



Completed National Reports and National Strategies for the Social Dimension should be sent to the Bologna Secretariat by email (secr@bologna2009benelux.org) no later than

1 November 2008.

PART I

BOLOGNA PROCESS TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2007-2009

Notes:

BFUG members are strongly encouraged to consult other stakeholders about the contents of their National Report.

Please complete your National Report in English using this template (shaded areas) and return it to the Secretariat by email. Where appropriate, please include precise web references to legislation or other documentation. Please add comments as appropriate under each question to describe the current situation. Please try to keep text brief, while aiming to answer all questions comprehensively.

National Reports will be posted on the Bologna website in their original form.

Information from National Reports will form the basis of the Stocktaking Report to be presented to Ministers when they meet in April 2009.

Details

| | |
|---|--|
| Country | Slovenia |
| Date | 1 December 2008 |
| BFUG member (one name only) Position | Darinka Vrecko Secretary |
| Email address | darinka.vrecko@gov.si |
| Contributors to the report | The Secretariat of the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>Slovenia contributed information on QA system. The report was sent to the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovene Student Union, Education, Science and Culture Trade Union of Slovenia, University of Ljubljana, University of Maribor, University of Primorska and University of Nova Gorica for comments and approval.</p> |
|--|---|

1. Main developments since London 2007

Please describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms and changes in institutional structures, since the London meeting in 2007.

Amendments to the Higher Education Act were adopted in June 2008.

They set the ground for establishing an international alliance of universities on the basis of a written contract or agreement between at least one Slovene and one foreign university. Other types of higher education institutions and research organisations may also be the founders of such an alliance. The diploma must state that a certain study programme was implemented in the framework of such an alliance.

According to the rule of the Constitutional Court the status of the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education (CHE), which is a consultative, accreditation, evaluating and habilitation body, was changed. Its professional, administrative and technical tasks are performed by the Secretariat of the CHE. Council Secretariat is headed by director, appointed by the CHE. All Council Secretariat's employees have the status of civil servants, its internal organisation is adopted by the CHE. The funds for its work are provided in the state budget.

In June 2007 the Diploma Supplement was amended. Its content had to be changed due to the implementation of the Bologna reform. Some new details were also added e.g. (a copy in one of the official languages of the EU is free of charge).

2. Partnership

Please describe the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country.

Presently there is no such structure in place.

- a) Does your country have a national working group for Bologna follow-up ¹
- Yes No
- b) Does your national Bologna follow-up group include representatives of
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Ministry | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rectors' conference | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Academic staff | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Staff trade unions | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National Quality Assurance Agency | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Employers | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Other (please specify) _____
- c) Does your country have a Bologna promoters' group²
- Yes No
- d) Does your national Bologna promoters' group include representatives of
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Ministry | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rectors' conference | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Academic staff | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Staff trade unions | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National Quality Assurance Agency | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Employers | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Other (please specify) _____

Please add any additional comments if necessary:

The group has five members, representing different types of tertiary education institutions and students.

¹ A group that develops policy proposals for implementing the Bologna Process

² A group that supports/advises HEIs on implementation of the Bologna Process

DEGREE SYSTEM

3. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle

a) Please describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycles.

In the academic year 2008/09 more than one half of undergraduate and one third of postgraduate study programmes performed are Bologna programmes. In some disciplines new Bologna programmes will be offered next year (arts, medicine, natural science, social work, pedagogy and sports) In 2009/10 only enrolment in the Bologna programmes will be possible.

b) Please give the percentage of the total number of all³ students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09.

| Total number of all students below doctoral level | Number enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09 ⁴ | % of all students enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09 |
|---|--|--|
| 97.439 (data for 2007/08) | 25.353 (data for 2007/08) | 26% (data for 2007/088) |

c) Please add comments which accurately describe the current situation regarding implementation of the two cycle system in your country:

The academic year 2008/09 is the last one when enrolment into pre-Bologna study programmes is still possible. Study programmes announced for 2009/10 are all Bologna study programmes.

This year the old pre-Bologna study programmes are still running in upper years of study, thus the percentage of Bologna students is not that high and does not reflect the share of Bologna study programmes.

4. Stage of implementation of the third cycle

Please describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of doctoral candidates following structured doctoral programmes including both taught courses and independent research
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- other elements⁵ apart from independent research that are included in doctoral study programmes
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies

³ "All" = all students who could be involved in 2-cycle system i.e. NOT those in doctoral programmes and NOT those in short HE programmes. *NB Students of ALL study fields are taken into account*

⁴ If countries have more recent data available after November 1, they can provide an update but no later than January 15, 2009

⁵ E.g. taught courses in the chosen discipline, other taught courses, teaching activities (if these are required as part of doctoral studies), etc.

- information on whether doctoral studies are included in your country's qualifications framework and linked to learning outcomes
- information on whether interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills are integrated in doctoral studies
- information on whether credit points are used in measuring workload in doctoral studies.
- Information on the status of the doctoral students (students, early stage researchers, both)
-

According to Higher Education Act doctoral study programmes have 180 credits and last 3 years. A mandatory part of these programmes are basic or applicative research assignments. Organised study forms consist of at least 60 credits.

The supervisory and assessment procedures are no different than those for other programmes - they are done by a competent body of the HEI and similar criteria is used (e.g. implementation, quality measures, methods of teaching and learning, programme's goals, mobility of students).

Doctoral studies are integrated in the educational system, but not in the qualifications framework since the latter has not been prepared yet. All doctoral study programmes are described with learning outcomes - competences, acquired within the programme, are namely a mandatory component of all study programmes.

According to the Criteria for credit evaluation of programmes, taking into account the programme's study area and components (e.g. modules), students have a possibility to choose freely at least 10 % of all credits. Students also have the option to transfer at least 10 credits from another programme. This should encourage the interdisciplinarity and integration of transferable skills.

Doctoral students have the same status as all other students as far as their rights are concerned. However, some of them can also obtain the status of a young researcher. In this case they are employed in a HEI, research institute or in the economy; studies are adjusted appropriately; costs of their employment are often covered by a state agency from public funds.

5. Relationship between higher education and research

a) Please describe the main trends in the role of higher education institutions in research in your country.

The role of HEIs in research remains very important. Data show that 30% of all researchers work in HE and more than one third of research is carried out in HEIs.

b) Please outline any measures to improve co-operation between higher education institutions and other private and public institutions that undertake research. Please include:

- percentage of GDP spent on research
 - from public funds
 - from private funds
- total annual national research expenditure (expressed in national currency)
 - from public funds
 - from private funds
- percentage of research carried out in higher education institutions (in terms of funding)
- details of the funding mechanisms for doctoral students in your country

In all relevant national strategic development documents, there are several measures directed towards strengthening research co-operation between HEIs and government research institutes, as well as research cooperation between universities and government research institutes on the one hand, and the business sector on the other.

% of GDP spent on research (in 2006)

- from public funds: 0,58
- from private funds: 1,0

Total annual national research expenditure (41.534 mioSIT)

- from public funds: 241 mioSIT
- from private funds: 415 mioSIT

% of research carried out in HEI: 36%

Details of the funding mechanism for doctoral students:

Since 1985, a very successful Junior Researchers Programme (<http://www.arrs.gov.si/en/mr/>) has been running in Slovenia. Since great majority of graduates from this programme have traditionally remained in universities and government research institutes, a complementary programme of Junior Researchers for the Economy was launched in 2001 that is directed towards increasing the share of researchers with PhD engaged in the business sector.

