

THE LISBON AGENDA

an introduction



ESIB—The National Unions of Students in Europe

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Imprint

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Layout: Linus Rowedda

Cover: Juliana Uhart

Printed in Brussels, Belgium, 2006

Picture reference:

- p. 9 Berlaymont, Brussels /2004-04-17 /selfmade /licence: GNU FDL)
- p. 30 Emmerson, Michael: The Wider Europe Matrix. Brussels.
- p. 37 <http://www.photocase.com>
- p. 40 Official Journal of the European Communities C 142, 14.06.2002, p. 19
- p. 57 <http://www.photocase.com>
- p. 60 COM(2005) 549 final/2, page 14
- p. 83 <http://www.photocase.com>
- p. 99 <http://www.sxc.hu>
- p. 111 <http://www.sxc.hu>

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foreword

Dear Friends,

We are living in times of continual educational reform. Now, more than ever, the lines between education and commerce are being blurred. Politicians are constantly talking about »strengthening the strong« universities; those that are producing »the best students« and who can wave the European flag in the »top twenty universities of the world«. We are told that we have to be »competitive« with the American market and that, in order to achieve this goal, there will have to be »winners and losers«—for only those institutions that prove »excellence« will survive. These are the keywords used in promulgating the Lisbon Agenda; these are the keywords used by people promoting the commercialisation of higher education in the name of achieving a »knowledge based economy«.

ESIB strongly disagrees with the above mentioned reasoning. We believe that the key words that will lead Europe to achieve a true »knowledge based society« are »involvement« of stakeholders in all processes, »increased accessibility« to higher education and »committed and qualitative governmental funding and support« for higher education institutions and students.

Access to higher education is a problem in Europe—many students do not participate or drop out of higher education due to socio economic and socio-cultural reasons. How are some governments reacting to this reality? They are introducing tuition fees, in the name of achieving the Lisbon aims, also claiming that tuition fees bring more equity, more access and a reduction of the funding gap. But what is the reality? Access problems have remained the same; yet another barrier has been created for under-represented groups and the funding gap still remains ever-present. The truth is that if governments really want to achieve their Lisbon goals—to create a knowledge-based society and a flexible and competitive workforce—then they must invest the money needed and not simply wash their hands of their responsibilities.

And this is where the students come in. We are the present and the future of Europe. It is imperative that we, the students of Europe, voice our opinion on these reforms—reforms that are affecting our education and the education of those that will follow us. As much as the government has a duty to supply qualitative higher education to its

students—so do we have the duty to voice the student opinion on the European and national processes that affect higher education. By making the governments and the European Commission listen, we are truly bringing a new cutting edge to this process—a process that so far has lacked the input of all the stakeholders.

ESIB has once again raised the student banner and is striving for involvement within the Lisbon Strategy with the same recognition it has within the Bologna Process, where students are regarded as natural partners. ESIB has issued several statements to the ministers calling out for student involvement within the Strategy, the removal of tuition fees in order to achieve social cohesion, and the ministers' continued commitment to further increase access to higher education for under-represented and minority groups. ESIB is also offering trainings to our members and this very handbook you are reading is yet another step in strengthening the student voice within the Lisbon Agenda debate. It will not end here—we will continue to voice the opinion of the 10 million students we represent—for better higher education that is accessible to all today, as well as for the Europe of tomorrow.

In the meantime, you hold this tool in your hands—a tool that will empower you with the knowledge needed to better represent your fellow students in the Lisbon arena.

ESIB has placed this book in your hands; the rest is up to you ...

Justin Fenech
ESIB Chairperson 2006

1 why is this handbook in your hands?

Dear Friends,

In your hands you are holding an introduction to the Lisbon Agenda. We're proud to present it to you as a basis for our concerted work on the European Union's all-embracing strategy that is changing the parameters of our education systems.

The reason for the existence of this handbook is the necessity to coordinate our work on all levels in order to strengthen the students' voice in the EU Lisbon Agenda. Coordinating our work includes knowledge- and information exchange, as well as joint priorities and actions. The first step for an intensive exchange of knowledge was set at the European Student Convention in Vienna in March 2006. This handbook concludes and widens the discussions that took place there and should serve as a basis to take the next steps which will enable our voice to be heard loud and clear.

This is the second edition of ESIB's Lisbon handbook. The first one, »The Lisbon Process—handbook for student unions« was published and handed out at ESIB's 50th Board Meeting in May 2006 in Belgrade. Since then we have improved and actualised the articles, trying to implement the various comments we received from our members.

In order to facilitate your reading of this handbook, there follows an overview of the chapters in this handbook:

Chapters 2 and 3 offer an overview of the Lisbon Agenda, and answer the questions »What is Lisbon? And what does education have to do with it?«. Those chapters explain why the EU started the Lisbon Strategy, how it works and which priorities the EU has set for higher education.

Chapter 4 provides a picture of Lisbon that will be more familiar to you: It gives examples of the implementation of Lisbon in four European countries, both in the EU and not.

Chapter 5 is an overview of the different stakeholders relevant to education within the Lisbon Agenda. If we want to reach achievements in our lobbying of Lisbon, we need to build coalitions with other stake-

holders. In this chapter you find an assessment of those stakeholders' strategies, and some hints as to how to go about building alliances.

Chapter 6 deals with our strategy towards Lisbon. It is based on the discussions at the Vienna European Student Convention and following ESIB seminars, and addresses the necessary fields of further work and action.

In the Annexes of this handbook you will find ESIB's Policy Paper on the Lisbon Agenda, the footnotes and the documents referred to in this handbook, as well as a guide to EU documents and a list of the authors that contributed to this handbook. In addition you will find a glossary explaining the terminology connected to Lisbon and education, as well as an overview of the abbreviations used in the texts.

We wish you inspiring hours of reading, full of new thoughts and energy for our joint work on this issue. We thank all those who contributed to this handbook.

The CoCo

(Anita Lice, Angie Striedinger, Anthony Camilleri, Christine Scholz, Koen Geven)

2 lisbon—what's that about?



Berlaymont building, European Commission, Brussels

2.1 the lisbon agenda—an introduction

Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, born and raised in Lisbon, Portugal, explains the re-launch of the Lisbon Strategy as follows: »It's about growth and about jobs. This is the most urgent issue facing Europe today. We must restore dynamic growth, which can bring back full employment and provide a sound base for social justice and an opportunity for all. There are too many people looking and failing to find jobs in Europe. The truth is that when current trends continue, growth in European economies will be half in the coming years. This is a reality, so we must take urgent action. That's why today we set out a new economic growth and jobs strategy for Europe. It is a powerful economic package and I believe it will provide a better standard of living for the people of Europe.«

MOST COMPETITIVE AND
DYNAMIC KNOWLEDGE-
BASED ECONOMY
IN THE WORLD

The Strategy was initially launched in March 2000, when the Heads of the European States met with high expectations for the new millennium. The European Council decided to launch the highly ambitious Lisbon Strategy. The minutes from the meeting read: »The Union has today set itself a new strategic goal for the next decade: to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion«¹ (European Council 2000: 3). In order to achieve economic growth, a very broad reform package was proposed, ranging from implementing regulation on the Union's internal market to investing in a better infrastructure.

In particular, it was agreed that an overall strategy should be applied, aimed at:

- »preparing the transition to a knowledge-based economy and society by better policies for the information society and Research & Development (R&D), as well as by stepping up the process of structural reform for competitiveness and innovation and by completing the internal market;
- modernising the European social model, investing in people and fighting social exclusion;

- sustaining the healthy economic outlook and favourable growth prospects by applying an appropriate macro-economic policy mix« (ibid).

political background of the strategy

Key figures at the meeting were heads of state such as Gerhard Schröder and Tony Blair, backed up by respective French and Dutch premiers Lionel Jospin and Wim Kok and the President of the Commission, Romano Prodi; all leaders of a new form of labour. Schröder and Blair were both strong advocates of a so-called ›third-way socialism‹. This new social democracy is a compromise between socialism and liberalism. Its main focus is to combine strong social cohesion, maximum employment and a liberal market economy. The third way economy is an answer to, on the one hand, the Scandinavian's developed welfare state systems and, on the other hand, the libertarian states such as the United States. In this system, equal chances are supported through the education system, with an active labour market policy and with minimal social net for unemployed people.

Both Blair and Schröder were also outspoken believers in the European Union's integration and work as necessary for the future of Europe as a whole. Both were key actors in taking Europe to the next level, proposing the Euro which was turned down by British, Danish and Swedish citizens. Both leaders were also key actors in the development and promotion of the European Constitution that was later proposed and that was eventually voted against by French and Dutch citizens. The Lisbon Strategy as a motor of European integration would be able to facilitate a stronger Europe.

Although the prospects for the European economies were positive in 2000, European politicians and economists were looking for a response to Chinas' official (although challenged) economic growth rate of 7.8% in 1998 and 7.1% in 1999. The rhetorics focused on the need of an answer as well as a plan for the future if the EU were to sustain the levels of the current welfare states. In the philosophy of competing states, in which a comparative advantage is used to generate economic growth, this meant creating a new strategy based on Europe's current primary resource: human capital.

The Lisbon Strategy is clearly marked by this political background, being much broader than a simple economic reform package. The central concept that would act as the foundation for this new economy would be a previously unknown topic to the European Union: the ›Knowledge Economy‹.

the knowledge economy

Although knowledge and innovation have always been major driving forces for economies, only recently have they become central to the economic strategy of many governments around the world, with the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) acting as a major advocate. The knowledge economy is primarily focused on the production, management and distribution of knowledge.

RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND INNOVATION Key concepts are research, education and innovation. It is based on research by economists such as Christopher Freeman (founder of SPRU Science and Technology Policy Research) and Luc Soete (Director of the Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology, MERIT). In the knowledge economy, special attention is given to the fields of mathematics, science and technology. The aim is to facilitate the use of research in this field for economic purposes, by transferring research knowledge into goods that are distributed through a strong infrastructure. Competition between education institutions, as well as a strong link between public universities and the world of business is regarded as essential to reach this aim.

Innovation is the key word in the policies surrounding this knowledge economy. According to the American researcher Paul David and his French colleague Dominique Foray there are two ways innovation comes about. Firstly, research as a formal activity generates new knowledge. Secondly, individuals learn by doing and thus make discoveries which can progress knowledge (David/Foray 2001: 1). Both approaches are central to the Lisbon Strategy: producing marketable knowledge and educating human resources for the labour market. Since education and research are not primary responsibilities of the European Union, it adopted the Open Method of Coordination (see section on the OMC) as a new public management tool to constitute this knowledge economy.

a new compass for the european union

In 2004, the existing achievements of the Lisbon Strategy were assessed by a high level group, chaired by the above mentioned Wim Kok. It was a pessimistic review, stating that economic activities had not yet grown and more action was needed from all the actors in the European Union: both from the Member States and the European institutes (High level group 2004). The Strategy was re-launched in March 2005

as a logical reaction to the less than enthusiastic views on the Strategy's achievements up to that point.

The five areas of work identified in the »Kok Report«, which demonstrate the wide-reaching nature of the agenda, are:

1. »the knowledge society: increasing Europe's attractiveness for researchers and scientists, making R&D a top priority and promoting the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs);
2. the internal market: completing the internal market for the free movement of goods and capital, and taking urgent action to create a single market for services;
3. the business climate: reducing the total administrative burden; improving the quality of legislation; facilitating the rapid start-up of new enterprises; and creating a more supportive environment for businesses;
4. the labour market: delivering rapidly on the recommendations of the European Employment Taskforce; developing strategies for lifelong learning and active ageing; and underpinning partnerships for growth and employment;
5. environmental sustainability: spreading eco-innovations and building leadership in eco-industry; pursuing policies which lead to long-term and sustained improvements in productivity through eco-efficiency« (High level group 2004: 6).

Taken further by more (neo-)liberal governments, the growth of the economy is clearly reflected in the goals of the Strategy; which in turn are still connected to social cohesion and sustainability which foster growth. The strategy is further facilitating European integration, since many of its policies do not concord with

LISBON IS DISCUSSED AT
EVERY COUNCIL MEET-
ING AND MENTIONED
IN ALL EU-DOCUMENTS

the competencies of the European Union as outlined in the Maastricht Treaty (1992). So far the Lisbon Strategy has not obtained a high level of success. The Strategy is now the core work of the European Commission with the twenty-five commissioners all involved in its implementation. It is discussed at every council meeting and mentioned in almost all documents produced

by the Union.

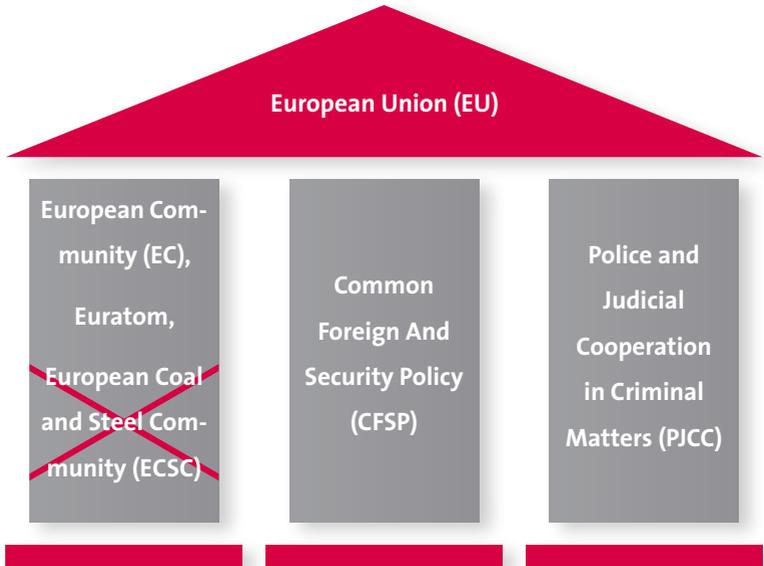
In the unlikely event that the goals of the Lisbon Strategy be achieved by 2010, it remains hard to foresee that the Strategy as such will cease to be, as it is now so embedded in the framework of EU policy making and strategising. The European Union will, without doubt, continue

to seek the competitive edge over the rest of the world and the Open Method of Coordination will most likely remain a public management instrument for the foreseeable future. A 10-years reform package became the new compass of EU policies—starting from a mere economic target, with an impact on all fields of politics and society.

2.2 how does the EU work?

the structure of the EU

The European Union is a very unique organisation, which cannot be compared to traditional international organisations. It is described as a Greek temple consisting of three ›pillars‹ with the EU as their roof. This structure was developed in the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 and tries to combine the original structure of the European Community (EC) with the newly established policy fields »Common Foreign and Security Policy« and »Justice and Home Affairs«.



the first pillar: the european communities

The first pillar is the original part of the EU. It consists of two self-contained organisations: The European Community (EC) and Euratom. The founding treaty of the third organisation, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was limited to 50 years and therefore ceased to exist in 2002.

