Independent Assessment of the Bologna Process

Degree and Curriculum Reform Cooperation in Quality Assurance

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Independent assessment

- What did major action lines contribute to
  - Establishment of EHEA → Mobility
  - Promote the European system of higher education world-wide
Degree reform

- 2-/3-cycle structures have been introduced
  - All within agreed credit ranges
    - 18-240 for 1st cycle, (60)90-120 for 2nd cycle
  - Much variety in 3rd cycle (doctoral), mostly 3-4 years

- Short-cycle programmes in 26 countries, in different cycles

- 180 + 120 credits (‘3 + 2’ years) is a prominent model

- Achieved
Degree reform

Students in 2-cycle structure (2008)

- 90-100%
- 50-89%
- 25-49%
- < 25%

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Curriculum reform

- ECTS or compatible credit systems: in all countries
  - Based on workload and outcomes: in 12 countries
  - Implementation in higher education institutions in many countries less than complete

- Needs attention
Curriculum reform

- Flexibility of curricula
  - Is a condition for ECTS, for flexible study paths
  - Mostly present to some extent, but rigid curricula are typical in a minority of countries
    - (3 without electives, 21 without systematic modularisation)

- Implementation not yet complete
Cooperation in quality assurance

- ESG accepted
- EQAR established, agencies entering the Register
- Internal + external quality assurance introduced in all but one countries
- Actual implementation in higher education institutions is not complete
Cooperation in quality assurance

• Discipline-based initiatives such as the Tuning project are important complementary actions to engender more ‘shop-floor’ level involvement
Qualifications frameworks

- QF-EHEA accepted

- Deadline for national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) extended to 2012

- More effort needed
  - NQFs are on the critical path for realisation of the EHEA by 2020
Mobility and Recognition

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International recognition policies

- Without recognition of credits and qualifications, the EHEA would remain a patchwork
- Mixed performance in recognition
International recognition policies

- Lisbon Recognition Convention
  - Ratification almost complete (44 countries)
  - National legislation compliant in 39 countries
  - Practices not harmonised
International recognition policies

- Diploma Supplement
  - In majority of higher education institutions in 30 countries

- ECTS formally adopted
  - yet recognition obstacle to short term mobility
Mobility within the EHEA

- Shift from short-term, credit mobility to degree mobility
  - Credit mobility: little growth?
    - Data unavailable beyond Erasmus, EuroStudent
  - Degree mobility: students became 4% more mobile
    - 2.0% of EHEA students pursue a degree in another EHEA country (in 2007)

- Previous trends were strengthened
  - East-to-west imbalance, which needs attention
Mobility within the EHEA
Mobility within the EHEA

- Portability of grants available in 38 countries
  - Needs further attention
Mobility towards the EHEA

- The EHEA countries attract 30% of the world’s foreign learners (2007)
  - Up from 25% in 1999
  - EHEA countries’ attractiveness increased
    - Growth is spread across 25 countries
Mobility towards the EHEA
Independent assessment


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Social dimension

• Aims:
  - Widen participation at all levels
  - Student body reflects population diversity
  - Flexible pathways into and within higher education
    • Including flexible curricula
  - Recognition of prior learning
  - Support and appropriate conditions for all learners
  - Measurable targets
Social dimension

- Since targeted social dimension actions started only recently in the Bologna Process, we cannot draw conclusions on the contribution of actions within the Bologna Process.

- Situation ca. 2007...2009 on next slides
  - To the extent that data were available
Social dimension

- Female learners are represented well in 1st cycle in almost all countries, but:
  - Less in 2nd and 3rd cycle
  - Less in science and technology

- Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds (parents’ education and jobs) are underrepresented in most countries
Social dimension

- Recognition of prior learning
  - Widespread through national regulation in 14 countries
  - Widespread through institutional procedures in 2 countries

- Part-time study, distance education etc. and special guidance and counselling are each available in ca. 1/3 of countries
Social dimension

- Student funding package: advantageous for students in a small number of countries in the north-west of the EHEA
  - Does not take into account support in kind (subsidized accommodation and meals, free transport, etc.)
Social dimension

- Lesson from case studies:
  Social dimension policies take a long time to develop, get embedded and become effective

- Needs attention in Bologna Process