278 new grants were available in 2008 for postgraduate students to obtain doctoral degree. The Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS) is funding salary and material costs for young researcher for maximum of four and a half years.

- c) Is there any tracking system to follow the further career of doctoral graduates?
Yes No If Yes, please specify:

The Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS) has a tracking system for all those who were Junior Researchers and stay active in public or private research institutions.

6. Access⁶ and admission to the next cycle

Describe the arrangements for access between the first and second cycles and between the second and third cycles.

6.1 Access and admission between the first and second cycles

Please indicate:

- a) the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the second cycle

100%

- b) any first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle (please specify)

None

- c) any special requirements for access to a second cycle programme in the same field of studies: *please tick whether graduates must:*

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| sit entrance exam | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |
| complete additional courses | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |
| have work experience | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |

If the answer to the last point is yes, please specify what type of work experience is required:

- d) any further special requirements for access to a second cycle programme in the same field of studies

Special talents or psychophysical abilities can be determined as an enrolment condition for specific programmes.

- e) to which students the above special requirements apply (*please tick*):

all students

Yes No

⁶ Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention: "Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education."

holders of particular first cycle qualifications Yes No
students of the same field coming from other HEIs Yes No

f) which of the requirements apply to students coming from other fields of studies
(please tick):

entrance exam Yes No In some cases
additional courses Yes No In some cases
work experience Yes No In some cases

6.2 Access and admission between the second and third cycles

Please indicate:

a) the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle

100%

b) any second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle (please specify)

None

c) any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles

Not needed

7. Employability of graduates/ cooperation with employers

a) What measures are being taken to enhance the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications? Please include the most recent statistical data on the employment status of graduates of all cycles.

If your higher education institutions also provide professional bachelor programmes, please provide employability data for both types of bachelors separately

First significant number of students enrolled in Bologna programmes will graduate in 2009 only.

b) To what extent there is a dialogue in your country between higher education institutions and employers on:

- curriculum design, work placements and international experience
Significant Some A little None
- accreditation/quality assurance
Significant Some A little None
- university governance
Significant Some A little None

c) Are first cycle graduates able to pursue careers in the public service on an equal footing with other graduates?

Yes No In some cases

d) Have you aligned recruitment procedures and career structures in the public service to take account of the Bologna changes?

Yes No In some cases

If no, or in some cases only, please explain the current situation:

8. Implementation of national qualifications framework

Please answer the questions below. Please add comments which accurately describe the current situation in your country.

a) Has the national qualifications framework been prepared⁷?

Yes No

Comment See answer to 8g!

b) Does the framework or proposed framework include generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences?

Yes No

Comment

c) Does it include ECTS credit ranges for the first and second cycle?

Yes No

Comment

d) Has the NQF been nationally discussed with all stakeholders?

Yes No

Comment

If the answer to d) is No, please answer question e):

e) has a timetable been agreed for consultations with all stakeholders?

Yes No

Comment

If the answer to d) is Yes, please answer the following questions:

f) Are all formal arrangements/decisions for implementing the framework in place and have the necessary formal decisions for establishing the framework been taken?

Yes No

Comment

⁷ A national framework of qualifications compatible with the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA

g) How far has the implementation of the national qualifications framework progressed (**please tick one**)

- The framework is fully implemented. All qualifications have been added to the NQF through a QA procedure (e.g. accreditation)
- There is significant progress on implementing the framework
- The work of describing all qualifications in terms of learning outcomes and competencies has been completed
- There is a timetable for implementation and the work has started
- Work on implementing the framework has not yet started but a timetable for implementation has been agreed
- Work on implementing the framework has not yet started and there is no timetable for implementation

Comment

The Higher Education Act stipulates that the HE NQF be adopted by the Higher Education Council of the Republic of Slovenia.

In 2006 the Decree on the Introduction and Use of the Classification System of Education and Training (KLASIUS) to be used as the compulsory national standard was adopted. The draft Decree was prepared by a working group consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sport, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS). The Decree is being implemented in all relevant areas.

In 2008 the Slovenian ENIC/NARIC Centre joined the application for the project "HEQual-NQFs - Description of H.Ed. qualifications in NQFs with regard to existing recognition procedures: major components a qualification needs to be assessed by credential evaluators". With this project proposal several countries responded to the LLP 2007 – 2013: Call for Proposals EACEA/16/08 - Award of grants for actions to develop and implement the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), including national and sectoral qualifications frameworks.

In 2008 the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology published a tender within so called targeted research programmes scheme Slovenia's Competitiveness 2006-13 for the development of NQF for HE. A project proposed by the University of Primorska was approved that should be finished in 18 months.

In 2008 an interministerial working group for preparation of a comprehensive NQF was nominated but hasn't start working yet.

h) What is the stage of progress on the self-certification of compatibility with the EHEA framework ?

- Completed Started, but not yet completed Not yet started

Comment

i) Has the self-certification report been published?

Yes No

Comment

Please add any additional comments if necessary:

Comment

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EHEA (ESG)⁸

9. Reviewing the QA system against the ESG⁹ and national support for implementation

a) Has your national QA system been reviewed against the ESG?

Yes No Not yet, but such a review is planned
(Please specify time) _____

b) If a review has been undertaken or is planned, please give further details of the review process.

A comprehensive review of QA system against the ESG is planned within the Operational programme for HRD proposed for the European Social Fund in the programming period 2007 – 2013. A lot of work, however, has already been done.

The national Criteria for monitoring, assessment and assurance of quality in higher education institutions, study programmes, science and research, and in artistic and professional work are taking into account the ESG. In 2006 first four pilot institutional external evaluations were performed that, among others, also tested the compliance of external evaluation procedures and criteria with the ESG. In March 2007 final meeting took place, where all stakeholders involved in external evaluation presented their opinions. There was an agreement that the instruments used in survey were appropriate and the external evaluations were conducted properly. There were some suggestions, however, to improve the survey questionnaire and the site-visit protocol for further evaluations. The results of first external evaluations have been published in the Report on Building the External Evaluations System of Slovenian Higher Education Institutions. For external evaluations in 2008 a new survey questionnaire has been prepared and two training courses have been organised for all involved. The Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education in charge of quality assurance is analysing external evaluations for 2007 and 2008; the final report is planned to be published in January 2009.

⁸ <http://www.bologna2009benelux.org/documents/Standards-and-Guidelines-for-QA.pdf>

⁹ ESG - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

c) If a review process has been undertaken, did it result in any of the following:

Stakeholder consultation on changes required to the national QA system?

Yes No

The introduction of specific financial or other incentives aimed at improving the internal quality assurance processes in institutions?

Yes No

If Yes, please give details of these incentives:

- Other measures

Yes No

If Yes, please outline these measures

d) If incentives and/or other measures have been introduced with the aim of improving the internal quality assurance processes in institutions, has any evidence of the impact of these changes been gathered?

Yes No

If Yes, please give details of how evidence of the impact of the changes was gathered, and of the main outcomes that it demonstrates

9.1. Internal quality assurance in higher education institutions

Describe the internal QA systems in place in your HEIs.