The legal character of the first pillar is described as »supranational«, mainly because its legal nature goes beyond the nature of traditional international organisations (like the UNO). The term »supra« also indicates that the EC law is supreme to national law.

The operating method of the first pillar is often called the »Community Method«. It is characterised by:

- Majority voting (a Member State can be forced to implement a decision against its will)
- Direct effect of EC law (Under certain circumstances EC law is directly applicable within the Member States, it does not need any implementation and is also directly enforceable by the citizens of the Member States)
- Supremacy of EC law over national law (national law which contradicts EC law is not applicable)
- The Member States have to share their power with independent bodies, such as the European Commission
- Obligatory jurisdiction of an independent Court of Justice

Policy areas within the first pillar: All the traditional policy areas of the EU like Customs Union and Single Market, Common Agricultural Policy, EU Competition Law, Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), EU-Citizenship, Education and Culture, Consumer Protection, Healthcare, Environment, Social Policy, Asylum and Immigration, Schengen and so on, are in the competency realm of the European Community and therefore form the core of the first pillar.

the principle of subsidiarity and proportionality

The principle of subsidiarity is supposed to ensure that the EU, in its actions, does not interfere with the competences of the Member States: The EU is only allowed to take action (in those policy areas which do not fall under its exclusive competence) if the proposed action cannot be efficiently taken at a national, regional or local level. It is closely connected to the principle of proportionality, which requires that any action by the EU shall not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the EC Treaty (Art 5 EC).

the second and the third pillar

The second pillar deals with »Common Foreign and Security Policy« (CFSP).

The third pillar is called »Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters« (PJCC) and deals with co-operation in the fight against (organised) crime. This area was originally named »Justice and Home Affairs«. Certain issues like asylum and immigration policy have been transferred from the third to the first pillar.

In the second and the third pillar the influence of the Commission, the European Parliament and the Court of Justice are significantly limited; most decisions are taken unanimously and have to be implemented in the Member States to enter into force.

the european union (EU) as the roof

THE EU IS AN UMBRELLA EMBEDDING THE THREE PILLARS IN A COMMON CONCEPT

The EU is not an actual organisation; it is simply an umbrella to certain treaty provisions embedding the three pillars in a common concept. Often, when talking about the EU, the European Community is meant. Most of the legal decisions and actions are taken within the European Community (EC) in the first pillar and therefore make up the body of Community law (EC law). This is not however the case as far as the »Common Foreign and Security Policy« (CFSP) and the »Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PJCC)« are concerned. However, all three pillars have common organs, the difference residing only in their specific roles (consultation, co-decision ...) and decision making requirements (majority, unanimity ...).

EU institutions and decision-making bodies

The main institutions and decision-making bodies of the EU are:

- The European Parliament, which represents the EU's citizens and is directly elected by them;
- The Council of the European Union (the Council of Ministers), which represents the individual Member States;
- The European Council, which represents the heads of state of the various Members and provides representation of these Members on a permanent basis.

- The European Commission, which seeks to uphold the interests of the Union as a whole;
- The European Court of Justice, which guarantees the uniformity of the application and interpretation of EU law as well as the compliance with it.

the european parliament

The European Parliament is the institution which directly represents the 450 million citizens of the Member States. It has a five-year mandate.

The Parliament has three main roles:

1. It shares the power to legislate with the Council.
2. It exercises democratic control over all EU institutions, in particular the Commission.
3. It shares authority over the EU's current annual budget of 100 billion Euro with the Council

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are not organised in national blocks, but in Europe-wide party-like political groups. The main meetings of the Parliament are held in Strasbourg, others in Brussels. The Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) deals with educational issues.

the council of the european union (the council of ministers)

The Council shares the responsibility for decision making with the Parliament. It is also the main actor in the field of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters.

The Council represents the governments of the Member States. It is made up of one representative per Member State at a ministerial level. Meetings are attended by whichever ministers are responsible for the items to be discussed, as appropriate: Foreign Ministers, Ministers of Economy and Finance, Ministers for Education and so on.

Each country has a number of votes in the Council broadly reflecting the size of their population, but weighted in favour of smaller countries. The Council decides with 'qualified majority', which is supposed to ensure a majority of Member States as well as a majority of the population represented by those States.

The Presidency of the Council is held for six months by each Member State on a rotational basis.

the european council

Up to four times a year, the Presidents and/or Prime Ministers of the Member States meet as the European Council. The European Council provides the Union with the necessary impetus for its development and defines the general political guidelines thereof (Art 4 TEU). The most ›famous‹ European Council meeting in the last years was the Lisbon Summit in 2000 where the so-called Lisbon Strategy was first formulated.

the council of europe

The European Council is often mixed up with the **Council of Europe**. However, the Council of Europe has nothing to do with the European Union. It was founded in 1946 and is currently composed of 46 Members. The Council was set up to defend human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law, to develop continent-wide agreements to standardise social and legal practices, and to promote awareness of a European identity based on shared values.

The Council's most significant achievement is the **European Convention on Human Rights**. It sets out a list of rights and freedoms, which States are under an obligation to guarantee to everyone within their jurisdiction. They are enforced by the **European Court of Human Rights** in Strasbourg (not to be mixed up with the European Court of Justice of the European Union).

the european commission

The European Commission promotes the general interests of the Union; it is the driving force within the EU's institutional system and is therefore often called the »Motor of European integration«.

- It has the right to initiative and is therefore the only body permitted to initiate legislation in the first pillar.
- The Commission also has the task of »Guardian of the Treaties«: it controls compliance with EC and EU law by the Member States.

- Furthermore the Commission is in charge of controlling the EU competition rules. It even has the power to impose penalties not only on Member States but also on individual companies.
- Last but not least, the Commission executes the budget.

The Commission currently consists of 27 Commissioners—one from each Member State. They are nominated by their national governments in consultation with the in-coming President and approved by the European Parliament. They do not represent the governments of their home countries; each of them has a responsibility for a particular EU policy area. The current Commissioner in charge of education is Ján Figel.

The President of the Commission is chosen by the governments of the Member States and endorsed by the European Parliament. The President and members of the Commission are appointed for a period of five years, coinciding with the mandate of the European Parliament.

»EDUCATION AND TRAINING 2010« INTEGRATES ALL ACTIONS IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In the field of education, the Commission has endorsed a 10-year work programme within the Lisbon strategy called »Education and Training 2010«, which integrates all actions in the fields of education and training at European level, including vocational education and training as well as the Bologna Process.

the european court of justice (ecj)

The European Court of Justice is the supreme court of the EU. Its seat, unlike many other EU institutions, is in Luxemburg. The main actions to come before the ECJ are:

- Actions for breach of Community law: If the Commission or a Member State claim that another Member State has violated EC law or has not implemented the necessary legal requirements to fulfil its obligations under EC law.
- Actions for annulment: if an EC institution has exceeded its powers.
- »Preliminary ruling«: Whenever a national court has doubts concerning the interpretation or the validity of EC law it has to submit the question to the ECJ. The ruling of the ECJ is binding for the national court. This procedure is supposed to ensure the uniformity of the interpretation and application of EC law.

founding and amending treaties

The Treaty of Paris, establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, which was signed in 1951, entered into force in 1952 and expired in 2002.

The Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC). Those treaties are often called the »Treaties of Rome«, because they were signed in Rome in 1957. They entered into force in 1958.

Single European Act 1986:

- Majority Voting instead of unanimity
- Starting point for the Internal Market
- formal inclusion of the European Council in the Treaty

The Treaty on the European Union (Maastricht 1992): It changed the name of the European Economic Community to »European Community« and introduced new intergovernmental structures in the fields of Common Foreign and Security Policy and Justice and Home Affairs. The structure formed by the Three Pillars is the European Union.

Treaty of Amsterdam 1997

Treaty of Nice 2001: Trial of an institutional reform needed for further enlargement, which in most parts failed.

enlargement

The founding treaties have also been amended whenever new Member States acceded:

1973: Denmark, Ireland, Norway (of course Norway never ratified the treaty as it did not join the EU), and the United Kingdom

1981: Greece

1986: Spain, Portugal

1995: Austria, Sweden, Finland, and Norway (again no ratification)

2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia

2007: Bulgaria, Romania

2.3 the open method of co-ordination

THE OMC APPLIES ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO PUBLIC GOVERNANCE

The inclusion of a knowledge-based society and economic globalisation on the Lisbon Agenda has resulted in new challenges. In order to tackle these, a new tool was necessary. The new method of policy-making which was created is called the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC). The OMC is supposed to be the driving force for the modernisation of European employment, economic, education and social policies. The OMC is a policy tool that derives from the new public management approach of State governance, which tries to apply economic management techniques to public governance structures.

While the economic integration within the EU sped up during the 1990s, the lack of social and political integration was increasingly obvious. The creation of a single market and a single currency (the Euro) has led to an ever-increasing interdependency and also to new constraints on the Member States. The corset of the EU's Stability and Growth Pact (not more than 3% of GDP annual budget deficit, public debt lower than 60% of GDP) has proved to be so restrictive that Member States were simply unable to use monetary policy as a tool for job creation, an active labour market and the implementation of a social inclusion policy.

This interdependence has led to an increasing interest in each other's fiscal policy and therefore also in the individual Member States' expenditures in fields such as social security, employment, or education (see also Trubek/Trubek 2003). As a result, a comparative policy has sprung up whereby the different national systems have now developed the need for common action on the European level.

The Member States were willing to expand EU integration, but still reluctant to transfer further competences from the national to the European level. Against this backdrop the only desirable solution was the creation of a non-binding coordination tool: The OMC. The OMC is applied as an alternative to the existing EU modes of governance and decision-making as it allows discussion, co-ordination, and the search for consensus on a European level and even beyond, while the decisions

on the concrete implementation still remain the responsibility of the Member States.

how does the omc work?

The OMC is not based on legal measures, it is based on so-called soft law mechanisms such as guidelines, indicators, benchmarks and sharing of best practise. »Soft law« means that there are no official sanctions if the defined goals are not achieved, but instead the whole process is more or less a co-ordination process. It relies on dynamics such as »political learning«, peer pressure and international prestige. The method is applied in various different ways and to differing extents throughout the various policy fields.

A prominent role is played by the European Council, which is taking on a »pre-eminent guiding and co-ordinating role to ensure overall coherence and the effective monitoring of progress towards the new strategic goal« (European Council 2000: paragraph 36). The European Commission also plays a crucial role as a catalyst in the different stages of the OMC by presenting proposals on European guidelines and indicators, organising the exchange of best practice, and supporting, monitoring and carrying out peer reviews. There is no official role in the OMC for either the European Parliament or for the Court of Justice.

The core principle of the OMC is »political learning«, which basically results from peer pressure and the application of the so called »naming-faming-shaming« method.

How does this function?

The OMC works in 5 stages (see also European Council 2000):

- The European Council agrees on general policy goals and guidelines. For the Lisbon Strategy this happened in 2000 at the Lisbon European Council.
- These goals and guidelines are specified by the Council of Ministers. In the field of education, the Council of Education Ministers defined the objectives for the education systems in 2001 in Stockholm. (Find more detailed information of the concrete steps in the field of education in the following chapter »Education within the Lisbon Process«.) In addition short, middle, and long-term timetables are established, and further procedures are agreed upon between the Member States.

- Indicators and benchmarks are developed to define the concrete way to reach the abstract goals. At the Education Ministers Council in 2002 in Barcelona, the Ministers agreed upon the indicators and benchmarks in the field of education. Following this Council Meeting, the Ministers translated those European benchmarks into national action plans (so called NAPs)
- In order to reach the defined benchmarks, the EU Member States develop concrete policies and reforms designed for their respective national situations and environments. In the field of education, discussions towards those policies are intensively fed and backed-up by the EU Commission.
- Last, but definitely not least, the results of the reforms in the Member States are submitted in reports and evaluated and compared on the European level. The EU member states have to publish annual progress reports on the implementation of Lisbon in the field of education, which are then compared and evaluated in joint reports by the EU.

This final step is the determining motor of the method. It is often referred to as the system of »naming-faming-shaming« which is supposed to replace the system of formal sanctions and the review by the European Court of Justice: On the basis of the NAPs and reports, the Commission names good and bad practices; through evaluations and (partly) ranking the progress within the Member States, the EU Commission can condemn or praise the performance of the States. Peer pressure and the aim of gaining an international reputation are one of the main driving forces of the Lisbon Strategy and its dynamics, as this statement demonstrates:

THE COMMISSION
NAMES GOOD AND
BAD PRACTICES

»In this account, Member States will seek to comply with the guidelines in order to avoid negative criticism in peer reviews and Council recommendations. The recommendations are often rather pointed observations about poor performance; the assumption is that nations will seek to avoid such negative publicity and thus will either make policy changes in advance to avoid recommendations or quickly adopt the recommendations once issued in order to limit the negative publicity they generate.« (Trubek/Trubek 2003: 19)

why is the method called »open«?

The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) can be considered as a multi-player as well as a multi-level form of governance (not of formal decision making, however). The process of coordination takes place on two levels: a horizontal one (between the respective institutions of the EU itself) and a vertical level (EU—Member States—sub-state-level authorities; this process is supposed to work both ways: bottom-up and top-down).

On the European level only general indicators and benchmarks are set, the concrete targets and the way to attain them must be set and implemented on the national or even regional level and should necessarily differ from Member State to Member State. Those practises declared to be »best practices« should be assessed and adapted in their national context. This process is supposed to ensure both the flexibility to take into account the various and different situations within the Member States as well as the insurance that the EU doesn't gain new competences by co-ordinating the process in those policy fields.

Since it was designed as a multi player form of governance, the OMC should include a range of different stakeholders and players, especially from the local level and the civil society. In the field of education this includes stakeholders like ESIB or EUA (European University Association).

»A fully decentralised approach will be applied in line with the principle of subsidiarity in which the Union, the Member States, the regional and local levels, as well as the social partners and civil society, will be actively involved, using variable forms of partnership. A method of benchmarking best practices on managing change will be devised by the European Commission networking with different providers and users, namely the social partners, companies and NGOs« (European Council 2000, paragraph 38).

assessing the omc

As a new mode of policy making and the core method of the Lisbon Strategy, the OMC is subject to praise as well as to strong criticism.

