Universities (CRE- EUA) , the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), and of the International Network for Quality Assurance In Higher Education. The Council collaborates with The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (USA), the International Association of Universities (IAU), the Quality Assurance Project (HRK - Germany), the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), and the Central and Easter European Network for Quality Assurance Agencies (CEE). Another factor which increases international participation in Quality Assurance in Cyprus is the participation of academics coming from Universities in Europe and the United States, in the Accreditation teams.

Please add any general comments, reflections and/or explanations to the material on quality assurance in the stocktaking report.

Even though evaluation-accreditation and recognition of titles of Studies are considered factors which promote quality assurance, there is no National Quality Assurance Agency in Cyprus yet. The Ministry of Education and Culture, though, has deemed the establishment of such an agency a necessity. Steps have already been taken along with other interested parties and stakeholders, for the establishment of a National Quality Assurance Agency.

4. The two-cycle degree system

The two-cycle degree system is covered by the stocktaking exercise. Please add any comments, reflections and/or explanations to the stocktaking report.

The two cycle system in Cyprus is applicable and is as follows: (a) The undergraduate cycle with a duration of four years, leading to the first final University degree (Ptychio), or

Bachelors in the Private Institutions, and (b) the postgraduate cycle with a duration of 1-2 years leading to the Master's Degree.

Furthermore following the proposal of the Ministry of Education and Culture, for a "common language" in Diploma awards for shorter duration, all private institutions of higher and tertiary education have adopted the following framework of qualifications depending on the length of studies: Certificate (1 year), Diploma (2 years) and Higher Diploma (3 years).

5. Recognition of degrees and periods of study

Recognition of degrees and periods of study is covered by the stocktaking exercise. Please add any comments, reflections and/or explanations to the stocktaking report.

The Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (KY.S.A.T.S.) follows certain principles and evaluation criteria. The criteria for the evaluation of a Title (or Degree) under consideration for recognition are those established by the corresponding Title (or Degree) from the University of Cyprus or other Public Institutions of Higher Education. If there is no corresponding Title (or Degree) from Cyprus Public Institutions, then a comparison is made against the corresponding Title (or Degree) from the European Accredited Institutions of Higher Education, primarily those of Greece.

There are two forms of Recognition: Recognition of Equivalence and Recognition of Equivalence and Correspondence. There are also different levels of recognition: (a) Diploma of Higher Education, (b) Ptyhio – University level Degree, (c) Postgraduate Diploma at Masters Level, and (d) Doctoral Degree

In the case that a Title (or Degree) does not fall in any of the above levels, the Council may issue a descriptive certificate for the contents, the duration and the level of studies.

6. Doctoral studies and research

6.1. Give a short description of the organisation of third cycle studies

(For example, direct access from the bachelor level, balance between organised courses, independent study and thesis)

At present, only the University of Cyprus offers postgraduate programmes at the level of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.), based on course work and dissertation. For the Ph. D. successful completion of a minimum of 30 credits at the graduate level are required with the provisions of the relevant programme of studies. Candidates holding a Master's Degree or the equivalent may be partly or fully exempted from this requirement. The minimum number of years of study required for the Ph. D. is four and the maximum eight.

6.2. What are the links between HE and research in your country?

(For example, what percentage of publicly-funded research is conducted within HE institutions?)

On the basis of the results of the ad-hoc survey carried out by the Statistical Service for the collection of data on scientific research and experimental development (R & D), total R & D expenditure in Cyprus in 2002 is estimated at £19,4 mn which corresponds to 0,32% of the Gross Domestic Product. Higher education institutions accounted for £5,7 mn or 29,5%, of the Total R&D expenditure.

About 44,8% of R & D activity in 2002 was financed from government funds (£8,7 mn),

while £3,3 mn was drawn from the budget of the University of Cyprus and £2,9 mn from sources from abroad (including £1,8 mn from the European Union). An amount of £4,5 mn constituted the contribution of the private sector.

7. Mobility of students and staff

7.1. Describe the main factors influencing mobility of students from as well as to your country (For instance funds devoted to mobility schemes, portability of student loans and grants, visa problems)

Free mobility of students, educators, researchers and professionals, is extremely important and timely relevant to the national priorities and concerns of Cyprus which fights consistently against isolation imposed by nature and size. There are no problems with the portability of student loans and visa requirements for inwards and outwards mobility. The main problems however are faced from the higher travelling and subsistence expenses required for mobility implementation.

It should be noted that a great number of students follow educational programmes abroad in various European countries, the United States and other parts of the world, which in effect constitute a form of Cypriot students mobility. A number of foreign students also pursue their studies at public and private tertiary education institutions in Cyprus.