Internal evaluations are the responsibility of higher education institutions. The Council for Higher education, composed of representatives of HEIs, employers and students, assists HEIs in this task and complements their work. HEIs have the quality assessment commissions that prepare annual self-evaluation reports. They also include students' questionnaires. The system of self-evaluation and the methodology for self-evaluations was developed jointly by all stakeholders. The Council for Higher education collects self-evaluation reports of all HEIs. Self-evaluation reports are the basis for procedure of external evaluations that follows. During the past years several higher education institutions had undergone international accreditations on their own initiative. These accreditations, of course, included also the external reviews. Some examples: CRE/EUA institutional evaluations of University of Ljubljana (UL) and University of Maribor (UM), international accreditations of institutions and / or study programmes of individual faculties (EQUIS accreditation of Faculty of Economics of UL, EAEVE accreditation of Veterinary Faculty of UL, sixteen FEANI courses at UM and twenty-nine at UL etc.).

Please comment in particular on the following aspects, giving references to relevant websites:

a) How many HEIs have published a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

b) How many HEIs have arrangements in place for the internal approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

Please describe what kind of arrangements are in place

HEIs issue annual reports about their quality. Together with students, the quality assessment commissions at individual institutions assess institutional goals, curricula, governance, teaching, research, etc. Self-assessment reports are made public at institutional web pages.

On the basis of self-evaluation reports and external evaluations the Council for Higher education re-evaluates and accredits study programmes every seven years.

c) How many HEIs have described their programmes in terms of learning outcomes?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

d) Are student assessments at HEIs designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes (based on published criteria) applied in a consistent way?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

Please describe how the above is achieved.

It is too early for an assessment of actual practice since the Bologna study programmes don't run for many years.

e) How many HEIs publish up to date, impartial and objective information about the programmes and awards offered?

All HEIs

Most HEIs

Some HEIs

No HEIs

Additional information if necessary

10. Stage of development of external quality assurance system

Describe the external quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

a) the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system

The quality assurance system includes:

- accreditations of institutions and programmes
- internal evaluation of institutions and programmes
- external evaluations of institutions and programmes

The accreditation and external evaluation are responsibility of the Council for Higher Education, established in 1994. According to the new ASHEA 2006, the responsibilities of the Council for Higher Education are extended to include also the tasks of external evaluations.

According to the new ASHEA 2006, the Council as an accreditation body performs the following tasks:

- determines the criteria for accreditation and re-accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes,
- determines the criteria for the design and accreditation of joint study programmes, wherein it shall apply the principles on establishing a European higher education space and other international principles and recommendations for the design of such programmes,
- determines the criteria for credit assessment of study programmes under ECTS and define minimum proportion of selection in study programmes,
- determines the criteria for transfers between study programmes,
- determines the criteria for recognising knowledge and skills acquired prior to enrolment in the programme,
- co-operates with foreign accreditation institutions and their experts,
- provides professional opinions on compliance with conditions for the establishment or transformation of a higher education institution,
- gives consent for study programmes,
- co-operates with foreign accreditation institutions and their experts,
- at least every seven years gives renewed consent for study programmes, taking into account the findings of self-evaluations reports and external evaluations reports.

As evaluation body, the Council:

- monitors, assesses and assures the quality of higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges, their study programmes as well as research, artistic and professional work

- determines the criteria for monitoring, assessment and assurance of quality of higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges, study programmes and research, artistic and professional work,
- co-operates with higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges and stimulates self-evaluations,
- co-operates with foreign accreditation institutions or bodies,
- organises training of external evaluation commissions,
- publishes reports on individual external evaluations and analyses them, prepares and publishes annual national reports.
 - collects and analyses self-evaluation and external evaluation reports,
 - prepares expert basis for and conducts external evaluation procedures,
 - nominates expert commissions for external evaluations of institutions and programmes,
 - directs and reports on external evaluation procedures and stimulates self-evaluations of higher education institutions and higher vocational colleges.

According to the article 2 of the standing order Council performs its tasks independently. The system of external evaluations operates at national level; it covers all higher education institutions and includes internal assessment, external review and publication of results as well as the peer review of the Council.

Criteria for external evaluations were adopted in order to establish a national system of regular external evaluations. In 2006 a Guide for external evaluations was published and first four pilot institutional external evaluations started. External evaluations continued in 2007 and 2008. In 2008 experts from European agencies (members of ENQA) are for the first time also among members of external evaluation commissions.

At the moment the Council analyses final reports of external evaluations in 2007 and opinions of higher education institutions and students on this reports. The Council is also preparing for the evaluation procedure of its work.

b) does your external quality assurance system operate at a national level;

Yes No

If **No**, please specify:

c) does your external quality assurance system cover all higher education¹⁰

Yes No

If No, please specify which types of institutions or programmes are not covered by your external quality assurance system:

¹⁰ Higher education: all types of courses of study or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to a country's higher education system.

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

d) which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| - self-assessment report | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - external review | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - publication of results | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - follow-up procedures | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

e) has a peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA already taken place

Yes No

If **No** is there a date set for the review? Yes (please specify date 2009) No

11. Level of student participation

From the following, please indicate all aspects of quality assurance in which students are involved:

- a) in governance of national agencies for QA. Yes No In some cases
- b) as full members in external review teams Yes No In some cases
- c) as observers in external review teams Yes No In some cases
- d) as part of the decision making process for external reviews Yes No In some cases
- e) in the consultation process during external reviews (eg arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students) Yes No In some cases
- f) in internal quality assurance (e.g. periodic review of programmes) Yes No In some cases
- g) in preparation of self-assessment reports. Yes No In some cases
- h) in follow-up procedures: Yes No In some cases

*Please add any additional comments, especially if students are **not** involved in any of the aspects:*

12. Level of international participation

In which of the following is there international participation in quality assurance

- a) the governance of national agencies for quality assurance Yes No In some cases
- b) the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies Yes No In some cases
- c) teams for external review of institutions or programmes, either as members or observers Yes No In some cases
- d) membership of ENQA Yes No In some cases
- e) membership of any other international network Yes No If **Yes**, please specify:

The Council is a member of the CEE Network and participates at different meetings of ENQA.

Please add any additional comments, especially if there is no international involvement in any of the aspects:

RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS

13. Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement

Describe the stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement in your country. Please include the percentage of all students graduating in 2009 who will receive a Diploma Supplement (if less than 100%, please explain)

In accordance with the 1999 Higher Education Act, a Diploma Supplement is part of each higher education diploma, issued by Slovene higher education institutions. Diploma supplement is issued automatically in Slovene language and in one of the official languages of the European Union, free of charge.

An update of Diploma Supplement form was adopted in 2007 to accommodate the changes in the Slovenian higher education system.

In 2009 all graduates should receive a DS.

a) Is the Diploma Supplement issued to students graduating from:

- 1st cycle programmes Yes No
- 2nd cycle programmes Yes No
- 3rd cycle programmes Yes No
- remaining "old type" programmes Yes No Not applicable
- short higher education programmes Yes No Not applicable

b) which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:

- issued in a widely spoken European language Yes No
 - *please specify the language one of official languages of EU*
- issued free of charge for a fee
- issued automatically on request
- corresponds to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format
- a national Diploma Supplement is used that is different from the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format

13.1. Use of Diploma Supplement for recognition of qualifications

Please describe the way in which the Diploma Supplement is used for the recognition of foreign qualifications (or studies). Please comment in particular on the following aspects, giving references to any relevant websites and documents:

a) The Diploma Supplement is used as the reference document when admitting holders of foreign qualifications to the second and third cycles.