Among the positives are:

- THE OMC IS SUBJECT
TO PRAISE AS WELL AS
TO STRONG CRITICISM
- The OMC is able to tackle sensitive policy areas over which Member States are still reluctant to transfer their power to the EU. Advocates argue that the OMC »enables Member States to cooperate closely, yet recognises their diversity and avoids forced harmonisation. It allows coordinated action in areas where it would be politically difficult, or even impossible, to move forward through a common policy or legal framework. [...] Thus progress can be made through open coordination where otherwise there would be none« (Hughes 2000).
 - According to the EU, the OMC is »a flexible method, allowing exchange and coordination in a way and to a degree appropriate to the policy in question« (European Commission 2005c: 3); it therefore also offers the necessary flexibility to take into account the specific national situation, background and needs in the often very complex and distinct policy fields where unification or harmonisation would not work.
 - Member States also agreed »that the streamlined OMC can usefully be applied to this area [social inclusion] in order to stimulate policy development, highlight common challenges and facilitate mutual learning«. (European Commission 2005c: 4)

Among the negatives are:

- Critics point out that the OMC is a way for the Commission to put its foot in the door of the national policy area. In the field of education for example, the EU's competencies are basically limited to mobility programmes, while the Lisbon Strategy allows strong and all-embracing impulses on national education policy. Those »recommendations« are empowered by the »soft« forces of the OMC and have a huge impact on the various national education reforms.
- Another major point of concern is of democratic nature: namely the lack of separation of powers and democratic legitimacy. The executive (the national Ministers, the European Council, and the EU

Commission) sets the policy agenda and defines goals and benchmarks, while the legislature (EU Parliament) and the judiciary (European Court of Justice) are generally excluded from the whole process.

- Furthermore, the method is also implying a political agenda itself. Arising from the theory of new public management, the OMC is affected by business language and logic, such as efficiency, flexibility, lean management and benchmarking. Critics fear that with the OMC appearing as a neutral and non-ideological tool, those business concepts could override political principles such as equality, democracy and involvement. While the OMC has been seen as the major tool for eventually implementing a Social Europe as a second pillar next to the Economic Europe, the concern grows that through the specific, market-orientated ideological background of the Lisbon Strategy social and societal issues will be further commodified and basic democratic and social values might be scarified for the values of a competition-orientated market economy.

- Because of the OMC's inherent principle of competition between the Member States this process might also lead to a competition between the lowest social and democratic standards resulting from the close link to the Stability and Growth Pact and the Member States fiscal policy. Many critics point out that the principle of efficiency is often confused with a mere cost-orientated view. As a consequence, best practice models are not those models which necessarily effectively improve the situation, but those which debit the State's household the least.

CRITICS POINT OUT THAT
»EFFICIENCY« IS OFTEN
CONFUSED WITH A
COST-ORIENTATED VIEW

2.4 the lisbon strategy in non-EU countries

Within the geographical area of the European continent and its immediate neighbourhood, the Southern Mediterranean, the European Union as a supranational construct of 25 member countries has become a global actor in a wide range of policy areas.

The European Union has multi-fold relations with its neighbouring countries. These can generally be separated into two areas—economic and political cooperation with the members of the European Economic Area (EEA) or the European Free-Trade Association (EFTA) and supportive measures for the development of stable democratic, market economies in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe and the Southern Mediterranean. It may rightly be assumed that within these relations the European Union as a large and powerful actor is setting the political pace on the European continent and in the Southern Mediterranean.

The Lisbon Agenda is, without a doubt, one of the political processes which may also leave a mark on the policies of its neighbours.

LISBON LEAVES A
MARK ON THE EU'S
NEIGHBOURS

This would not be a surprising matter, since its political aims might be seen as the universal goal of nation states: to improve a country's economic competitiveness and attractiveness on the international level, to increase economic growth, to attain more and better jobs and social cohesion. Thus, such an impact from

the EU partly originates from a voluntary alignment of individual nation states based on similar political aims and goals. However it may result from interdependence between the EU and neighbouring countries (Emmerson 2004a: 2).

The Lisbon Strategy does encompass policy areas such as education, which are not solely the responsibility of the EU.

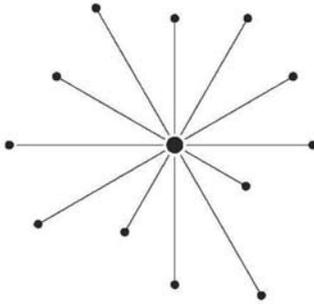
Whereas member states of the European Union may choose to disregard the suggestions by the EU Commission, neighbouring countries can be more receptive and willing to comply with it. Such compliance is visible both in the political strategy documents of the individual non-EU countries as well as in the progress reports, which are issued for non-EU countries receiving financial support from the various support programmes of the EU.

diverse neighbourhood

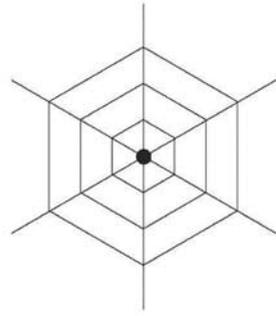
The neighbourhood of the European Union can be differentiated into two main groups—stable democracies with competitive market economies, which do not wish to enter the EU, as well as countries already embarked on the transformation process, wishing to either enter or strengthen their relations with the EU. This group comprises of a number of countries either awaiting their accession or who are accession candidates, whilst others may simply enjoy a privileged relationship with the EU.

Emmerson has defined this complex system of relations between the EU and its neighbouring countries as concentric circles (Emmerson 2004a: 13). Furthermore, he developed four different model types to explain the organisation of a complex region. Those are:

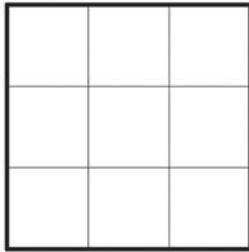
- The *hub-and-spoke* system, based on bilateral relations between a leading power and many smaller states or entities.
- The *cobweb* system, with successive concentric circles of states and entities surrounding (neighbouring or dependent upon) the leading power, but where there are multilateral relations around each circle, as well as bilateral relations with the leading power.
- The *matrix* represents the breaking down of the relations between a leading power and a complex region by policy domain and by state or entity.
- The *rubik cube* represents the same matrix where there is more than one leading power (Emmerson 2004a: 31).



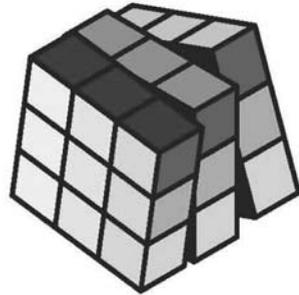
hub-and-spoke



cobweb



matrix



Rubik cube

model types for the organisation of a complex region (pict.: Emmerson 2004a: 31)

The most intense relations exist with the stable democracies and economically competitive countries in Northern and Central Europe as well as with the accession and candidate countries and the closest neighbours of the Western Balkans. The European Neighbourhood Policy is a security policy around the borders of the new EU member countries as much as it is an extension of the European Union's economic sphere to South-Eastern and Eastern Europe as well as to the Southern Mediterranean.

european free-trade association (EFTA) and european economic area (EEA)

The EU's closest relationships exist with Switzerland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Iceland, who are members of the European Free-Trade

Area (EFTA). The EU cooperates with all but Switzerland, in the framework of the EEA, which allows for free movement of goods, services, capital and persons between these countries and the EU. Such intense cooperation preconditions comparability and compatibility of the policies in areas such as competition and state aid rules as well as horizontal provisions relevant to the four freedoms. These provisions form the legal basis for incorporating community legislation on social policy, consumer protection, the environment, statistics and company law into the EEA Agreement. Finally, the Agreement covers co-operation outside the four freedoms in flanking areas, such as research and technological development, information services, education, training and youth, employment, enterprise and entrepreneurship and civil protection. The policies connected to the Lisbon Strategy thus directly impact the relations of the EU with the other EEA members in a number of policy areas, requiring compliance by non-EU EEA members with suggested reforms in order to ensure the compatibility of policies relevant to the four freedoms.

accession countries and candidates to the EU

Strong links also exist with the accession countries, i.e. Romania and Bulgaria with an expected accession date of January 2007 as well as candidate countries to the European Union, which include Turkey, Croatia and Macedonia. All of these countries have bilateral agreements with the European Union on accession support measures as well as necessary political and economical reforms in order to align their policies with the policies and legislation of the EU. Documents listing the requirements set by the EU, the yearly progress reports and the national strategy documents of the respective countries reflect the impact of the Lisbon Strategy on them.

western balkans and the stabilisation and association process (SAP)

The countries of the Western Balkans have a very specific political relationship with the European Union, which is called the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP). In addition to Croatia and Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbia as well as Montenegro are included in this process. These countries have bilateral relations with the European Union and have to comply with similar reform measures to those laid out in the Lisbon Strategy. However, unlike the members of the ENP, these countries are offered a long-term perspective for

membership into the European Union based on the notion that democratic and economic stability of the region can only be reached by offering them a clear perspective for European integration

european neighbourhood policy (ENP)

The EU has developed the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which encompasses countries in Eastern Europe as well as in the Southern Mediterranean and countries in the Middle East. Through this programme, Belarus, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria and Tunisia are offered partial access to the internal market of the European Union, favourable trade regulations as well as financial support under the condition of the implementation of democratic and economic reforms, the rule of law and the safeguarding of human rights in their respective countries. The impact of the Lisbon reform measures on education through the European Neighbourhood Policy can be found in the National Action Plans, which are bilaterally agreed upon between the EU and the respective non-EU countries. They are also reflected in the yearly Progress Reports of the ENP and the national strategy documents developed in each country.

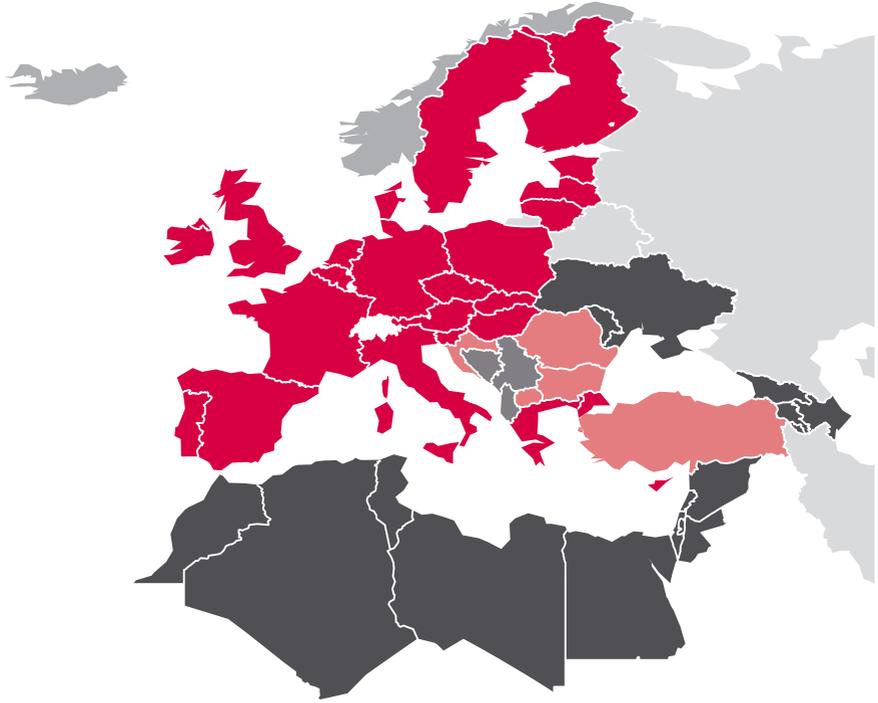
impact of the EU by voluntary alignment of the neighbourhood

Interdependence between the members of the EEA and the EFTA require the compatibility of certain policies in order to ensure that economic relations between the European Union and the non-EU members in the EEA and the EFTA are not compromised by unfavourable or incompatible conditions for the business sector and the labour market. Furthermore, neighbouring countries which are in the process of political, social and economic transformation and receive financial and political support from the EU (and its member states), have to comply with the conditions connected to these financial aid programmes, set by these actors. Thus, interdependence between the European Union and its non-EU neighbouring countries offers the EU a strongly influential power when it comes to EU policy, leaving the non-EU little alternative to compliance.

INTERDEPENDENCE
LEAVES NON-EU COUN-
TRIES NO ALTERNA-
TIVE TO COMPLIANCE

impact of EU policy in international intergovernmental organisations

The neighbouring countries of the EU are members both of the Bo-



Map 1 Neighbourhood of the European Union

- EEA countries
- EFTA countries
- Western Balkan
- countries of the European Neighbourhood Policy
- accession and candidate countries to the EU
- members of the EU

logna Process and the Council of Europe (CoE). They are also affected by the Lisbon Strategy through discussions and policies of EU- and non-EU countries within those institutions. Lisbon has an obvious impact on the policies suggested by the Bologna Process, which is visible in explicit references in the official documents of the Bologna Process. Furthermore, the financial and infrastructural support measures² of the EU also politically affect non-EU countries.

impact of EU policy in regional networks

The political relationships between EU Member States and their non-EU neighbours provide a forum for the exchange of information on the aims and reform measures of the Lisbon Agenda.³ This serves to widen their scope and impact, since cross-border co-operation favours the comparability and compatibility of economic, social and educational systems in neighbouring countries. This further promotes the implementation of reforms agreed upon at an EU level.

impact of EU policy via demonstration effects

Transition countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, which are not members of the European Union are currently in the process of reforming their political, economic, social and educational systems in order to become competitive on the international level. One key factor for economic growth and societal development in these countries is the reform of the educational system in order to ensure that the need for a skilled labour force, with emphasis on particular services or industries, is met by the national higher education system. In their initiative to implement reforms according to these aims, countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe are supported by a number of the EU's developmental programmes.

However, the political importance of the partnership of Eastern and South-Eastern European countries with the European Union promotes the alignment of their policies with EU initiatives reflected in Communications of the EU Commission, regardless of financial or infrastructural support. This measure can be understood as an initiative and desire for increased co-operation and a long-term perspective for integration into the EU.

impact of the EU by interdependence between EU and neighbouring countries

interdependence between EU and non-EU countries in the EEA

The countries of EFTA and EEA to a large extent follow the EU's economic principles. They are also in close alignment with the aims and reforms of the Lisbon Strategy, as it is first and foremost an economic reform agenda. In the area of higher education they are included in and receive financial support from the EU mobility programmes including ERASMUS Mundus, which is aiming at attracting the »best brains« worldwide to Europe.

interdependence between EU and non-EU countries based on EU financial support schemes

Accession and candidate countries also have to follow the Copenhagen Declaration (2002) criteria and the acquired cultural realities as a precondition for entry into the EU. Like the EFTA and the EEA, they are also included in the Community mobility programmes.