Since November 1997, Cyprus participates in the SOCRATES programme which comprises a number of “Actions” within the field of education. These are primarily being coordinated and enhanced by the Cyprus Socrates Coordination Unit at the Ministry of Education and Culture. Cypriots, both professionals and students, have participated in various actions such as, Comenius, Erasmus, Grundvig, Lingua etc. Cyprus considers free mobility of students, academic staff and professionals as a very important factor towards European integration.

The University of Cyprus has introduced an intensive Greek language programme for foreign students in order to overcome the language barrier for incoming students. In all private and most public tertiary level education institutions the language of instruction is English, which facilitates to a certain extent the mobility of students.

7.2. Describe any special measures taken in your country to improve mobility of students from as well as to your country

The main effort to facility inward and outward mobility is the introduction of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The University of Cyprus has implemented the provisions for the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The ECTS comprises of 60 credits for a full academic year, and 30 per semester. ECTS will be made obligatory for all courses at the University of Cyprus with the commencement of the academic year 2005 – 2006. Already, a number of courses apply ECTS at the University of Cyprus.

An amendment of “The Institutions of Tertiary Education Laws of 1996 to 2004”, which includes the requirement for the adoption of the ECTS system and of the diploma supplement by all public and private institutions of tertiary education, is at present under discussion. The adoption of the ECTS will certainly enhance student mobility.

An Intensive Greek language School has been organised for incoming students at the University of Cyprus.

7.3. Describe the main factors influencing mobility of teachers and staff from as well as to your country (For instance tenure of appointment, grant schemes, social security, visa problems)

The staff mobility grant offered is not considered to be satisfactory to meet the travelling and subsistence expenses during the mobility period.

7.4. Describe any special measures taken in your country to improve mobility of academic teachers and staff from as well as to your country

The local academic staff is encouraged to make use of other financial resources (research/staff development funds) in order to meet the expenses of mobility participation.

8. Higher education institutions and students

8.1. Describe aspects of autonomy of higher education institutions

Is autonomy determined/defined by law? To what extent can higher education institutions decide on internal organisation, staffing, new study programmes and financing?

The Laws governing the operation of the University of Cyprus and the other public universities in the process of establishment, provide for autonomous self-governed institutions. Since funding is exclusively from the government budget the universities submit an annual budget which is approved by the Council of Ministers and the House of Representatives. There is some flexibility in the internal organisation but there are limitations to the establishment of new programmes as these will lead to extra financing which needs approval.

The legislation which is going to govern the establishment of Private Universities in Cyprus, is in its final legislative stages and will guarantee autonomy of the new universities. As there are no provisions for government funding these institutions will be flexible in the organisation of new programmes.

8.2. Describe actions taken to ensure active participation from all partners in the process

The existing legislation for the public and the private institutions of higher education has provisions for the participation of the academic staff and the students in the Boards and the other committees.

The Council of the University of Cyprus includes among others the following members:

- Four members appointed by the Council of Ministers
- Three members appointed by the Senate outside the academic staff
- One member representing the administrative staff of the university
- One member representing the students of the university

The students are also represented in the other bodies of the university like the Senate, The Faculty and the Departmental committees.

Similar provisions exist for the other public and private institutions of higher education.

The Law for the Tertiary Education Institutions has provisions for an Advisory Committee for the Tertiary Education in which all the stakeholders are represented. This committee consists of the following members:

- (a) the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Culture, as Chairman;

- (b) the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance or his representative;
- (c) two members of the academic staff of the University of Cyprus appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the Senate of the University;
- (d) three persons appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the employers' associations;
- (e) two persons appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the trade unions;
- (f) two persons appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister, after consultation with the teachers' associations of the public and private institutions of tertiary education;
- (g) one person appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the owners of the registered private institutions;
- (h) two persons appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the students' associations of the public and registered private institutions of tertiary education;
- (i) one person appointed upon the recommendation of the Minister after consultation with the parents' associations of students of secondary and tertiary education;
- (j) Two persons, with academic credentials, who are appointed according to merit on the ground of their special knowledge and capabilities in the field of tertiary education. These persons should have no direct or indirect benefits from private institutions of tertiary education or to participate in any board or committee of such institutions;

8.3. How do students participate in and influence the organisation and content of education at universities and other higher education institutions and at the national level?

(For example, participation in University Governing Bodies, Academic Councils etc)

At the University of Cyprus, the student Union of the University of Cyprus was founded in 1993. Its governing body is the General Assembly and its executive body is the Administrative Council which has 21 members elected annually. Every student becomes a member of the Student Union upon registration. The student Union is represented in all the Governing Bodies of the University (Council, Departmental and Faculty Boards) and actively participates in the decision making process.