Yes No

Comment

In most cases the individual Diploma Supplement contains all the information that the credential evaluators/admission officers need in a recognition procedure. It

facilitates recognition and is a very useful tool, especially in recognition of joint degrees, pre-Bologna qualifications, qualifications obtained in distance learning or transnational education. A recognition procedure time is much shorter.

b) Holders of foreign qualifications who present a Diploma Supplement in a widely spoken language do not have to provide official translations of their qualifications.

Yes No

Comment If the recognition authority believes that the official Slovene translation of the final diploma is not needed and that the applicant's educational achievements can be evaluated, it can take a decision without it. This practice is also used for Diploma Supplement, thus its official translation is usually not required.

c) Holders of foreign qualifications who present a Diploma Supplement in a widely spoken language do not need to prove through other documents the validity of the qualifications in the awarding country (for further studies or employment in the non-regulated part of the labour market).

Yes No

Comment If a credit system and the Diploma Supplement are issued according to the prescribed standards, other documents are not needed in order to prove a validity of a foreign qualification.

d) Specific action has been taken at a National and Institutional level to enhance the use of the Diploma Supplement as a communication tool towards the labour market

Yes No

Comment There were no specific actions at national or institutional level, except counselling to individuals, institutions and employers who wanted to apply for an official opinion on a foreign level of qualification. Slovenia has a long list of regulated professions. But even if a profession is not regulated, the employers still ask for official information on a level of a foreign qualification in order to place it into the official payment system (the whole public sector). The Diploma Supplement is a very useful tool also for Slovenian qualifications, especially for transparency of qualifications in the transition time from pre-Bologna to new Bologna study programmes.

14. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents¹¹ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

a) Does appropriate legislation comply with the Lisbon Convention?

Yes No

¹¹ Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001); Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004); Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001)

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

The Lisbon Recognition Convention has been ratified by Slovenia and appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention. Its five main principles are fulfilled. Applicants have a right to fair assessment. There is recognition if no substantial differences can be proven. In case of negative decision the competent recognition authority (Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and higher education institutions) demonstrate the existence of (a) substantial difference(s). The accurate list of higher education institutions and their study programmes is available on website. The Education Recognition Unit at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology represents the Slovenian ENIC (Recognition and Assessment of Education Act, 2005)

http://www.mvzt.gov.si/fileadmin/mvzt.gov.si/pageuploads/doc/dokumenti_visoko_solstvo/priznavanje/EN_ActOnRecognitionAndAssessmentofEducation.doc

b) Does appropriate legislation comply with the later Supplementary Documents:

i) Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

The Recognition and Assessment of Education Act regulates the procedures and criteria and designates the bodies competent for recognition and assessment of foreign education as well as assessment of Slovene education, and use of foreign vocational, professional and academic titles. The Rules on Forms, Documents, Fees and Record keeping in Procedures for Recognition and Assessment of Education (2005) determines the contents and form of the format for applications for recognition and assessment of education, documents to be supplied with the application, and the costs and manner of record keeping in procedures of recognition and assessment of education.

http://www.mvzt.gov.si/fileadmin/mvzt.gov.si/pageuploads/doc/dokumenti_visoko_solstvo/priznavanje/EN_RulesonFormsDocumentsFees.doc

ii) Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

Recognition of joint degrees is foreseen in The Recognition and Assessment of Education Act. The stipulations of the mentioned act and the Recommendations are used in the recognition practice.

iii) Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

The Slovenian higher education legislation includes provisions on transnational education. The higher education institutions may open their branches abroad, but the branches should be registered at the Slovenian Council for Higher education according to regulations. No register of transnational providers/institutions, operating in Slovenia is available. Foreign qualifications issued through transnational education programmes are assessed on individual bases. TNE qualifications, complying with the provision of the Code, are recognised in accordance with the stipulations of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

The introduction of more detailed provisions on Transnational Education in the Slovenian legislation is planned in 2009.

c) which of the following principles are applied in practice

i) applicants' right to fair assessment

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level

As a result of the "double nature" of recognition, the Recognition and Assessment of Education Act introduced two procedures: for access to education and for employment purpose. For the latest procedure, the applicant has a possibility to apply for recognition of a level of education and a field of study and/or for the equivalence for the regulated professions in Slovenia (with a right to use the Slovenian professional or academic title). Assessment of education is envisaged to facilitate the exercise of any other possible rights based on school certificates and diplomas or an individual's educational achievements. A fair assessment is ensured also by the General Administration Procedure Act, which is the general act in all administrative procedures in the country (recognition procedures at the Ministry and educational institutions). Each recognition procedure is based on individual expertise and transparent procedures and criteria with reasonable cost and in approx. 85% of cases also in a reasonable time of 2 to 4 months.

ii) recognition if no substantial differences can be proven

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level

The Slovenian recognition legislation and practice is based on positive recognition of foreign education when no substantial differences can be proven. If the applicant requires also the use of the Slovenian title or for the study purpose, an individual foreign study programme is closely examined and a recognition decision result can lead to a positive or a conditional recognition. Normally, recognition of a level and a field of study leads to a positive recognition decision. In case of recognition of a level of a foreign Bologna qualification which indicates a level of qualification in a foreign Bologna country, the same Bologna level is recognised in Slovenia almost as a rule.

lii) demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level

Considering the purpose of recognition in compliance with The Recognition and Assessment of Education Act the following stipulated criteria are used in addition to relevant international criteria, e.g. education system in a foreign country, list of courses, curriculum and education programme, academic achievements, duration of education, rights arising from the obtained education in a foreign country, other circumstances relevant for the recognition. In the recognition procedure at the Ministry and education institutions as well, stipulated criteria should be respected. Substantial differences, which may lead to partial recognition or to non-recognition, depend on the purpose for which recognition is sought, e.g. recognition for the purpose of pursuing further studies or for access to a non-regulated professional activity. Substantial differences are treated through stipulated recognition criteria and should be really substantial (length of study e.g. 5 years for the first and second cycle together, major subject, master thesis, learning achievements, right for admission to further cycle in a foreign country etc). In most cases only a combination of differences based on particular recognition criteria are sought as substantial differences and lead to a partial recognition or even non-recognition.

iv) provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is done in practice

An accurate list of accredited higher education institutions and belonging study programmes is available on the website. A new list in a more users friendly form is being prepared for 2009.