The political impact from the EU on the countries of the Western Balkans and on Eastern Europe stems from the preconditioned need of diverse financial support measures and access to the internal market of the EU. In the area of higher education, the TEMPUS⁴ supports infrastructural and curricula development in partnership between higher education institutions from EU and non-EU countries as well as allowing for limited mobility of students and staff to the partnering institutions. Thus it promotes reforms in the areas of higher education governance, curricula development and, since places are limited, the mobility of the »best brains«.

effects of such impact on the EU's neighbours

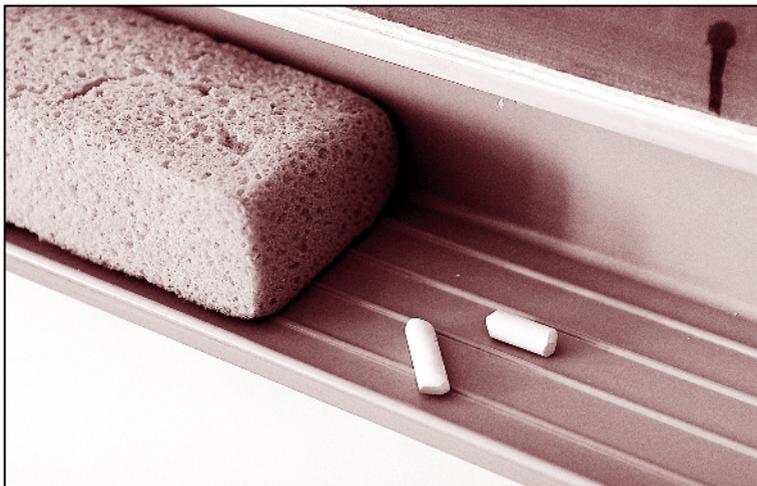
The impact of the EU educational policy varies according to the political and economical relations with the different countries. The EU exercises much of its influence because of security considerations—supporting transformations which lead to stable democracies and competitive economies in non-EU countries and which are, hence, friendly neighbours to the EU. Additionally it is certainly driven by an economic motivation to open new and sustainable markets for trade

in order to increase the political influence and competitiveness of the EU on the international level.

The position of a pacesetter however also carries its own problems in processes that reach beyond the scope of the EU, particularly the Bologna Process. The problem of setting the agenda through diverse means instead of developing it with all the partners involved, on an equal footing, could create a problem of acceptance of and resistance to these policies among the neighbourhood. If the EU and its members are aiming to create a »ring of friends« around their borders, offering their neighbours access to the internal market of the EU, beneficial trade regulations and financial support, while assuring the common interest of all concerned this may not be the easiest way to go about creating unhierarchical relationships. Treating the neighbouring countries as equal partners would be a mark of good governance.

TREATING NEIGHBOUR-
ING COUNTRIES AS
EQUAL PARTNERS?

3 education within the lisbon agenda



3.1 what's happened so far

Officially, the European Union only has a small role to play in the field of education. Articles 149 and 150 of the EC Treaty state that the EU should contribute to the development of quality education. It should encourage the co-operation between the member states and promote mobility—»while fully respecting the responsibility of the member states for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems« (European Union 2002b). This means that the EU can take no legal action that goes beyond this definition.

When the Lisbon Agenda was launched in 2000, the focus on the »knowledge society« was declared the core element of the EU's political work. How to do that, if you do not have the possibility to take legal action on education systems, the basic engine of a knowledge society? The EU found its answer in the Open Method of Coordination, which allows great impact on fields like education. With this method of policy making, the implementation of Lisbon in the education systems goes beyond what would be possible through legal competences. It focuses on establishing a political discourse, on endless repetition of buzzwords and benchmarks, and on peer pressure mechanisms.

THE »KNOWLEDGE
SOCIETY« AS CORE ELE-
MENT OF THE EU'S
POLITICAL WORK

setting goals and benchmarks

The first step was taken in February 2001 at the Education Ministers Council meeting in Stockholm, where the ministers decided upon »The concrete future Objectives of Education and Training Systems«.

At their meeting in February 2002 in Barcelona, the Education Ministers Council took the second step by adopting a detailed work program (European Council 2002b) as a follow-up of the Stockholm objectives. For those three strategic objectives, the ministers defined 13 objectives altogether and the respective indicators and benchmarks to measure progress in each field, as well as a timeline for the implementation, defining by when the goals should be reached.

1. Increasing the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the EU
 - Improving education and training for teachers and trainers

- Developing skills for the knowledge society
 - Ensuring access to ICT for everyone
 - Increasing recruitment to scientific and technical studies
 - Making the best use of resources
2. Facilitating the access of all to the education and training systems
 - Open learning environment
 - Making learning more attractive
 - Supporting active citizenship, equal opportunities and social cohesion
 - Opening up education and training systems to the wider world
 3. Strengthening the links between working life & research and society at large
 - Developing the spirit of enterprise
 - Improving foreign language learning
 - Increasing mobility and exchange
 - Strengthening European co-operation

shaping a discourse and forming policies

The EU Member States then translated those indicators and benchmarks into national action plans. The reforms taking place on a national level were visibly backed up by conferences and communications published by the EU Commission.

NATIONAL REFORMS ARE VISIBLY INFLUENCED BY EU DOCUMENTS

The first main Communication by the Commission that proposed policy action for national reforms of the higher education systems, »The role of the Universities in the Europe of Knowledge« was presented in 2003, followed by a consultation process and a follow-up communication in 2005, »Mobilising the Brainpower of Europe—enabling Universities to make their full Contribution to the Lisbon Strategy«. In May 2006, the Commission published a third communication on higher education: »Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: Education, research and innovation«. Reacting to critical remarks that highlighted a conflict between the concepts of equity on the one hand, and efficiency on the other, the Commission published

another communication in September 2006: »Equity and efficiency in European education and training systems«.

Although those papers don't pose legal obligations to the Member States, they do describe problems and provide »solutions« to those problems. By this they suggest political priorities that are often taken up by the Member States and translated into National Action Plans (NAPs).

naming—faming—shaming

In February 2004 the Commission presented a joint interim report on the implementation of the detailed work programme as adopted in 2002 in Barcelona, stating that »The Success of the Lisbon Strategy hinges on urgent Reforms«. In this communication, the Commission proposed to publish such a joint report every second year, and suggested »that the Member States submit [to the Commission] each year as of 2004 a consolidated report on all the action they take on education and training which can contribute to the Lisbon strategy in view of the objectives set, results achieved, and the four above mentioned strategic levers« (European Commission 2003b: 17). The EU member countries submitted their national reports in 2005, which served as a basis for the draft joint report in November 2005, which will be followed by another joint progress report in 2008.

Model to be used in the follow-up of quantitative indicators to support the implementation of the objectives using the open method of coordination

	Present levels			Progress		Benchmarks (where feasible)/Reference Criteria (see note below) ⁽¹⁾	
	Average (EU)	Average of 3 best performing (EU)	USA and Japan	2004	2010	for 2004	for 2010
Indicator							
Indicator							
Indicator							

⁽¹⁾ On the basis of chosen indicators for each objective an interim report foreseen in 2004 and the final report foreseen in 2010 will include an evaluation of progress made. Where feasible, European-wide benchmarks could be set by the Council by consensus within the scope of articles 149 and 150 of the EC Treaty. Furthermore, the reference criteria (benchmarks) for 2004 and 2010 will be communicated by the Member States on a voluntary basis. This process of implementation will require the availability of national statistical data according to the indicators chosen

For the evaluation of the progress in the defined sectors, the EU uses the table on the left (European Council 2002b: 19), which compares the EU-average with the top three »best performers« of the EU, as well as with the US and Japan. It also compares the defined benchmarks with the actual achievements:

the most important EU documents:

February 2001, Council of Education Ministers, Stockholm: »The concrete future Objectives of Education and Training Systems«

February 2002, European Council, Barcelona: »Detailed Work Programme on the Follow-up of the Objectives of Education and Training Systems in Europe«

November 2002, Communication from the Commission: »European benchmarks in education and training: Follow-up to the Lisbon European Council«

January 2003, Communication from the Commission: »Investing efficiently in education and training: an imperative for Europe«

February 2003, Communication from the Commission: »The role of the universities in the Europe of knowledge«

April 2004, Communication from the Commission: »Mobilising the brainpower of Europe: enabling universities to make their full contribution to the Lisbon Strategy«

November 2005, Communication from the Commission: »Modernising education and training: a vital contribution to the prosperity and social cohesion in Europe« (2006 joint progress report)

May 2006, Communication from the Commission: »Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation«

September 2006, Communication from the Commission: »Efficiency and equity in the European education and training systems«

3.2 the changing role of education

In the second half of the last century, the student numbers throughout Europe increased dramatically. Tuition fees were abolished, social support for students introduced and expanded, participation in decision-making processes within universities was strengthened. These political measures that were introduced in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as well as the principles they followed, are referred to as the »first wave« of changes in the education systems (Kerr 1987). The main driver behind this first wave was the idea of striving for equal opportunities.

»It would however«, according to the EU Commission about three decades later, »be presumptuous to believe that this open, egalitarian, horizontal and sometimes minimalist approach could provide a sound basis for the knowledge economy and society in Europe and for Europe’s place in the world.« (European Commission 2005b: 3). Indeed, the reforms that have been shaping our education systems in the past years have a very different character than the reforms that governments introduced in the 1970s. This so-called »second wave« of educational reforms follows the purpose of adapting universities to the new technologies and the demands from industry, the labour market and the national advancement in the light of global competition.

CURRENT REFORMS
HAVE A VERY DIFFERENT CHARACTER
THAN IN THE 1970s

changing the spin

While the first wave rested on the intention to realise a political ideal, promoters of the second wave argue with the urgency to adapt to the changing realities of a globalised economy. »Last time, also, change was directed toward shifting power in the political process; this time at improving performance in the economic. Last time the attempted change came largely from within—from students and from their faculty allies on the left. This time it comes principally from the outside, and as a matter of economic necessity not political preference« (Kerr 1987: 187). The meanings of the terms »learning«, »knowledge« and »education« are losing their emancipative character; education is mainly seen as an instrument with which to improve the global competitiveness of the European Union, following the »natural pow-

ers« of our market society. Though this argumentation might seem objective and unideological, the reforms and their effects show that they do have a political character and an ideological basis. The starting point is the principle of competition for all sectors of policy, society and economy. Cutting down democratic decision-making structures or introducing tuition fees are—according to the credo of »there is no alternative«—presented as necessary follow-ups.

Starting from an economic goal, the Lisbon Strategy designs policies for all sections of society, including higher education. But within this discourse, there's often not much room left for general thoughts on whether what we are doing is actually how we want our education systems to function. Therefore, when discussing EU policies on higher education, some basic questions should be considered:

- Which sections of society benefit from the reforms? Which groups would lobby in favour of certain reforms and which groups would lobby against?
- What are the basic assumptions and dogmas that the argumentations are based on? Which logic and ideology are these assumptions rooted in? Do we agree with them?

With those considerations in mind, find here an overview over the main elements of EU education policy and rhetoric, quoted from Commission papers.

»Universities are key players in Europe's future and for the successful transition to a knowledge-based economy and society. However, this crucial sector of the economy and of society needs in-depth restructuring and modernisation if Europe is not to lose out in the global competition in education, research and innovation.« (European Commission 2006a: 11)

financing of higher education

»The worsening under-funding of European universities jeopardises their capacity to keep and attract the best talent, and to strengthen the excellence of their research and teaching activities. Given that it is highly unlikely that additional public funding can alone make up the growing shortfall, ways have to be found of increasing and diversifying universities' income. [...] At the March 2002 Barcelona European

Council, the Union set as its target to increase Europe's research effort to 3% of its GDP.« (European Commission 2003a: 12)

»Four main sources of university income can be identified:

- Public funding for research and teaching in general, including research contracts awarded on a competitive basis. [...] There is a limited margin of manoeuvre for increasing public support. [...]
- Private donations can prove a substantial source of income for universities. [...]
- The universities can also generate income by selling services (including research services and flexible lifelong learning possibilities), particularly to the business sector, and from using research results. [...]
- Lastly, contributions from students, in the form of tuition and enrolment fees.« (European Commission 2003a: 13)

»For the future, it seems likely that the bulk of resources needed to close the funding gap will have to come from non-public sources.« (European Commission 2006a: 4)

»Each country should therefore strike the right balance between core, competitive and outcome-based funding (underpinned by robust quality assurance) for higher education and university-based research. Competitive funding should be based on institutional evaluation systems and on diversified performance indicators with clearly defined targets and indicators supported by international benchmarking for both inputs and economic and societal outputs.« (European Commission 2006a: 8)

access, equity and tuition fees

»It has been shown that free higher education does not by itself suffice to guarantee equal access and maximum enrolments. This casts the much debated issue of tuition fees in a fresh perspective.« (European Commission 2005b: 8)

»Where tuition fees are introduced, a substantial part of the funds should be redistributed as income-contingent grants/loans aimed at guaranteeing access for all, and as performance-related scholarships aimed at encouraging excellence.« (European Commission 2005b: 10)

»Student support schemes today tend to be insufficient to ensure equal access and chances of success for students from the least privileged backgrounds. This applies equally to free access, which does

not necessarily guarantee social equity. Member States should therefore critically examine their current mix of student fees and support schemes in the light of their actual efficiency and equity. Excellence in teaching and research cannot be achieved if socio-economic origin is a barrier to access or to research careers. [...] The bulk of evidence shows

»EXCELLENCE CANNOT
BE ACHIEVED IF SOCIO-
ECONOMIC ORIGIN IS A
BARRIER TO ACCESS«

that there are usually significant private returns to those who participate in higher education, and that these are not entirely offset by progressive tax systems. [...] Many countries are turning to the main direct beneficiaries of higher education, the students, to invest in their own futures by paying tuition fees [...]. By guaranteeing bank loans and offering income-contingent loans, scholarships and means-tested grants, governments can encourage access by less wealthy students.« (European Commission 2006c: 7f).

governance and autonomy of higher education institutions

»[The universities] should have an effective decisionmaking process, a developed administrative and financial management capacity, and the ability to match rewards to performance.« (European Commission 2003a: 17)

»The over-regulation of university life hinders modernisation and efficiency.« (European Commission 2005b: 4)

»In an open, competitive and moving environment, autonomy is a pre-condition for universities to be able to respond to society's changing needs and to take full account for those responses.« (European Commission 2005b: 7)

»Universities will not become innovative and responsive to change unless they are given real autonomy and accountability. Member States should guide the university sector as a whole through a framework of general rules, policy objectives, funding mechanisms and incentives for education, research and innovation activities. In return for being freed from overregulation and micro-management, universities should accept full *institutional* accountability to society at large for their results.« (European Commission 2006a: 5)