In public and private non University institutions, students have the opportunity to participate in their institution's governance and to raise their views in the development of their college by participating in the Student Union. The members of the Student Union are elected every fall by the student body. Among other activities the Student Union is responsible for organizing the General Assembly in which all students participate to voice their views on academic and student issues.

9. The social dimension of the Bologna Process

9.1. Describe measures which promote equality of access to higher education

Access to the University of Cyprus and the other public tertiary institutions is through competitive entrance examinations which are organised annually by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Access to the Private Institutions of Tertiary Education is subject to the possession of a secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent and to aptitude tests set by the institutions.

For the purposes of financial assistance to the Cypriot students there is a system of scholarships offered through the Cyprus Scholarship Foundation on the basis of merit as

well as on financial conditions. Furthermore the family for each student at an accredited programme of study in Cyprus and abroad receives an annual assistance of CYP 1000 or CYP 1500 if fees are paid for the studies.

10. Developments in lifelong learning

10.1. What measures have been taken by your country to encourage higher education institutions in developing lifelong learning paths?

In line with the broad vision of the Bologna Declaration to reform education systems in order to create an educational environment which will enhance and promote life long learning, Cyprus has taken substantial measures, as follows:

- Establishment of the Technological University of Cyprus which will include the public institutions currently operating, and possibly add new disciplines. This university will provide courses to previous graduates of the public institutions of tertiary education to upgrade their qualifications.
- Establishment of the Open University of Cyprus, which will provide the opportunity to all citizens to obtain through flexible methods higher education qualifications and ensure life long learning possibilities. The Open University of Cyprus is expected to operate in January 2006 with the following programmes of study:
 - Undergraduate Programme in Greek civilization.
 - Postgraduate Programme in Education
 - Post-graduate Programme in Management of Health Services.
- Promotion of the legislation which will govern the establishment and operation of Private Universities which through their flexibility in operation are expected to provide as well opportunities for life long learning.

A number of similar programmes are also offered by other Ministries, Private Organizations, Institutions and Centres of Adult Education and Training as in the following cases:

Private Schools of Tertiary Education

Twenty-three private tertiary education institutions, colleges and institutes are registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture and offer a wide range of programmes of study some of which are tailored specifically for adults, holding a school leaving certificate from a six year secondary school or its equivalent. Classes are conducted in the evening on each institute's campus. Programmes include Business Studies, Engineering, Social Sciences, Languages, Education, Hotel and Tourism, Administration, Management, Graphic Design, Computer Science and other. Some of these institutions offer programmes of study at a Masters level.

Mediterranean Institute of Management

It offers a year-long programme, at the postgraduate level, that leads to the acquisition of a qualification in the field of management. This programme, offered on the premises of the institute in the capital of the country, is tailor-made to satisfy the needs of working individuals who possess a university or equivalent qualification and have very good knowledge of Greek and good knowledge of English.

Cyprus Pedagogical Institute

It offers a compulsory pre-service course to prospective secondary school teachers which

allows to those who complete it successfully to be considered for appointment in secondary schools. The course lasts for 7 months, and it is offered in two major towns. For the purposes of better provision, only individuals selected by the Education Service Commission (Epitepiti Ekpaideftikis Ypiresias) can attend the programme.

The optional courses of the CPI, on the other hand, are open to all interested teachers of both primary and secondary education. They are held in the afternoons on the premises of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute in two major towns. They usually last 15 teaching periods and at the end a certificate of attendance is awarded, which is used by teachers in their self-evaluation forms as an indication of interest in in-service training.

The methods used in all the institutions mentioned above range from traditional to modern since the aim is to adopt a flexible approach which is better suited to the needs of adults, especially working ones.

There are also numerous private institutions which offer short general courses that lead to either a certificate of that institution or, if an external examination is passed, to a widely recognized qualification. If the course is approved by the Human Resource Development Authority, then participation is subsidized and the trainees pay only part of the fees.

Cyprus Academy of Public Administration

It offers continuous learning workshops, seminars and day events, lasting from one to ten days, especially designed for civil servants. These programmes focus on subjects like: the European Union, Management of Learning in the Public Sector, Personal and Interpersonal Skills in the Public Sector, and Organizational Development and Management Development in the Public Sector.

Methodologically the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration practices participative techniques in its training and development programmes, based on experiential and adult learning approaches. These encourage the undertaking by the participants of work based projects combining job-related problem solving with learning. The Cyprus Academy of Public Administration supports these initiatives with follow-up meetings and other activities, so as to ensure the effective transfer of learning from class to the work place. Methods and techniques used include lectures, team work, videos, discussions, role playing, cogniscope, case studies, exercises etc. Those attending receive a certificate of attendance, which may be taken into consideration for promotion purposes.