<http://www.svs.gov.si>

http://www.mvzt.gov.si/en/areas_of_work/science_and_higher_education/higher_education/dejavnost_visokega_solstva/register_of_higher_education_institutions_in_the_republic_of_slovenia/#c16877

v) do you have a fully operational ENIC

Yes No

If Yes, please describe the role of your ENIC in recognition and information provision a) nationally and b) internationally

a. Main tasks at the national level:

- **ENIC collects and provides adequate, reliable and authentic information on national and foreign education systems, admission requirements, qualifications awarded in Slovenia in other countries, legislation on recognition, recognition procedure, information on accredited institutions, the Lisbon Recognition Convention etc. to citizens and different institutions;**

- **In accordance with the Recognition and Assessment of Education Act the Slovenian ENIC is a competent authority for recognition (recognition for employment purpose - a formal official decision on the level of education**

and field of study), assessment of the Slovenian and foreign qualifications (citizens, higher education institutions, etc.);

- ENIC provides basic information on the professional recognition of the regulated professions (EU Directives);
- It contributes to higher education policy development and legislation, changes of the education system at national level;
- It organises or actively participates at national information seminars and workshops, prepares publications, information and other materials on education system, recognition, and participates in publications, surveys, comparative studies and other research activities;
- It promotes the Lisbon Recognition Convention, ENIC and NARIC Networks;
- ENIC cooperates with different organisations/institutions in the field of recognition.

b. Main tasks at the international level:

- ENIC provides adequate, reliable and authentic information on national legislation, qualifications, education system and recognition procedure to all interested parties (centers ENIC/NARIC, foreign higher education institutions, etc.);
- It provides basic information on professional recognition of regulated professions (EU Directives);
- It co-operates in the ENIC and NARIC Networks projects (contributes to higher education and recognition policy development and legislation at regional, national and European level);
- It participates in the elaboration of publications, information and other materials on the home education system and participates in publications, surveys, comparative studies and other research activities undertaken by the European Commission, Council of Europe, UNESCO and other international organisations.

d) As additional information, please describe any actions to implement fully the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents.

Since the new recognition legislation came into force in 2005, seven national information seminars and workshops were organised in order to ensure the right understanding and performing of recognition procedures at educational institutions. This kind of promotion activities proved to be very useful in a view of better communication with institutions, exchange of good practices and the promotion of Diploma Supplement, stipulations of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and its Supplementary Documents.

LIFELONG LEARNING

16. Recognition of prior learning

Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning (RPL), including non-formal and informal learning (for example learning gained in the workplace or in the community).

a) Do you have nationally established procedures in place to assess RPL as a basis for access to HE programmes?

Yes No

If Yes, please specify:

The criteria for recognition of prior learning are set in the Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes that were adopted by the Council for Higher education as accreditation body in 2004. Thus, from 2004 onwards, they are part of the criteria for accreditation of study programmes.

According to the Criteria, HEIs recognise acquired knowledge, skills and competencies that, what concerns content and requirements, fully or partly correspond to general or subject-specific competences, set by individual study programme. Knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by formal, non-formal and in-formal learning are taken into account.

Recognised knowledge, skills and competencies can be considered as an enrolment condition, if this is not set by law, as selection criteria in case of a limited number of study places or as completed study obligation. In the latter case, a completed study obligation must be evaluated and expressed in ECTS.

Thus, all HEIs must develop a system of the evaluation of student's knowledge, skills and competencies that relate to courses they offer. The results of the assessment serve for gaining entry to a formal programme, or count towards completion of the course. HEIs evaluate individual documented applications of students according to the provisions of their statutes and other internal regulations and on the basis of the Council's criteria.

b) Do you have nationally established RPL procedures in place to allocate credits towards a qualification?

Yes No

If Yes, please specify: See 16a!

c) Do you have nationally established RPL procedures in place to allocate credits for exemption from some programme requirements?

Yes No

If Yes, please specify: See 16a!

d) To what extent are any such procedures applied in practice?

Comprehensively Some A little None

Please describe the current situation: Such procedures are applied in practice mostly at those individual faculties that enrol significant numbers of part time students who are or were employed.

17. Flexible learning paths

Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, to encourage participation by under-represented groups.

Several legislative provisions were adopted with the aim to make the continuation of studies in different type of programme easier. After 2001/2002 a vocational matura and an additional exam in one of the matura subjects is an alternative to general matura, also granting admission to academic type of undergraduate programmes. With the introduction of the Bologna degree structure a first-level degree in appropriate professional field gives access to the second cycle and a second cycle degree in appropriate professional field gives access to the third cycle. Recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning prior to enrolment in the study programme further increases the flexibility in entry requirements.

To increase the flexibility of their provision, HEIs increasingly implement flexible organisation of studies, distance studies, e-learning, individual consultation hours, tutorial system etc.

Public tenders in 2007 and 2008 for development projects of HEIs supported, among others, also the introduction of Bologna study programmes. In selection procedure, project applications that included flexible learning paths, modern learning methods or adjustments for disabled students received additional points.

Among measures intended specifically for under-represented groups, the use of sign language was recently introduced. The sign language must be provided on student's request.

a) Are there specific measures in place to promote flexible learning paths within the national qualifications framework?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation

b) Are there any measures to support HE staff in establishing flexible learning paths?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation

c) Is there flexibility in entry requirements aimed at widening participation?

Yes No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between the three Bologna cycles

d) Are there any flexible delivery methods to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners

Yes No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between different Bologna cycle

e) Are there modular structures of programmes to facilitate greater participation?

Yes No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between different Bologna cycle

f) If possible, please provide any statistics on the results of measures taken to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, to encourage participation by under-represented groups,

JOINT DEGREES

18. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees¹⁵

a) Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.

Are joint degrees specifically mentioned in legislation?

Yes No

Does the legislation fully allow:

i) establishing joint programmes?

Yes No

If No please explain what are the obstacles

ii) awarding joint degrees?

Yes No

If No please explain what are the obstacles

¹⁵ A *joint degree* is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.

b) Please give an estimate of the percentage of institutions in your country which are involved in

i) joint degrees

75-100% 50-75% 25-50% 1-25% 0%

ii) joint programmes

75-100% 50-75% 25-50% 1-25% 0%

c) What is the level of joint degree/ programme cooperation in your country

In the first cycle? None Little Widespread

In the second cycle? None Little Widespread

In the third cycle? None Little Widespread

d) In which subject areas/disciplines is joint degree/programme co-operation most widespread (please list if possible)?

Joint study programmes in public administration, tourism management, maritime biology, humanities and construction were accredited.

e) Estimate the number of joint programmes in your country

10

f) Describe any actions being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes.

None

g) Are there any specific support systems for students to encourage joint degree cooperation?

No

MOBILITY

19. Removing obstacles to student and staff mobility

a) What measures have been taken by your country both at governmental and institutional level to enhance student and staff mobility and overcome main obstacles?

Slovenia doesn't have a separate document stating strategy on mobility of students and staff in higher education. Promotion of international mobility is considered a part of the objective to increase the internationalisation of HE. As such it is included in all major national strategic documents (Slovenia's development strategy, Resolution on the National program on HE in the Republic

of Slovenia in 2007-2010, Reform programme on the implementation of the Lisbon strategy in Slovenia...). Concrete benchmarks are set for incoming mobility.

b) Have arrangements for visas, residence and work permits been amended to enhance student and staff mobility?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation: The Act on foreigners prescribes the priority when processing the applications of foreigners for a residence permit for the purpose of studies or research. In case of the largest group of foreign students, the Croatian residents, an exception was made to simplify the procedure for obtaining a residence permit (of duration up to 3 months).

c) Is there financial support for national and foreign mobile students and staff?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:
For outgoing mobility the main source of support comes from EU programme LLP-Erasmus, CEEPUS and bilateral agreements.