»Member States should build up and reward management and leadership capacity within universities. This could be done by setting up national bodies dedicated to university management and leader-

ship training, which could learn from those already existing.« (European Commission 2006a: 6)

employability, lifelong learning and qualification frameworks

»In order to overcome persistent mismatches between graduate qualifications and the needs of the labour market, university programmes should be structured to enhance directly the employability of graduates and to offer broad support to the workforce more generally. [...] Credit-bearing internships in industry should be integrated into curricula. This applies to all levels of education, i.e. short cycle, Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programmes. [...] This should extend beyond the needs of the labour market to the stimulation of an entrepreneurial mindset amongst students and researchers.« (European Commission 2006a: 6f)

»STIMULATION OF AN
ENTREPRENEURIAL
MINDSET AMONGST
STUDENTS«

»Lifelong learning presents a challenge, in that it will require universities to be more open to providing courses for students at later stages in the life cycle. [...] In summary, while the integration of graduates in the labour market is a responsibility shared with employers, professional bodies and governments, labour market success should be used as one indicator (among others) of the quality of university performance, and acknowledged and rewarded in regulatory, funding and evaluation systems.« (European Commission 2006a: 7)

attractiveness and mobility

»European universities are functioning in an increasingly »globalised« environment and find themselves competing with universities of the other continents, particularly American universities, when it comes to attracting and keeping the best talent from all over the world. [...] The Union will also step up support to enhance the attractiveness of European universities through action to support mobility under the Sixth Framework Programme, which will enable over 400 researchers and doctoral students from third countries to come to European universities between 2003 and 2006, and under the »Erasmus World« initiative.« (European Commission 2003a: 21)

»WORLDWIDE COM-
PETITION OVER TAL-
ENT, PRESTIGE AND
RESOURCES«

»Most universities are strongly dependent on the state and ill prepared for worldwide competition over talent, prestige and resources.« (European Commission 2005b: 4)

»If universities are to become more attractive locally and globally, profound curricular revision is required—not just to ensure the highest level of academic content, but also to respond to the changing needs of labour markets.« (European Commission 2005b: 5)

»One fundamental point is to simplify and accelerate legal and administrative procedures for the entry of non-EU students and researchers.« (European Commission 2006a: 10)

excellence, quality and the european institute of technology

»The concentration of research funding on a smaller number of areas and institutions should lead to increased specialisation of the universities, in line with the move currently observed towards a European university area which is more differentiated and in which the universities tend to focus on the aspects situated at the core of their research and/or teaching skills.« (European Commission 2003a: 18)

»Excellence can only emerge from a favourable professional environment based in particular on open, transparent and competitive procedures.« (European Commission 2005b: 6)

»The accountability of universities to society also requires an external system of QA. In Europe this should be done through a network of QA agencies—catering each for a country/region or a discipline/profession—agreeing on some basic criteria in order to facilitate the cross-recognition of quality seals throughout the Union [...] Europe's universities need quality seals with international credibility.« (European Commission 2005b: 7)

»The Commission has already proposed the establishment of the European Institute of Technology (EIT) which was welcomed by the 2006 Spring European Council [...] It can contribute to improving Europe's capacity for scientific education, research and innovation, while providing an innovative model to inspire and drive change in existing universities, in particular by encouraging multi-disciplinarity and developing the strong partnerships with business that will ensure its relevance.« (European Commission 2006a: 2)

cooperation with business and industry

»European universities also need to become more attractive partners for industry. Lasting partnerships are a condition for structured staff exchanges and for curricular development responding to industry's need for well trained graduates and researchers.« (European Commission 2005b: 9)

»Clearly, European universities need to attract a much higher share of funding from industry; but they must recognise that this will only happen in partnerships where both sides find an interest, and start preparing themselves for more of these [...] The Commission therefore invites Member States to ensure that fiscal rules enable and encourage partnerships between business and universities, and that universities are able to use such funds in ways which will provide continuing strength.« (European Commission 2005b: 10)

»While the public mission and overall social and cultural remit of European universities must be preserved, they should increasingly become significant players in the economy, able to respond better and faster to the demands of the market and to develop partnerships which harness scientific and technological knowledge. This implies recognising that their relationship with the business community is of strategic importance and forms part of their commitment to serving the public interest. Structured partnerships with the business community (including SMEs) bring opportunities for universities to improve the sharing of research results, intellectual property rights, patents and licences (for example through on-campus start-ups or the creation of science parks).« (European Commission 2006a: 6)

3.3 bologna and lisbon

Although higher education is still retained under the auspices of single states, it is increasingly present on the policy agenda on an international level. Various levers increase the pace of internationalisation and Europeanisation of higher education. There are a number of reasons for such course of development. Two, at a first glance separate processes, offer the platform for changes in higher education: the Bologna Process and the process following the Lisbon Strategy of the EU.

higher education at the centre of attention

The very nature of our society and its subsystems calls for constant evolution and change, thus the higher education systems are under constant and significant pressure to undergo changes.

The different external challenges that tend to trigger the redefinition of the varying functions of the higher education systems in Europe are:

- the knowledge society and economy;
- the Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation of the economic, social, political settings within which the institutions operate;
- the development and the impact of new information and communication technologies.

European higher education must respond to the evolving nature of our world. A decisive move forward was needed in order to ensure that higher education policy is respected and that our institutions fit seamlessly into the modern world.

As far as economics go, we can confidently claim that the knowledge society is vital to the competitiveness of the European economy with the US or fast growing Far East economies. This concept of the knowledge economy characterises new relationships between the State, the society and the economy. Many national and supranational policies and codes of practice are introduced in its name. Knowledge society emphasises the current shifts in our society (highly skilled labour forces, the international circulation of »brains«, life long learning, transferable skills and the belief that competences and knowledge

management are key to organisational capacity, on both individual and collective capacities).

Higher education and research are without doubt key instruments in boosting knowledge-based industry and services. It is therefore only natural that higher education should appear at the centre of development strategies.

Combining these two viewpoints clearly points to higher education as one of the fulcrums of the contemporary political and economic strategy, of core importance to the development of society.

bologna process and lisbon strategy

The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy were born separately and in two different contexts:

The Bologna Process was conceived in the late nineties and was officialised when the ministers, responsible for higher education in 29 European countries, signed the declaration in Bologna in 1999. These

**BOLOGNA SHOULD
MAKE THE HE-SYSTEMS
MORE COMPARABLE
AND COMPATIBLE**

ministers agreed to make the higher education systems more comparable and compatible in order to allow researchers, teachers and students to move freely between universities and take advantage of the wide variety of higher education opportunities. Reformed studies across Europe should grant greater graduate employability and attract citizens from Europe and beyond.

In 2000, a year later, the European Council summit under Portuguese presidency took place in Lisbon. In Barcelona, two years after the birth of the Lisbon Strategy, the EU summit strengthened the commitments in the field of higher education by setting the goals for the education and training systems which would become a world reference by 2010 (European Council 2002a).

similarities and differences between the two processes

In the Bologna Process, the states agree upon measures to be undertaken and the according adjustments to their systems. The governments still adopt their own legislation, but they do so in response to, or in anticipation of, the measures and policy of each other in reference to the previously agreed plan. In the case of the Lisbon Strategy, the main motive of the process is the co-ordination of the national

level policies through an intergovernmental negotiation. National governments transform the agreements into national law on their own (Wende 2003).

LISBON INSTEAD
SHOULD BOOST THE
EUROPEAN ECONOMY

In the sense of policy areas, the Bologna Process is limited to higher education and research. The Lisbon Strategy instead reaches a larger spectrum of policy areas in order to boost the European economy and guarantee a high level of competitiveness. The EU's main rationale for action has consistently remained an economic one, which is obvious in the Lisbon Strategy: »Its policy texts call for higher education activities to be responsive to the »needs« of the labour market and industry« (Keeling 2006: 209). Although the Bologna Process also emphasises the role of higher education in the labour market and in economic development, the divergence appears obvious, given the increased focus on the social dimension and related public goods in the Bologna Process (Wende 2003).

The Lisbon Strategy officially involves far less countries than the total number of countries that adhered to the Bologna Process. The Bologna Process thus reaches far beyond and has a bigger geographical frontier than that of the Lisbon Strategy. The Bologna Process uses a bottom-up system with a considerable and far more direct involvement of higher education institutions, students and other partners (Bergen communiqué 2005). However, the Lisbon Strategy was designed to be led directly by the commission.

Notwithstanding all the above mentioned distinctions, the common ground between the two processes is easy to spot. Both were conceived in the context of developing the knowledge society, economic integration and the complex relationship between Europe and the rest of the world (Zgaga 2004: 70). Due to all of these factors, the European Commission was coerced into participating more decisively in issues relating to higher education.

the increasing role of the european commission

The European Commission was not granted significant influence in the field of higher education until the Council meeting in Lisbon 2000. There were, however a few areas in which it still dealt with higher education. A number of projects and activities, such as the Socrates-Erasmus mobility programme, paved the ground for further co-oper-

ation in higher education in Europe and were later taken over by the Bologna Process.

With the Prague Communiqué (2001), the European ministers responsible for higher education granted the European Commission membership to the Bologna follow-up structures that drive the developments of the Process between the biennial ministerial meetings. Since then the Commission has been permanently present and has an official say in the Bologna Process. Many of the Bologna initiatives are »mainstreaming« solutions, first developed by the Commission to enhance the international mobility of the European students and their qualifications (e.g. the European Credit Transfer System, ECTS). The Commission also provides incentives for higher education co-operation and reform projects in line with the Bologna objectives. In addition, the Commission runs projects that are in line with certain Bologna elements, specifically in the field of quality assurance and accreditation.

In 2002 and 2003, the Directorate General for Education and Culture at the European Commission released the first progress reports that offered a systematic overview of the ever-growing number of activities of the European Commission in the field of higher education, including the Erasmus programme. They were related to all the action lines, as well as to the evolution of the Bologna Process. In most cases, the Commission has carried out the measures in co-operation with the member state governments (Zgaga 2004: 71). In the same period the EU educational activities gained prominence when national ministers responsible for education endorsed the first European-level *Work Programme for Education and Training 2010* (European Council 2002b). This document, in combination with the European benchmarks (European Commission 2002), represented concrete common strategies in the field of higher education.

Besides taking part in the Bologna Process, the European Commission substantially intensified the policy activities in the field of higher education. The Lisbon Strategy is the framework within which the commission's involvement has evolved. Over the years, the influence of the Commission on the Bologna Process increased visibly. The higher education policy of the European Commission is developing alongside both Lisbon and Bologna.

opinions, directions and outcomes of the two processes

ONE CONCERN IS THAT
HE IS SUBORDINATED
TO THE NECESSITIES
OF INDUSTRY

According to some scholars, one of the most feared possible consequences of the contemporary processes in higher education is that teaching, research and the university would be stripped of its autonomous status and subordinated to the necessities of industry and economic development. The higher education reform proposals in the name of the Lisbon Strategy are often prepared by economic experts and based simply on economic arguments. The role played by higher education in society is seldom taken into consideration. The doubtful legitimacy of the European Commission to interfere so strongly in a sector that has not been a matter under its auspices, the questionable experts, contradictory documents within the frame of the Lisbon Strategy as well as the Commission's heavy influence on the Bologna Process are criticised. The high quality teaching and learning, and the restoration of the broader intellectual mission of the European university could be at risk (Tomusk 2004).

Nevertheless, it is difficult to ignore the increasing pressure from society on higher education. In this respect, the Bologna Process is further-reaching than the Lisbon Strategy and therefore more able to accommodate the peculiarities of the academic world and the complexity of higher education. The changing needs of economy and employers are only part of the large-scale changes in society. The Bologna Process should, therefore, not be considered as a political strategy at the service of the economy and large companies. Besides preparing the individual for the labour market, the higher education institutions are also preparing students for active citizenship in a democratic society, contributing to their personal growth, as well as maintaining and developing an advanced knowledge base (Bergan 2005: 27). »The Bologna Process builds on the heritage of European universities, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances is very much a part of this heritage. The public responsibility for higher education also means conserving and building on this heritage, and to transfer it to future generations« (ibid: 25).

Furthermore, the origin and the content of the Bologna Declaration is easier to understand if it is not read as an academic document, but rather as an agenda for change in higher education driven by social and economic considerations (Haug 2005: 203). There is little doubt that the Bologna Process is also a result of the EU labour market

integration. It has in fact contributed much to the discussion on the relationships between the world of work and higher education institutions. Teichler (2004: 2) sees the Bologna Process as »the real opportunity [...] to reconsider and reshape the relationships between higher education and the world of work«. The growing awareness of the need for providing and increasing graduates' employability encourages changes and reforms in higher education.

From another extreme point of view, both the Lisbon strategy and the Bologna Process are the two ineffective processes centrally orchestrated by the Commissions' bureaucracy and hampering the process of the modernisation of higher education. This perspective envisions higher education as the ultimate tool for the improvement of the economic performance. According to some opinions, the Bologna Process fails to integrate the vocational education and short cycles, and does not contain anything with which to close the gap between the labour market and higher education (Ferrandez/Whittington 2006).

discussion

The two view points could be compared to the two approaches that characterise the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy. Both are responding to the challenges of the modern world but each from a different perspective. The Bologna Process is addressing the academic world, and higher education in a broader way with the aim of responding to the challenges of a modern European society, while the Lisbon Strategy encompasses reforms across a broader spectrum, higher education included, and aims mainly at improving the economic performance of the EU. It appears that the economic goals are far more directly addressed in the Lisbon Strategy. Higher education is a part of the set of instruments that are supposed to bring Europe to a more competitive level in economic terms. The Bologna Process, on the other hand, caters for the complexity of the academic world and the multiple role of higher education in society.

One of the common denominators of the two processes is that both are heavily influenced by the European Commission which in other words would mean that the Commission is pulling the strings of two processes in order to achieve the desired outcomes and goals. Nevertheless, the Commission still operates on the very edge of its competences, when it comes to higher education. The Bologna Process is more inclusive both in terms of the adhering states and stakeholders involved and, therefore, better accepted in the higher education community. Thus it is possible to conclude that in practice the Commis-

sion took, or is about to take over the Bologna Process in order to facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the Lisbon Strategy.

The sceptics from one side accuse both processes of jeopardizing the intellectual mission of European universities and of the instrumentalisation of higher education for economic purposes. On the other hand, we can encounter those who accuse both processes as ineffective in responding to the urgent needs of the modern labour market and society. Anyhow, it is difficult to overlook the scarce ability of the universities to fit into the modern world. Levers to accelerate the transformation of universities and higher education reforms are needed.