The Cyprus Productivity Centre

It offers short modular programmes that focus on technical occupations and management functions. The basic aim of these programmes is to offer those already working the opportunity to upgrade their skills, possibly with a view to a promotion, and to enable interested individuals to acquire new skills which will enable them to be employed in fields where there is a need for trained workers.

The Cyprus Productivity Centre operates on its own premises in three major towns. Starting qualifications and final qualifications depend on the type of programme the trainee follows.

10.2. Describe any procedures at the national level for recognition of prior learning/flexible learning paths

At present there is not a mechanism for the recognition of prior learning.

11. Contribution to the European dimension in higher education

11.1 Describe any legal obstacles identified by your country and any progress made in removing legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees and/or joint study programmes

There is a legal obstacle for the private schools of tertiary education to provide joint degrees as this may lead sometimes to a franchising agreement with a foreign university which will bypass the local accreditation procedures.

11.1.1. Describe the extent of integrated study programmes leading to joint degrees or double degrees

For the time being a limited number of joint degrees are under consideration by the University of Cyprus.

11.1.2. How have these programmes been organised? (joint admissions, mobility of students, joint exams, etc.)

11.2. Describe any transnational co-operation that contributes to the European dimension in higher education

Cyprus participates in all European programmes relating to education and training and collaborates in the inward and outward mobility of students and staff.

11.3. Describe how curriculum development reflects the European dimension (For instance foreign language courses, European themes, orientation towards the European labour market)

The European dimension is reflected through the respective studies at the University of Cyprus and the private institutions of tertiary education. There are courses of European studies either in the degree or in the postgraduate level provided by these institutions. The University of Cyprus in its efforts to promote the European dimension has also introduced intensive foreign language courses.

12. Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

12.1. Describe actions taken by your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA

One of the main priorities and concerns of the Cyprus Government and the Cypriot society is the optimisation of both the production process and the provision of services. A tool towards accomplishing this target is the increase of competitiveness of our higher education system.

The ultimate objective, as far as tertiary education is concerned, is to offer high quality education in a number of fields of study, turning Cyprus in this way into a regional educational and research centre. Cyprus is going to contribute, in this way, in the implementation of the goals set by the Lisbon strategy which aspires to turn the European economy into the most competitive economy of the world through its transformation into a knowledge based economy.

Along these lines the higher education of Cyprus, and in particular the private institutions of tertiary education, have attracted a significant number of international students. Thus during

the current academic year an approximate number of 5,000 international students are studying in Cyprus. These students originate from countries like India, China, Bagladesh as well as from the Eastern European countries.

13. Concluding comments

13.1. Give a description of your national Bologna strategies

The national Bologna strategies for Cyprus are:

- Introduction of the ECTS and the DS into all public and private higher education institutions. This is planned to be introduced via legislative reforms which are in progress and also via the promotion of this necessity in order to facilitate the mobility activities of each institution.
- Improvement of the quality of higher education by expanding the existing accreditation infrastructure into a Quality Assurance Agency for both the public and the private institutions.
- Expansion of the public higher education institutions by the introduction of new courses/faculties and setting up the Technological and the Open Universities to facilitate among the other objectives life long learning.
- Expansion of the research activities in the higher education institutions to realise the governmental policy to increase research spending from 0.3% of GDP to 3% of GDP by 2008.
- Promotin the attractiveness of the higher education to the outside world with the aim for Cyprus to become a regional education, research and training centre.

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

- Establishing a National Quality Assurance Agency. It is necessary to establish quality assurance in tertiary education in order to promote education's continuous and constant qualitative improvement. This can become the main source of feedback on the degree of the effectiveness of the education system, and, in the long run, turn Cyprus into a regional provider of quality tertiary education.
- Establishing private universities. The upgrading of private institutions of higher and tertiary education in Cyprus is of great importance and the legislation which will govern the establishment and operation of private universities in Cyprus is, at present, being promoted.
- Expanding Higher and Tertiary Education. In order to provide the required human resources for the socio-economic development of the country the following are imperative:
 - he growth of the University of Cyprus and its expansion by adding new faculties and departments to provide higher education to more Cypriot students and reduce the ratio of the students abroad.
 - Commencement of the operations of the Open University of Cyprus in order to promote lifelong learning.
 - Commencement of the operations of the Technological University of Cyprus which will integrate a number of already operating schools of higher education upgrading them to a University level.
 - Upgrading the private providers of tertiary education to a university level. The upgrading of private institutions of higher and tertiary education in Cyprus is of great importance and the legislation which will govern the establishment and operation of Private Universities in Cyprus is, at present, being promoted.