At national level special scholarships are offered for incoming and outgoing mobility and loans are offered for outgoing mobility by Slovene Human Resource Development and Scholarship Fund. The fund also manages company scholarships and Zois merit-based scholarships for talented Slovene students which can also be used for studies abroad.

d) Are study periods taken abroad recognised?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:
Recognition of ECTS obtained during the study periods taken abroad is in a jurisdiction of HEIs. In principle, students which go on a short term mobility don't have problems with recognition, if they agree in advance with their home HEIs which knowledge is relevant in relation to the study programme they are enrolled in. Problems are arising in recognition of placements, because most HE study programmes do not have practical work as part of their curriculum. The recognition procedures sometimes take a long time. When study periods spent abroad are not recognised students seldom complain outside their HEIs.

e) Is there accommodation for mobile students and staff?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

Ministry set a quota of subsidised accommodation in dormitories (under the same conditions as for Slovene students) for incoming students who receive a CEEPUS, bilateral scholarship or a scholarship from the Slovene Human Resource Development and Scholarship Fund. Universities also have possibility to offer limited number of places in the public student dormitories for the Erasmus students.

f) Have any measures been taken to increase outward student and staff mobility?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

Portability of grants is secured, loans for studying abroad are available by the scholarship fund.

20. Portability of loans and grants

a) Are portable grants available in your country?

Yes No

If No, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants. Yes, for short term mobility: Any study abroad that is recognised as part of regular studies is regarded as study at a national HEI. All rights, linked with the student status in Slovenia, therefore remain unchanged. Three main types of national scholarships (state social scholarships, Zois merit-based scholarships and company scholarships), which amount to more than 90% of all scholarships available, are portable during the short-term mobility abroad.

Students may also apply for these scholarships for the whole period of study abroad, when a chosen study programme is not provided at Slovene HEIs or when studying abroad is geographically more suitable. In all other cases the candidate has to prove that studying abroad will enhance his/her employability and/or professional expertise. In case of a company scholarship, the interest of a company is decisive.

b) Are portable loans available in your country?

Yes No

If No, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of loans. Loans for studying abroad for the whole study period or shorter exchanges are offered by Slovene Human Resource Development and Scholarship Fund.

THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE EHEA AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

21. Implementation of strategy

a) Describe any measures being taken by your country to implement the strategy "European Higher Education in a Global Setting"

No specific measures were undertaken to implement the strategy as such. However, during the last two years the international activities in the area of HE focused strongly on the Euro-Mediterranean region. While implementing these activities, Slovenia also promoted EHEA in the region of South Mediterranean. Promotion of the strategy is also a side effect of cooperation activities of HEIs with institutions from other regions. The priority region for Slovene HEIs is Western Balkans; initiatives with different Asian countries are also on the rise.

b) What has your country done to:

i) improve information on the EHEA outside Europe?

No special measures were undertaken; nevertheless, HEIs disseminated information in the framework of international programmes, projects and exchanges.

ii) promote European higher education, enhance its world-wide attractiveness and competitiveness?

Slovenia participated at the European Higher Education Fair 2008 in New Delhi.

iii) strengthen cooperation based on partnership in higher education?

Slovenia launched the Euro-Mediterranean University with the seat in Portorož as a concrete contribution to the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education, Science and Research Area. Cooperation based on partnership was particularly promoted by HEIs and their international programmes, projects and exchanges.

iv) intensify policy dialogue with partners from other world regions?

During its Presidency of the EU Council Slovenia convened the first meeting of the ad hoc working group on higher education that was envisaged in the

Declaration of the First Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research (Cairo, June 2007). The WG should not only facilitate cooperation but also promote a policy dialogue on higher education in the EUROMED region.

v) improve recognition of qualifications with other world regions?

No specific measures were undertaken.

c) What measures have been taken in your country to implement the *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*? Please describe.

Slovenia undertook no special measures in order to implement the guidelines in the formal legislative sense yet, except in case of joint degree programmes. There is full legislative implementation of the OECD/ UNESCO guidelines concerning the provision of joint degree programmes in the national act on higher education. Preparation of more detailed legislative provisions on transnational education are foreseen in 2009.

What concerns the “soft” implementation, there is a lot of effort to spread the acknowledgment and awareness of the TNE provision and its implications among the concerned groups of students, providers and other stakeholders.

d) Are the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education applied to

i) cross-border provision of your education programmes?

Yes No

If Yes please explain in what ways the guidelines are applied

There is full legislative implementation of the OECD/ UNESCO guidelines concerning joint degree programmes and branch campuses in other countries.

ii) incoming higher education provision?

Yes No

If Yes please explain in what ways the guidelines are applied

As already explained, Slovenia hasn't holistically implemented the OECD/ UNESCO guidelines in the strict legal sense yet. However, the guidelines are de facto used as soft law/legislation in the sense of international recommendations and principles, international praxis, especially concerning the treatment of TNE provision in the recognition of education sector.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

22. Main challenges for higher education

Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for higher education and the Bologna Process in your country in the short and long term.

The main challenges are:

- encourage the internationalisation of HE and increase national and international mobility in tertiary education and research,
- strengthen development of specific knowledge, skills and competences of graduates, relevant for innovation,
- create mechanisms for encouraging investment of business in education and co-operation between HE and industry, especially in the area of technical studies,
- further create closer links to and responsibilities of regional economies in education, also through regional scholarship schemes,
- increase intersectoral mobility between tertiary education and research on one side and business on the other side,
- systematically increase quality of HE and quality assurance in HE (introduce regular external evaluations), in line with Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA,
- foster evidence-based policy-making,
- foster development of flexible study programmes and joint study programmes,
- encourage recognition of informal learning,
- encourage introduction of learner-centred teaching and learning methods,
- develop the mechanisms of HE financing in favour of encouraging production of applied knowledge and link financing also to quality indicators,
- develop HE strategies and changes with better cooperation of all HE partners.

PART II

TEMPLATE for NATIONAL STRATEGIES on THE SOCIAL DIMENSION of THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

Practical instruction

The answers to this questionnaire will be included in the general national report on the implementation of the Bologna Process and reach the Bologna Secretariat (e-mail: secur@bologna2009benelux.org) by November 1, 2008. **Please do not exceed the length of 10 pages for the national strategy on social dimension.**

The questions in Annex C are not included in the questionnaire itself but are to be considered as reference material which could facilitate the drafting of the information on the national strategy.

I. Definition of the Social Dimension in the London Communiqué

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

II. AS IS SITUATION (Current state of affairs)

1. Which groups in society are still underrepresented in your national higher education system? What are the main obstacles to participative equity in terms of access and successful completion of studies?

Slovenia is among the EU countries with the highest enrolment rate of adults aged 18-39 in tertiary education (15,5%). For several years more than 60% of the age cohort enrol in tertiary education every year. This is an important factor for equitable access of different groups in society to tertiary education. Slovenia is also among seven EU countries with very marked numerical superiority of women in tertiary education.