It is probable that the continent needs both the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy, but the choice between which of the two tracks is adequate in which segment of the reform process, must be made on the basis of a sound reflection and the awareness of the unique role that free knowledge within the confines of the university plays for the development of science, the enhancement of democracy and the progress of society. The strategy aiming mostly at achieving economic goals and supported only by experts in economics should not interfere with the complex subsystems of society, such as higher education. The Bologna Process shows a good amount of inclusiveness and consideration. As a platform of Europeanisation and thorough reform of higher education, it should continuously question its measures and approach, should base its steps on solid expertise, and should not be dominated by the Lisbon Strategy of the EU.

4 the implementation of lisbon



Building of the European Parliament, Strassbourg

4.1 notes on the implementation process

This chapter will translate what you have read so far into a picture that will be more familiar to you: the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda within the European countries. First you will find a general overview of the implementation process, followed by reports from four individual countries. The countries we chose include »old« EU countries, a »new« EU country, as well as a non-EU country. The similar structures of the reports will allow you to discover the similarities and distinctions in the characters of the implementation processes.

general remarks

NOT EVERYTHING
IS DONE IN THE
NAME OF LISBON

Not everything that is being done in the field of higher education in Europe is done in the name of Lisbon, and not everything that is done in the name of Lisbon actually has to do with the Lisbon Agenda. This makes it a bit hard to tell what the implementation of Lisbon looks like. To make it more concrete, we are outlining three reasons as to why this is the case:

- The Open Method of Coordination (OMC): As described earlier, the OMC is a very open and loose way of directing policies. The EU defines the direction of political actions, sets benchmarks and proposes a range of actions for the implementation of the defined goals. But the implementation and the priorities are up to the countries. This »soft law« mechanism makes it harder to detect the roots of policies and reforms.
- The national reports (NAPs): Accordingly, the elements described in the national reports don't necessarily need to be directly connected to the goals set at the European level. Sometimes they are just used as a basket where every action that is taking place in higher education, and that can in any way be associated with Lisbon, is thrown in, in order to satisfy the Commission.
- The ideology behind: Lisbon follows the idea of the »competing state«, of nations or regions competing against each other in the

worldwide arena of economic performance. This idea was born much earlier than 2000, and extends far further than Europe. Lisbon can, therefore, not even be called a process as such, but rather a motor behind a political-ideological agenda in the lines of a socio-liberal transformation of the function of the state, the market and the individual.

COMPETITIVENESS,
EFFICIENCY, FLEXI-
BILITY, AUTONOMY,
ATTRACTIVENESS

»Lisbon« and the »knowledge society« are often mentioned as buzzwords in the discussion on educational reforms. Further buzzwords that you have most likely already come across in the education discourse in your country are amongst others: »world-class«, »competitiveness«, »efficiency«, »flexibility«, »social cohesion«, »autonomy«, »attractiveness« ... These words dominate the discussions on higher education across Europe and are used by governments to legitimise whatever is being done. In the same way, the European level as such is used as a legitimisation—calling a reform a »European idea« often substitutes political discussions.

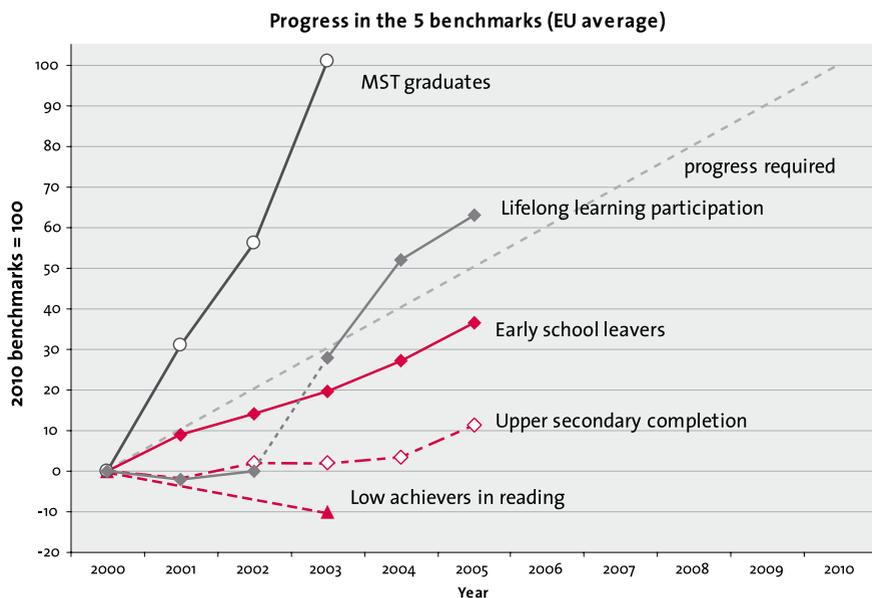
Despite these difficulties, the following articles will try to detect the lines of policy making that finally produce the whole picture of the Lisbon implementation.

the 2006 joint interim report

In 2004 the EU published the first joint interim report on the progress made towards the Education and Training 2010 (E&T 2010) programme. This report called on urgent reforms in order to approach the set goals and benchmarks. In order to be able to follow the steps of implementation more closely, it proposed the production of such reports every two years.

The »2006 joint progress report«, is based on the 2005 national reports and includes EU members and EFTA (European Free Trade Association)/EEA (European Economic Area) countries, as well as acceding and candidate countries.

The report analyses the progress made in the countries, basically stating that, over the past few years, the Lisbon Strategy had become a factor in national education and training policy development. The following graph (European Commission 2006b: 10) will give you an overview of the average progress towards the five benchmark areas to be reached by 2010. The zero-line shows the status of the year 2000, while the 100 % line shows the level of the set benchmarks for 2010.



What is immediately apparent is the huge progress made in the field of mathematics, science and technology graduates, as opposed to the decrease in »low achievers in reading«, and the very slight progress achieved in the percentage of »completion of upper-secondary education«.

Whilst the spending on education as a percentage of the GDP is increasing in nearly all EU countries, most countries argue that financial constraints keep them from implementing the necessary reforms in the fields of social inclusion and employability. The report states that »investing in education and training has a price, but high private, economic and social returns in the medium and long-term outweigh the costs. Reforms should therefore continue to seek synergies between economic and social policy objectives, which are in fact mutually reinforcing.« (ibid: 3) The report defines the financing of higher education as the key challenge, and states that an additional 180 billion Euros per year are necessary to close the funding gap. In the report, the stimulation of private investment is demanded from the participating countries. In reality, the countries tended to focus on increasing the private investment from individuals and households (e.g. through tuition fees), while there has been less extensive effort made to increase the investment from employers.

The report also gives an overview of the progress made on the European level towards the E&T 2010 programme: An E&T coordination group has been set up; the working groups that followed the progress of the central goals of the programme were substituted by »country clusters«, groups of countries that adhere to similar priorities in the implementation of Lisbon. They are organising »peer learning activities« to support each other in the implementation process. For 2006, the Commission is proposing recommendations to the EU Council and Parliament on the creation of a European Qualifications Framework, and will also focus on increasing the quality of teacher education as well as on adult learning.

LITTLE PROGRESS

IN THE FIELD OF

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Finally, the report expresses concerns that there is so little progress in the field of social inclusion: »Unless significantly more efforts are made in the areas of early school leaving, completion of upper-secondary education, and key competences, a larger proportion of the next generation will face social exclusion, at great cost to themselves, the economy and society.« (ibid: 10) While it states that access to education must be independent from the socio-economic background it doesn't answer the question of how this should be combined with striving for the introduction and increase in individual financial contribution to higher education, namely tuition fees.

4.2 ireland

After Ireland's term as holder of the EU Presidency during the first part of 2004, and spending significant time on education-related issues within the Lisbon structure in that capacity, there has been relative peace and quiet. Here, the Lisbon Objectives as applied to education have generally been dealt with in conjunction with other aspects of reform, rather than as explicit goals or targets in isolation.

There are seven universities and 14 »institutes of technology« or »ITs« (akin to polytechnics in other nations) in Ireland, as well as a number of other public institutions (such as teacher training colleges), private institutions, and a growing further education sector. Universities and the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) award their own degrees and are controlled by the Universities Act and the DIT Act respectively. Other higher education institutes are either associated with a university or come under the auspices of the Higher Education Training and Awards Council (HETAC), who can then delegate award-making power to an individual institution. Around 150,000 students are in higher education in Ireland, with an age cohort participation of over 50% (HEA 2006).

This article does not deal with Northern Ireland, where the implementation of Lisbon comes under the jurisdiction of the Northern Ireland Department of Education and Learning and the UK Government.

the government's central aims

IRELAND HAS HIGHLIGHTED THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMY

Reading the progress reports of the Irish government with regard to Lisbon and education, it is clear that while the targets and goals of Lisbon have an influence on the content of the debate and policy process on education in Ireland, they are treated as a contribution or outline (Government of Ireland 2005). The Irish government has for many years highlighted the role of education and training in the development of the Irish economy; in addition, major reforms in higher education took place during the 1990s, including as just some examples the abolition of undergraduate tuition fees for all full-time Irish or EU students, the enactment of new university legislation (the Universities Act), the evolution of the regional technological colleges

into ITs, and the planning of the National Framework of Qualifications. However, as set out below, there has been a recent move towards further ›reform‹, in which the influence of Lisbon, especially at the doctoral level, is apparent.

One of the primary elements of Lisbon-related policy development in Ireland is what is broadly termed ›reform of higher education‹, which was effectively launched after the OECD Review of Higher Education (OECD 2004). The Irish Government accepted the report (in outline), and a number of current initiatives are clearly and consciously based upon the report's findings.

concrete reforms

financing and student support

HEIs in Ireland typically depend on State funding for the vast majority of income. This is distributed under two headings, ›block grant‹ (presently allocated as a general grant without subheadings or targeting) and finance ›in lieu of fees‹ (tuition fees for Irish or EU students were abolished in 1995). However, it is generally recognised that funding has failed to keep pace with costs or even inflation, although an increase of 7% was announced for the financial year 2006 (Irish Department of Finance 2005b). Other sources of funding include targeted grants (e.g. for QA, e-learning, etc) and tuition fees for postgraduates (2nd/3rd cycle) and non-EU students.

No major reform of funding has taken place to date, although the reintroduction of tuition fees was debated and dropped in 2002/3, and the HEA is presently reforming the financial allocation model. These changes (which are not legislative but administrative) are being phased in from October 2006, and will resemble the existing allocation formulae of the Higher Education Funding Councils in England and Wales (HEFCE and HEFCW). In the last few years, some universities have also reformed their internal financial procedures along market-influenced lines. It is also worth noting that a number of influential reports have recommended the reintroduction of some form of fees (OECD 2004: 56-9, National Competitiveness Council 2005: 121-2, Royal Irish Academy 2005: 38-9)—but the political climate is such at present that this is not a realistic prospect, at least until after the next general (parliamentary) election, which will most likely take place in mid-2007.

Student support in Ireland has not changed significantly in recent years, although a number of measures to combat disadvantage were expanded, including higher grants for students from low-income fam-

ilies, and the creation of a coordinating National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education, as a sub-unit of the HEA. Reform of the administration of student finance is expected in 2006/7, although this will focus on long-standing domestic grievances relating to slow payment rather than anything more substantial. While the Minister of Education has made various announcements, no legislation has been introduced in parliament at the time of writing.

STUDENT SUPPORT
HAS NOT CHANGED
SIGNIFICANTLY

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and representatives of academic staff, including the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) (primarily in ITs and further education) and the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) (primarily in universities) have been very critical of government spending on education (USI 2005). The Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC) has also called for investment, and in particular for the abolition of tuition fees for part-time education (IBEC 2004).

governance

Legislation was drafted in 2005 to bring institutes of technology (ITs) (non-university HEIs) within the governance of the Higher Education Authority, which presently allocates funding to universities and a number of other colleges. The HEA has less day-to-day involvement in the governance of HEIs than the Department of Education, which presently administers ITs in conjunction with local vocational education committees. This legislation was passed in summer 2006 and is currently being implemented.

The OECD made a number of other significant recommendations that relate to aspects of the Lisbon objectives, such as the reduction in the size of university and IT governing authorities (which are generally regulated by statute and include student and staff representation, and many external members in most cases) (OECD 2004: 26). No legislation has been promised on this matter to date.

attractiveness

Research and Development: The meeting of Lisbon targets has received significant attention from the Government and stakeholders. Although the Irish target is to see gross expenditure on R&D increase to just 2.5% by 2013 (not 3%), from a 2001 position of 1.4%, this is still considered an ambitious target, especially in conjunction with the related ambition to almost double the number of researchers in the economy (from 5 in 1000 to 9 in 1000) (Government of Ireland 2005:

20-1). However, the most recent budget and a number of prior budgets included designated funding for academic and non-academic research (Irish Department of Finance 2005a: 10). The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) adopted a policy on Lisbon and postgraduate numbers in 2005, calling for adequate student supports and the maintenance of quality. The Irish Universities Association (IUA) has been very active on research issues, and maintains a database (www.expertiseireland.com, 11.11.2006) among other projects. The IUA was the first stakeholder to make significant use of the term ›fourth level‹ (as an addition to first level (primary), second level/secondary (post-primary) and third level/tertiary (HE), which are commonly accepted terms) to refer to research (IUA 2005), and the Government has now adopted this term.

International Students: Within many institutions, there is a strong desire to attract more students from outside of the European Union. This is primarily for financial reasons; as EU students do not pay tuition fees, there is little room for an institution to respond to financial pressures or to increase discretionary income within the framework of the Irish or EU student intake. They receive a set contribution per student from the government, which does not cover the ›actual cost‹ of education. Therefore, increasing the number of EU students can actually lead to a net loss for the institution (as the ›block grant‹ referred to above does not presently increase with increased intake. However, non-EU students, as well as all postgraduate students, pay fees that are set by the institution, without the necessity for government approval; so the ›actual cost‹ (or more) can be charged, and the full income retained by the institution for whatever purpose. Some steps have been taken to increase the attractiveness of Ireland as a destination for non-EU students, both by individual institutions and by the Department of Education—including the signing of bilateral agreements, high-profile delegations (of government and institutional representatives) to countries such as China and India, etc.

curricular Reform

Higher Education Reform in General: HE reform, and the associated legislation, is thus not expressed as being »Lisbon legislation«, but the influences are most visible, as explained above. Therefore, virtually all considerations of curricular change can be dealt with under the government's desire to see »HE reform«

The principles of HE development and reform are defined by the Irish government as follows:

- flexibility of courses offered and lifelong learning

- increasing participation and access
- quality of teaching and learning
- increasing PhD numbers
- technology transfer

(Irish Department of Education 2005)

Strategic Innovation Fund: In the annual Budget announcement in the Dáil (lower house of parliament) on 7th December 2005, the Minister for Finance announced that €300m (over 5 years) would be allocated to a Strategic Innovation Fund, the creation of which was announced by the Minister for Education on 25th April 2005. The seven purposes of the fund were defined as rewarding internal restructuring/rationalisation, improving performance management, staff and structural reform, teaching and learning reform (inc. modularisation and e-learning), quality improvement, and ›access, transfer and progression‹ between institutions and levels.

conclusion

IT IS NOT CLEAR
WHETHER THE ECO-
NOMIC SUCCESS
IS SUSTAINABLE

Many other nations express their admiration for the recent economic success enjoyed by Ireland, and recognise the role of education and higher education in creating the conditions for this success. However, it is not clear whether it is yet sustainable, and a national debate on the role and funding of higher education is ongoing. This, naturally, colours the reception of the Lisbon-related issues in this country. Questions of the role of public funding, and the ability of the higher education sector to respond to the changing economic goals of the state, are certainly not answered definitively by documents transmitted from EU offices, although they are relied upon by most sides in advancing their own agendas.

4.3 austria

Austria already started a huge reform discussion in the late 1990ies, which came to its implementation with the change of government in 2000. The Austrian Universities Organisation and Studies Act from 2002 (University Act 2002) was one of the first comprehensive reform packages among the EU Member States taking into account the discussion on the European level. However, this anticipatory obedience (the law even passed before the first Communication from the Commission in that area was published) sometimes led into irremovable impasses, and reforms turned out to bring a lot of new problems with them.

the government's central aims

The Austrian national report, like in many other countries, includes a lot of different policy measures in various fields, many of them not even implemented yet or not connected to Lisbon Strategy at all. The goals are formulated in very trendy but empty keywords and the content often does not really fit the headline. The Lisbon Strategy, as well as the Bologna Process have often been misused to introduce disagreeable reforms.

Most of the top priority areas for the Austrian government were tackled by the University Act 2002, others are still in the fledging stages. The main focus lies on the renewal of the institutional framework for universities and the development of adequate steering and controlling instruments. The reforms give the universities more autonomy on the one hand and more responsibility and accountability on the other hand. In short, the University Act follows the concept of new public management by heart, treating HEIs as major enterprises. It has been widely criticised from teacher, student and other expert sides, mainly because the promised autonomy was reduced to a new responsibility to allocate resources, and because of the abolition of most of the democratic structures within the universities.

THE UNIVERSITY ACT
TREATS HE-INSTITU-
TIONS AS ENTERPRISES

In the field of curricular development the government clearly prefers »a talent-fostering, performance-driven and results-oriented« system (bm:bwk 2006: 22) to ensure the competitiveness of the students.

The obvious lack of adequate financing (both from the public and the private side) led to access restrictions in certain subjects, which caused a gradual narrowing of the access to public universities, in particular for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

concrete reforms

financing

The general idea of the University Act 2002 was to create »increased budgetary freedom in a secure financial framework« (bm:bwk 2002: 4) by »decentralisation of the education and training financing« (bm:bwk 2005: 9), which is realised through a management by objectives system. Part of the new financing system is also the levy of tuition fees: Since 2004 they are directly paid to the universities, from 2001 until 2004 they have been paid to the ministry.

The so-called »University Billion« issued in 2001 to finance technical device should cover this decrease of the university budget. However, it basically restored the budgetary situation from 2000. It was withdrawn again in 2003, which left the universities in a financial misery. Even the Austrian Rectors' Conference stated at that point that the lecture and research activities of the Austrian universities are demonstrably endangered and suspect that tuition fees serve the only purpose to stuff holes in the national budget (ÖRK 2003).

Tuition Fees: Since 2001, Austrian universities and some polytechnics have been charging tuition fees. The fee is € 363,36 per semester for EU and EEA citizens; students from third countries have to pay € 726,72. The fees are waived for students from the »poorest countries in the world«. Students from low-income families have the possibility to get their fees reimbursed and also to get additional subsidies. However, this system has been widely criticised as too inflexible, restrictive, and bureaucratic. Students have to advance the money on loan and have to wait for several months to get their payments from the State. Also other constraints like income limits are too rigorous to ensure proper student financing. Tuition fees led to a decrease of student numbers by 20 % immediately after their introduction. Only slowly the number of enrolled students is rising again, the amount of 242,598 students enrolled in 2000 is still not reached.

SINCE 2001, TUITION
FEES ARE CHARGED

Financing by Objectives: The universities will receive three-year global budgets based on »output and outcome« (bm:bwk 2005: 18). 80% of the higher education budget are distributed according to per-

formance agreements between the universities and the ministry. The other 20% of the national higher education budget are distributed in a competition between the universities according to quantitative performance criteria like quotations, graduates, relation students-supervisors etc. However, the judge between the universities still is the ministry, it has the steering power by setting the criteria. In the distribution of money, the demands of and responsibility for the society are supposed to be taken into account; however, the first experiences show, that in the new system only the profitable will survive. This system was supposed to enter into force in 2007, however the conclusion of the first round of performance agreements has already been postponed for one year. This means that the universities will have to work with an interim budget much below their needs for another year. Also sub-entities of the universities are controlled and steered through a system of management by objectives: each entity has to conclude performance agreements with the rectorate, which determine their financial resources, research focuses and staff capacities.

governance

The goal of the institutional change in the University Act 2002 was the creation of autonomy and the establishment of »modern management methods and efficient organisational structures«, as well as a »clear division of responsibilities, coupled with qualified participation« (bm:bwk 2002: 1). This was the turning point from internal self-administration to a clear hierarchic management structure and from academic co-determination to a mere right to give recommendations, in particular for students and the junior academic staff.

The law basically follows the principles of new public management, and the idea that democratic bodies are inefficient and students' co-determination is slowing down strategic and academic decision-making processes.

With the University Act 2002, the universities became fully-fledged legal entities with the autonomy to allocate their own resources and to be the employer of all personnel. The law foresees a structure based on the Academic Senate, the Rectorate and the University Council, whereby most of the powers are concentrated with the Rectorate.

The University Council is an externally supervision body, which represents economical and societal interests and is not obliged or responsible to anybody. Its tasks are the (dis)election of the rector, the approval of the development strategy, the internal organisation, and the performance agreements with the ministry. Since the ministry dele-

gates half of the University Council's members, their political clientele is also represented there: This currently ranges from the big bosses in economy to right wing nationalists. The University Act introduces two new instruments: the »organization plan« (internal structure of the university below the university level) and the »development plan« (university profile and research focuses). Both are proposed by the Rectorate and decided upon by the University Council. The Senate has a suspensive veto.

STUDENTS CAN LISTEN
AND COMPLAIN,
BUT THEY ARE
EXCLUDED FROM
DECISION MAKING

The structure below the university level differs from university to university and is determined in the organization plan of each university. The enumeration of all the models would go beyond the scope of this article, still it should be mentioned that some universities managed to find an even less democratic structure than the framework of the law foresees. At the University of Vienna, for instance, all bodies and conferences established below the university level only have a recommending function; decisions are made by single persons (deans etc.), students can listen and complain, but they are as much excluded from decision making as possible.

attractiveness

In 2005 a law passed, setting up the Institute of Science and Technology Austria (ISTA), a top-level PhD and Post-Doc research institution commonly referred to as the »University of Excellence«. This institution is supposed to »attract young, highly talented junior scientists« (bm:bwk 2005: 18). There is no fixed point for starting operations yet.

Austria is in particular proud about the considerably high percentage of 18% foreign students. However, the legal measures implemented do not correlate with this, when it comes to students from outside the EU or EEA: Those students have to pay the double amount of tuition fees and have to prove a study place in their home country to enrol at an Austrian university. A new law now allows the implementation of additional access barriers to prevent the rush from EU students coming to Austria due to the more liberal access regulations. Also the new regulations concerning residence and citizenship, which entered into force in 2006, created a very hostile atmosphere for researchers, as well as for students. It has been widely criticized by the Austrian research community.

Non traditional students: The promotion of non-traditional students is only taken into account when it comes to polytechnics. These institutions in particular facilitate alternative forms of access as well as part-time courses. However, there is the hope that the implementation of the Bachelor-Master system will increase the number of non-traditional student and those from a less advantaged socio-economic background, because the Bachelor programs are supposed to »enable students to acquire a de facto qualification in the normal course duration and offer a broad economically oriented qualification profile« (bm:bwk 2005: 19). Still there has been no adjustment of the subsidies system in order to meet the needs of non-traditional and working students.

Economy: Since 2004 the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) has the task to support co-operations between enterprises, universities, research institutions etc. which aim to strengthen the technology infrastructure, improve the co-operation between science and economy and increase regional innovation.

curricular reform

All new courses at universities must conform to the two-cycle system, all existing courses are progressively changed into the Bachelor-Master structure (there are some exceptions, like medical studies which will still remain in the old structure). According to the ministry, nearly 50% of the regular first-degree programmes provided by universities and polytechnics are offered as Bachelor-Master courses. However, most of the students are still enrolled in the old diploma degrees due to the necessary transition period.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Already in 1999, the Austrian Accreditation Council was established with the task of accrediting private universities. In 2004 the Austrian Agency for Quality Assurance (AQA) was founded on the joint initiative of public and private universities, polytechnics, the Student Union ÖH and the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture. AQA is currently a mere service institution for quality assurance and evaluation. Universities have to find their own QA mechanisms and measurement criteria. The lack of control and consequences concerning evaluation results, e.g. regarding lectures, is still a major problem.

conclusion

The Austrian government implemented one of the biggest higher education reform packages in Austria after the huge reforms in the 1970ies. Critics have been widely spread, and the promised results of the reforms did not become reality, while the negative assumption more or less came true. The reforms have been designed and implemented against the resistance of the students and wide parts of the academic staff, and still nobody feels really happy with the new system. The HE situation in Austria today does not present a very bright picture. The recent OECD Survey »Education at a glance« shows Austria's very poor performance concerning the HE participation rate, graduates and also concerning private and public investment into HE.

REFORMS HAVE BEEN
MADE AGAINST THE
RESISTANCE OF
STUDENTS AND
ACADEMIC STAFF

Also crucial points, like the promotion of women or equitable access to HE in socio-economic terms (E&T Strategic Objective #2: »Facilitating the access of all to education and training systems«) have not even been touched by the reforms. Even worse, the access to higher education is restricted more and more.

4.4 slovenia

Slovenia made a relatively smooth transition to a market-oriented economy with a gradual and ongoing process of deregulation, privatisation and liberalisation. The country only joined the EU in 2004, but a large part of the economic and other policies were established to fit the standards, objectives and requests of the EU15 considerably earlier. Therefore, it is easier to find a lot of Lisbon Strategy elements incorporated in the various policies dating back to the start of the millennium. However, formal participation to the education segment of the Lisbon framework only began in 2002, when civil servants were included in the EU working groups responsible for individual objectives within the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme. Mostly, this participation was passive. When the Slovene Student Union (SSU) established contacts with government representatives in 2003, it was obvious that there was no national strategy behind the government's participation to the meetings in Brussels. With the shift in the government office after the general elections, a far-reaching reform package was proposed. The proposed measures are in line with the Lisbon Agenda and include major changes in the field of higher education.

THE PROPOSED MEASURES ARE IN LINE WITH LISBON

the government's central aims

The National Progress Report, implementing the work programme in the field of Education and Training 2010 could be considered a usual national report outlining the positive aspects and tending to alter the real picture. The report was written during a period when single elements of the Lisbon-oriented reforms were not working as a whole and were often not based on the Lisbon Agenda. In the field of higher education, the main progress described is the reform of the Higher Education Act in coherence with the Bologna Process. A new law on recognition and evaluation of education was adopted. The Bologna reform is now in the process of implementation; both on national level as well as in all higher education institutions.

The general elections and the new government (December 2004) have brought about a substantial change in the approach to education and training.

In June 2005, the Slovene government adopted *Slovenia's Development Strategy*, where interventions in the field of higher education and research were announced. In this document, incentives to improve quality and links between higher education, research and industry were foreseen. The government envisioned a boost in enrolments in science and technology studies.

As agreed during the EU Luxemburg presidency (spring 2005), the EU Member States were asked to present their development programmes in the context of the Lisbon Strategy by autumn 2005. The Slovene government employed a working group of experts to prepare the development framework proposal which was presented to public on 6th October 2005. It was adopted approximately two months later as the official reform programme called »*The Framework of the Economic and Social Reforms Aimed at Increasing the Welfare in Slovenia*«. The reform proposal represented a broad master plan for economic reforms. It proposed a number of measures reaching way beyond the narrow economic policy area and clearly showed its coherence with the Lisbon Strategy of the EU. Some proposals, such as flat tax and substantially increasing the flexibility of the labour market, implied relatively radical change. Among the fields addressed by the proposed measures was also higher education.

There was a mixed reaction from the political parties and opposition from a vast majority of the trade unions. Demonstrations were organised and, despite the blizzard, around 30,000-40,000 workers went out onto the streets of Ljubljana. Some major employers timidly but openly supported the solutions even though none of the social partners or stakeholders were officially consulted during the preparation of the reform programme. The Slovene Student Union was the first organised group that reacted to the proposed set of reforms. Student representatives especially emphasised the lack of consideration to the social aspects of studying in the proposed reforms and protested against the measures that would lead to the commodification of universities.

DESPITE THE BLIZZARD,
AROUND 30,000 WORK-
ERS WENT ON THE
STREETS OF LJUBLJANA

The European Commission reacted to the national reform programmes at the end of January. The general comment to the Slovene programme included criticism due to the lack of clearly defined priorities and an absence of concrete reform plans.

Following the approval of the proposed reform programme, a ministry, formally named *Government Office for Growth*, was established in order to coordinate the reform process. The scope of tasks covered

by the ministry is broad and reflects the profound nature of the adopted strategy.

There has not been a concrete legislative proposal in the field of higher education so far, but it was announced that a new Higher Education Act is being prepared. Once more, no stakeholder in higher education is officially consulted in the drafting phase.

For an outsider, it is difficult to trace the common ground for policy proposals between the government office for growth and the Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Technology. Some of the statements hint at a lack of harmony between two offices (e.g. the tuition fees policy).

concrete reforms

In the field of higher education, some major reforms were proposed. In general, the proposed strategy was aiming at more market-oriented conditions in the higher education arena. It is clear from the text that the working group was composed mainly of experts in fields other than higher education. In fact, they proposed the abolishment of the so-called procedure of *nostrification* of diplomas, even though that had already been done 10 months earlier and replaced by the concept of recognition of education. Moreover, there was also no evidence that the authors are conscious of the fact that Slovene higher education is already undergoing one of the largest reforms in history, triggered by the Bologna Process.