Officially, no groups in society are identified as underrepresented in national higher education system. One of the reasons might be that there is not sufficient research based evidence for this. Some projects undertaken in recent years like Eurostudent Survey should improve the situation. The authors of the research project "The system of financing tertiary education, its equity and economic efficiency" (Institute for Economic research, 2008) demonstrate that undergraduate and especially graduate studies are less accessible for students from families with lower income and less educated parents although the situation has improved from 1990s on. Analysing the census 2002 data, some experts claim that nowadays, alongside the high level of social inclusion (high % of age cohort enrolled in tertiary education), the reproduction of social inequalities takes form of segmentation (students with better educated parents tend to enrol more prestigious studies).

2. Please describe what measures your Government is taking to increase the representation of the groups identified in the question above. Please refer to the possible actions listed in the Bologna Working Group report on the Social Dimension and Mobility (see Annexes A and B to this document).

Besides the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, different ministries are in charge of policy and measures in this area:

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social affairs (social security and social transfers to both students and their parents, scholarships ...),

Ministry of Education and Sport (short-cycle tertiary education),

Ministry of Health (health service for students), and

Ministry of Finance (taxation of student work).

The majority of measures and actions are targeted to the whole student body. In this respect all students are treated equally and have the same rights deriving from their student status.

Slovenia pays special attention to financial support for students as the essential aspect of the social dimension of tertiary education and particularly of access to it. In 2003 indirect funding via financial support to students represented a quarter of total public expenditure on tertiary education, which was one of the highest share in EU-27. Slovenian students don't pay tuition fees for regular first and second cycle Bologna type of studies, a large proportion of students receive scholarships and substantial public subsidies for their studies.

Some incentives, however, are designed for special group of students.

For example, 4.1 % of enrolled students are students with special needs which are offered better study conditions both in classrooms and in dormitories. All new school buildings and dormitories are designed according to up-to-date standards and all overhauled capacities follow the most satisfactory solutions for students in question. Students with high disability in constant need of personal assistance have their aid's room rent subsidised. 7% of students are married and 8% of students have at least one child; students' families have both the "child's bed" and the "partner's bed" subsidised. Students being Slovenians but without the Slovenian citizenship have all the rights based on the student status as all other students (for example, they may apply for national/"state" scholarships).

3. Describe what measures are being taken by the Government to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background. Again, please refer to the possible actions listed in the Bologna Working Group report on the Social Dimension and Mobility (see Annexes A and B to this document). Please indicate whether the measures apply to all students or only to certain levels or types of higher education institutions.

Slovenia belongs to the group of countries that consider students financially dependent on their parents. Thus, financial support is designed for students as well as their parents. In absence of tuition costs for full-time studies at public institutions, financial support is earmarked to cover the costs of living.

Parents receive financial assistance in the form of family allowances (taking into account the family income) and tax relief (a lump sum amount) on their yearly income for children up to 26 years of age who are either students or unemployed. The students' health care (so called social and health insurance policy) is based on parental employment status.

Students receive direct and indirect state financial support.

Scholarships are the only form of direct support as student loans, introduced in 1999, were soon abolished. After 1995, the absolute number of scholarships is increasing but the share of full time students receiving scholarships is decreasing due to rapid increase in overall student numbers. From the second half of nineties between 0,14% and 0,16% of GDP is devoted to scholarships from public sources.

Scholarships in Slovenia are based either on means tested and/or merit basis. They are regulated by the Scholarship Act (Zakon o štipendiranju, O. J. RS 59/07 and 63/07, ZŠtip) issued by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. Most of scholarships are intended for materially deprived students (54%) and talented and gifted students (30%). The scholarships are offered to students also by the industry and private sector and the municipalities. These scholarships are needs focused and demand based, and amount to 12.5%. Certain percentage of basic scholarships represent special allowances for disabled students, students from families with minimum income, students with above-average study achievements, students coming from the most distant places from the study centres, students enrolling in under subscribed programmes, students from minorities, and student families. Scholarships are not taxed.

Besides these forms of scholarships, the Slovene Human Resource Development and Scholarship Fund – Ad futura is distributing also mobility scholarships for studies abroad. Mobility of Slovene students is still rather low, reaching about 9% of student population (Eurostudent Survey SI 2007). However, the three main types of national scholarships, which amount to more than 90% of all scholarships available, are portable during the short-term mobility abroad. Students may also apply for these scholarships for the whole period of study abroad, when a chosen study programme is not provided at Slovene HEIs or when studying abroad is geographically more suitable. In all other cases the candidate has to prove that studying abroad will enhance his/hers employability and/or professional expertise.

The forms of indirect student support are subsidies for costs of living, health insurance and tax relief on students' work.

The highest share of state financial aid to students represent subsidised meals (17,4% in 2006). All students receive subsidies for nutrition (meal coupons) and overall health insurance, while subsidies for housing (in student halls of residence and rented off-campus residential facilities) and public transport tickets are given to students fulfilling certain conditions.

Room rent for 16.8% of students, admitted to the total of 40 students residence halls (public, or private) in academic year 2007/08 is subsidised on means tested criteria.

All students have "one hot meal per day" subsidy of 2.53 EUR (working days only; disabled and some other groups can purchase additional 10 subsidised meals' coupons) based on provisions of Students Nutrition Subsidy Act (Zakon o subvencioniranju študentske prehrane, O.J. RS 74/2007).

Public transport subsidy to students (means tested) reaches up to 50% of monthly transportation ticket price and is based on the provision of the regulations on subsidised students transportation (Pravilnik o subvencioniranju prevozov študentov, O.J. RS 18/04) .

The tax relief on students' work as adopted by the Ministry of Finance was scrutinised and approved by the Slovene Student Union. It represents a suitable basis for 60% of all students that are working during their studies (Eurostudent SI 2007, ISCED norms).

4. Does your country have statistical and/or other research evidence at disposal to underpin the identification of underrepresented groups and the main obstacles to participative equity (see Q 1) ? If yes, please specify. Or are regular student survey organised with the aim to provide data concerning the social dimension?

The Republic of Slovenia's Statistical Office does follow the complexity of students' life, but for the time being there is no special research on the identification of the underrepresented groups and thus no identification of the main obstacles to participative equity either.

The Statistical Office is preparing a special survey, the Survey on Education of Adults, where some specific items - such as special characteristics of the person, status of employment, income, obstacles to obtain education are being surveyed. The results might be used in identification of underrepresented groups, too, despite the fact that the Survey is covering the whole population and all levels of education and is not focused on higher education only. The response data has been processed; there is no obtainable result as yet.

The Eurostudent national survey on economic, social and mobility status of the Slovenian students was last executed in the academic year 2006/2007. The online survey was made possible by the grant of the Dutch Ministry of Education, based on standard questionnaire for Eurostudent surveys, adapted to Slovenian conditions and adding some queries for specific indicators. The questionnaire and the Survey did not deal with the underrepresented population in Slovenia separately; the sample was composed of HE students in Slovenia in general. The Survey results have been published on the Ministry's web site, and on limited number of hard copies and CDs.

The cross-section report of the Eurostudent survey reports from the 23 participating countries was published in April 2008 under the title of Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe, (Eurostudent III 2005-2008, HIS

GmbH) and presented at the international conference in Ljubljana, during its Presidency of the EU Council.

Slovenia has joined an ever larger group that participates in the future Eurostudent surveys (Eurostudent IV survey report is due in 2011) working on the synopsis of indicators together with other participating countries in order to obtain data needed for broadening and simplifying the access to HE education.

III. PROCESS TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM (strategy for the future)

5. How do you plan to tackle the challenges identified under Q 1 in the near future (2008-2010)?

(a) Which concrete goals do you want to achieve?

At the moment, a special strategy for social dimension of the Bologna Process is not foreseen. However, a new White Paper on Education as well as changes and amendments of the HE Act and regulations on financing HE are envisaged that might tackle different aspects of social dimension. Students will be involved in working groups preparing these changes. Besides, the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Student Affairs and its working groups participate in drafting new regulatory frameworks and in discussing all issues that concern study and social conditions of students.

In the near future (2008 -2010) the challenges identified in previous section will continue to be tackled mainly by already existing policies and measures. However, especially in the light of the present financial crisis, an on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of different actions will be needed to secure appropriate study conditions for students. A review of some policies is already foreseen by the new Government. Thus, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social affairs has already announced changes and amendments of legislation regulating scholarships and subsidies for students' meals in 2009.

(b) What actions are planned for the different target group identified above to overcome the obstacles in access, participation and completion of studies by students? Please refer to Annex B and to the suggested approach outlined in the 2007 report from the Bologna Process Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility (Annex C to this document).

(c) is there a specific budget for these measures for underrepresented groups ? If yes, please provide details

d) is there a timeline for action? If yes, please provide details.

6. What arrangements are planned for monitoring progress towards more equitable access, participation and success?

IV. INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PREPARATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGIES

Please indicate which authority or other actor is responsible for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the national strategy and describe the way in which the various stakeholders are involved. Did your country designate (a) contact point(s) for the national strategy? If so, please add the coordinates of the national contact point(s).

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

ANNEX A

Actions mentioned by the Bologna countries in the 2007 national reports

Financial

- scholarships - means tested
- scholarships - merit based
- research grants
- grants for studying abroad
- grants or loans for (nearly) every student
- unspecified social support system
- free education (at least 1st cycle)
- reimbursement of tuition fees for certain groups
- financial assistance for certain groups/areas
- improved funding systems

Structural

- new /expanded routes of access
- broader teaching or learning strategies
- information and preparation at secondary schools
- increase student places
- indirect aid schemes (tax relief, family allowance)
- subsidised residences/meals/transport/books
- provision of student welfare services (health care, day care centres)
- counselling/guidance services

Certain groups

- measures for ethnic minorities (not financial)
- measures for disabled (not financial)
- measures for disadvantaged groups (not financial)
- allocation of study places to certain groups
- promote access from all national areas

Policy and practice

- explicit widening access policy (devoted funds/units/laws)
- carry out surveys (study & work, disabled students,...)
- evaluations/research of policies and practices
- monitoring access (and retention) by students

ANNEX B

Possible actions and tools identified by the 2007 Bologna Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility

Measures to promote equal opportunities for access, participation and completion

- Anti-discrimination legislation covering higher education
- Admission rules that are simple, fair and transparent

Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education

- Outreach programs for underrepresented groups as defined nationally
- Flexible delivery of higher education
- Flexible learning paths into and within higher education
- Transparency of qualifications and recognition of prior learning
- Incentives for higher education institutions to take action to widen access and participation

Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience

A, Provision of academic services

- Guidance (academic and careers) and tutoring
- Retention measures (modification of curricula, flexibility of delivery, tracking academic success etc.)
- Working tools and environment (well functioning libraries, lecture halls and seminar rooms, internet access, access to scientific data bases etc.)

B, Provision of social services

- Counselling
- Targeted support for students with special needs and students with children
- Appropriate housing conditions for all students
- Provision of healthcare
- Provision of transportation, student canteens etc.

Student participation in the governance and organisation of higher education

- Legislation or other measures to ensure student participation in higher education governance
- Provisions for the existence of and exercise of influence by student organisations
- Student evaluations of courses, programmes and institutions, including action plans and follow-up of actions taken

Finances in order to start and complete studies

- Financial and legal advice for students
- Appropriate and coordinated national financial support systems that are transparent
- Targeted support for disadvantaged groups as defined nationally
- Support measures for students with children

ANNEX C

Suggested approach of the work on national strategies on the social dimension

In time for the next ministerial meeting in 2009 the Working Group suggests that the countries should report to the BFUG on their national strategies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to show their impact. All stakeholders concerned should actively participate in and support this work at the national level.

The development of a strategy should be followed by a national action plan that includes monitoring mechanisms. Ideally, the strategy and action plan will be based on a national debate on the social dimension and the future priorities of that country depending on the current situation. In order to facilitate a national debate on the social dimension the Working Group proposes the following structure and topics for such a debate:

- Measures to promote equal opportunities

What obstacles are there to equal opportunities within higher education? What protection is there if a student is discriminated when applying for, being admitted to or carrying out studies? Is there a framework for appeal? What action would be the most effective to achieve equal opportunities in higher education?

- Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education for underrepresented groups (gender, ethnic origin, immigration, socio-economic status and background, disability, geography etc.)

What groups are under represented in your national higher education system today? Is there data to show access to higher education by gender, socio-economic background, disabilities, prior immigration, region etc? What obstacles to widened access and participation are there within your higher education system? At other education levels? What actions would be appropriate for the different groups to achieve widened access? Are targeted outreach activities needed?

- Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience

A, Provision of academic services

B, Provision of social services

What kind of academic or career guidance is provided for the students in your country? What is the student – staff ratio? Are there retention measures adapted to different groups or individuals with different needs? Is the academic success of student tracked? What would be/has proven to be the most efficient retention measures? What kind of study environment is there at the higher education institutions? Do student have access to information, electronically or by other means? What is the condition of libraries, lecture halls and seminar rooms? How do students in your country live? Is housing available, of acceptable standard and affordable? Is targeted support provided or needed for specific student groups? Is counselling available if students run in to personal difficulties?

- Measures to increase formal and actual student influence on and participation in higher education governance and other higher education issues

Are there formal provisions for student influence and participation at all governance levels, in consultative as well as decision-making bodies? Are there formal provisions for student evaluation of the education? Are the formal regulations followed-up with actual practices? Are there informal ways of student influence and participation as well? Do students have an influence on all issues related to higher education? Are students aware of their rights? Do students have organisations that

can organise elections to fill elective posts? Is it possible to find enough candidates to fill the posts available? If not – how could this be improved?

- Finances in order to start and complete studies

What kind of information and guidance is provided for students regarding financial issues? How does the average student make his or her living during studies? What kind of state support is provided? Is it appropriate for all groups and individuals? Do certain groups run the risk of being excluded from, or not able to finish their studies, due to financial reasons? Which are these groups or individuals? What could be done to help them? Are students informed about possible employment possibilities after finishing their studies? How is the labour-market relevance of the studies secured? Are former graduates tracked to follow-up their employment rates?

- Monitoring: The participating countries should establish national measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of the national strategy and action plan.

What monitoring mechanisms would be the most appropriate? How could success in strengthening the social dimension be measured short-term and long-term? What quantitative and qualitative data are needed? How is the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation allocated and divided? Are there student surveys carried out to measure the impact of a social dimension strategy? How can student surveys be used in this work?

- Stakeholder involvement

Which stakeholders should be involved in the development of a strategy and an action plan? What should be the responsibility of the different stakeholders when carrying out the agreed strategy and plan?