The issues listed below indicate a substantial move towards the commodification of higher education. The authors based the legitimacy for such reforms mainly on the urgent necessity to boost the quality of the existing public higher education system and abolish the rigidity of public universities.

financing

THROUGH FINANCING MECHANISMS, STUDENTS SHOULD INFLUENCE THE QUALITY OF HE	Financing should shift to more output-based and market-oriented criteria. Among other measures, a voucher system and income-based deferred tuition fees were proposed. The allocation of funds would be linked to international comparisons according to the criteria of academic excellence, cooperation with the business sector, the success of graduates in the market and international cooperation. Some restrictions to the financial support for studies such as the revision of the
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grant system, tax exemptions and food subsidies would be carried out. Through the financing mechanisms, a greater influence of students on the quality of higher education should be achieved.

governance

There is no direct suggestion for the transformation of the governance of higher education institutions. Nevertheless there is a substantial shift proposed in the regulation of higher education institutions. Together with the other proposed measures, the reformers are aiming at increased competition and more market-based conditions in higher education. In order to maintain the ability to compete in such contexts, the institutions would be coerced into a more entrepreneurial structure and policy.

attractiveness

From the proposed measures it is clear that competition is seen as the main factor which would enhance attractiveness. To increase the competition, the experts foresaw a rise in the number of universities from three up to ten, amongst which at least half would be private. Furthermore, private universities would be entitled to the same public funding as their public counterparts. Among the criteria for quality; employment possibilities and applied research are mentioned. Although not particularly well defined, evaluation mechanisms will need to be created in order to monitor the quality.

A series of non-market based measures to raise the attractiveness were also proposed. Among these, there is the recognition of non-formal education, career guidance support, the acceleration of the mobility of teachers and students, the opening up of legal possibilities to teach in English and ease the recognition of degrees and diplomas. But it is not difficult to notice that these measures are less emphasised and vaguer than the first ones. One could conclude that they appear in the document to make it more »edible« and politically moderate.

curricula reforms

STRONGER COOPERATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND INDUSTRY IS ADVOCATED

When it comes to curricular issues, the main intervention proposed by the reform package aims at increasing the flexibility in the design of courses and employment of teachers. In addition, the reformers see benefits in increasing the mobility of students between courses and international cooperation. From all

the documents related to the Lisbon Agenda, an emphasis on scientific and technical courses is visible. A stronger cooperation in various ways between universities, research institutes and industry is advocated.

conclusion

The Lisbon Objectives in higher education in Slovenia can be summed in the following points:

- The Slovene government adopted a program of reforms based on the Lisbon Objectives of the EU including a segment on higher education.
- The program proposes to substantially modify the higher education system in order to serve the economic strategy and objectives.
- The reforms are seeking legitimacy in considerably rigid public higher education institutions and often below-average quality programs.
- The working group that prepared the reform programme consisted of experts that are not primarily focused on the field of higher education and its related policy.
- The approach used to compose the program of reforms is based on economic expertise and lacks other considerations that are necessary when a reform should reach far beyond the sphere of economy.
- The ongoing Bologna reform was neglected when designing the proposal programme of reforms.
- The government did not include stakeholders in the reform process.
- The bulk of the proposed measures in the field of higher education would most likely lead to the commodification of higher education.

4.5 macedonia

THE AUSTRIAN EU- PRESIDENCY FOCUSED ON COOPERATION WITH THE BALKANS

Investment in education and training is one of the main instruments for achieving the goals set out in the European Council Conclusions in Lisbon, spring 2000. To begin with, it is important to stress that not only the Member States, but also third countries (European Commission 2004) are given access to some of these programs. The proposal of the Austrian presidency of the Union for the first half of the 2006, emphasised the importance of future efforts of the Union and the Member States in the field of »Education and culture« (Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry 2005). The Austrian presidency especially distinguished the cooperation with the Western Balkan States. The proposal stated that: »The Austrian Presidency will also assist in opening up education and further education systems to non-member countries« (ibid: 23), with a particular focus on the Western Balkan countries.

the government's central aims

Connected to this and the future plans of enlargement of the Union, the Republic of Macedonia gained the status of a candidate country for membership in the Union at the European Council in December 2005. Even before the official decision for the candidate status was taken, the country was given access to 11 Community programs until 2007. In the proposal by the government of the Republic of Macedonia for embarking upon the necessary preparations for entering the first group of community programs, the programs in the field of youth and education (till 2007 participating in Leonardo DA Vinci II and Socrates II, which after 2007 are integrated in the LLL program 2007-2013) were given priority. This way, other instruments for the operational support of the educational system reform were added to the TEMPUS program, which, till then, was the only accessible Community support program in the field of education and research.

However, aside from these formal preconditions, the practical utilisation of the given opportunities is yet to be explored. It will pose demanding challenges of the relevant institutions and individual actors, especially in the sense of providing transparency in access, the

dissemination of information and strengthening internal capacities for the purpose of participation.

concrete reforms

The main restructuring of the educational system of the Republic of Macedonia started under the Bologna Process. The Republic of Macedonia became a signatory state at the Ministerial Conference in Berlin, September 2003. Since then, efforts have been made under the provided *legal framework from 2000* to concretely implement the commitments agreed upon within the Bologna Process. Due to Macedonia's new status as a candidate country for EU membership and the opening of new Community programs, primarily serving the purpose of support to the countries with this status, it will be important to take into account the influence of the Lisbon Objectives, although so far only indirectly.

financing

The Council for the development and financing of higher education started its work in 2003, although it was already introduced under the legislative from 2000. The main objective incorporated in the founding of the Council is to establish a joint decision-making process between the government and the Universities regarding planning and the distribution of public funds in the field of higher education and research. The Council has slowly started to exercise its autonomous powers and its decisions were primarily made in the same line as before, under the influence of the Ministry of Education and Sci-

EXPENDITURE FOR HE
HAS BEEN DECREAS-
ING YEAR BY YEAR

ence. The role of the Council was undermined due to the fact that it could not *de facto* influence the budget for higher education and research adopted by the Parliament. The expenditure for higher education and research has been decreasing year by year, in which sense it would be hard to imagine a concrete building of a »*knowledge-based economy*«, a term from the Lisbon Strategy, very often found in the language used by Macedonian government officials. The Lisbon Strategy further envisages »*a substantial annual per capita investment in human resources*« (European Council 2000: 9). Macedonia is still far from reaching this goal.

The Lisbon Process takes the social approach into account, when addressing the different factors contributing to economic growth. While social cohesion was to be promoted under Lisbon 2000, the revised

Lisbon 2005 speaks of a »Social inclusion policy by the Union and the Member States« (European Council 2005: 12). The proposal of the Austrian presidency of the European Council 2006 envisages that: »the social protection process should be retained as *an independent process* alongside the revised Lisbon Strategy in order to *emphasise the importance of social issues* and give them more weight« (Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry 2005: 14). Thus it is important to bear in mind that, through the investment in education and training, investment in »human capital« is being achieved, but also a contribution to values, such as social inclusion and equal opportunities, is being achieved. This way of reasoning is still doesn't find its way into Macedonian governing structures. Whilst in certain fields of educational system reforms, the country has been able to rely on EU support, the social dimension has been a state responsibility. Being under pressure to rationalise public expenditure in all sectors had negative effects on the social support system for students and therefore negative consequences for the access and completion in tertiary education. This can in no way contribute to Macedonia approaching the ambitious Lisbon goals in the long run, if it is to become a Member State of the EU.

governance

The fragmented structure of the public Universities (the faculties are legal entities) is another obstacle to an effective and homogenous implementation of the Bologna provisions. Although in time, the Universities have become more aware of the necessity to change (UKIM 2003, UKLO 2002), when it comes to the concrete acceptance of criticism, its practical incorporation within the reform process has continued to be more formal than factual. The way the *governance* structure of the University is organised also has an impact in this sense. There is an evident need for a more effective management of the administration. The involvement of the administrative staff in the governance structures could contribute to this. The participation of students and student representatives in this process remains rather formal. While the students should receive a stronger say on a faculty, University and national level, the student representative body should also undergo internal reforms, in order to be able to fully reflect the interests of the student population and thus adequately represent their peers.

STUDENT REPRESENT-
ATIVE BODIES SHOULD
ALSO UNDERGO
INTERNAL REFORMS

curricula reform, attractiveness, mobility

The formal preconditions for the introduction of the ECTS and a two-tier degree system were already laid out in the Law on Higher Education and were further developed in the internal acts of the Universities (There are 3 public Universities and 3 accredited private Universities). However the process of the practical implementation of the commitments has been rather slow, taking into consideration the reluctance of the old academic staff to implement change and the lack of proper knowledge on Bologna related issues. It is particularly problematic to change the educational concept from teacher centred to learning oriented. The introduction of flexible learning paths is still a mystery to the faculties, in particular due to the fear of the academic staff that they might »lose« their subjects.

A National Quality Assurance Agency and a National Board of Accreditation were also established under the 2000 Law on Higher Education. However, in the field of recognition of qualifications and competences and creating a real outcome-oriented approach in the higher education system is needed, thus contributing to the concept of life-long learning. This will also promote the mobility of academic staff and students on a national and European level. Till now only a limited number of academic and research staff was able to benefit from the existing mobility programs, such as TEMPUS, CEEPUS and the 6th FP. The opening up of the other mobility programs under the integrated life-long learning programme of the community should enhance this process, because the participation in these programs is conditional on the undertaking of the necessary structural changes. Connected to this, special attention should be paid to *curricula development*, especially through the introduction of new learning modules with a European dimension and offered in internationally spoken languages, as proposed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia. However, this is still in the fledgling stages.

conclusion

It is clear that a more coherent and integrated approach, which especially emphasises the co-operation amongst all stakeholders, is needed. Sometimes it is difficult to achieve coordination within one institution (in this sense the cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science and the Secretariat for European Issues of the Republic of Macedonia is of high importance), and even less between different stakeholders. A positive step forward is the creation of a working

group at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius—Skopje, with the intention to actively contribute to the new law on higher education, currently under preparation (UKIM 2006). However, there is still a gap between formal participation and real influence. Moreover, students are still not fully recognised as equal partners and their possibility to positively contribute in the process is not immediately apparent. The implementation of reforms under the Bologna Process is fragmented, and the often used excuse is the »European Union«. This is perhaps one of the few similarities between Macedonia and the EU Member States.

THE OFTEN USED

EXCUSE FOR REFORMS

IS THE EU

5 the stakeholders in the european education arena



5.1 cooperating with stakeholders

WE DO HAVE AN INTEREST IN INFLUENCING LISBON

The Lisbon Agenda is primarily a process of politicians and social partners. As it is first and foremost an economic reform package, students are not the obvious partners for cooperation and negotiation. As our higher education systems are being reformed, we do however have an interest in influencing the strategy. But how to do that? Apart from informing and organising the students all over Europe, cooperation with other stakeholders and NGOs strengthens our voice. This includes:

- lobbying together with other stakeholders
- building a network for information exchange and coordination of actions
- running joint campaigns

Find here a rough overview of the various stakeholders, followed by more detailed descriptions of the main organisations and their strategies towards the Lisbon Agenda.

governmental structures

The Lisbon Agenda was launched by the heads of state of the European Union. Each individual prime minister or president of the (at that time) 15 member states of the EU agreed to launching this Strategy. However, as the European Union has no legislative power in the field of education and training, the action is taking place on a national level. The Lisbon Strategy has become the priority of many ministries of economic, but also social affairs and other ministries.

Obviously, the first actor you should influence is your minister of education and her/his ministry. In some countries there is even a special ›Lisbon minister‹ or ›Reform minister‹, whom you can contact. You need to get to know the civil servants who are responsible for making national Lisbon reform programmes in ministries of economic affairs and education.

Secondly, as reforms are made on the national level, they have to pass through national parliaments. This means politicians should be informed about the Lisbon reforms. However, many politicians still

don't know about the Lisbon Strategy, especially when it comes to education issues. Furthermore, as opposed to actors on the European level, the Lisbon-hype didn't yet reach all parliamentarians, which allows for a more critical approach and receptiveness to student interests.

social partners

In many countries, the Lisbon Strategy trickled down to so-called ›tri-partite‹ (three partners negotiating) or ›bi-partite‹ (two partners) decision making structures. In these structures, the so-called social partners, being the trade unions and employers' organisations (›bi‹) have the power to discuss and negotiate on economic and social reforms. In most cases, the government is also present at these negotiations, making them ›tri-partite‹. Within the European Union, it is also becoming a standard procedure to invite these social partners to negotiate about economic and social reforms.

Within the Education and Training 2010 Programme, a coordination group has been set up, which defines the reform plans and benchmarks on the European level. It is composed of the social partners. Trade Unions and Employers' organisations usually have hired specialised ›education‹ policy makers, who prepare policy and negotiate directly with the respective ministries.

education stakeholders

Since 2003, the higher education community in Europe has increasingly claimed its involvement in Lisbon, and started to receive invitations to give input on the activities of the EU. Universities (EUA) and students (ESIB) commented the creation of the Communications of the Commission about the role of higher education, such as »Mobilising the brainpower of Europe«.

Other important stakeholders are the school student organisations. As the »Education and Training 2010« programme is in part focused on secondary education, a student organisation alone can't claim to represent all the students being affected. School student organisations often have the same interests as student organisations.

Most national organisations have a European umbrella organisation. On the websites of the European organisations, you can find out how to get in touch with the national organisations you are seeking.

National Organisation	European equivalent	Website
Minister	Council of Ministers	ue.eu.int
Ministry of education	Directorate General on Education and Training	europa.eu.int/comm/education
Parliament	European Parliament	www.europarl.eu.int
Education Trade Union	European Trade Union Committee on Education (ETUCE)	www.etuce-csee.org
Employer's organisation	UNICE—The voice of Business in Europe	www.unice.org
Rector's conference	European University Association	www.eua.be
Universities of professional education	EURASHE	www.eurashe.be
School Student's Organisation	Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU)	www.obessu.org

5.2 the teachers: EI

what is ...

EI, Education International?

- the international trade union of teachers and education workers
- representing 29 million people
- through 348 member organisations
- in 166 countries
- www.ei-ie.org

Education International protects the rights of every teacher and education worker, and every student they educate. It assists the development of democratic organisations for teachers and other education workers and builds solidarity and mutual co-operation. It combats racism and discrimination in education and society, fostering good relations between education workers in all countries.

interview with gaston de la haye, deputy general secretary of EI

- Does your organisation have a policy on the Lisbon Strategy?
Yes we do, we have our principles and we try to deliver those to the relevant policy makers within the Lisbon Strategy. We are trying to correct bad directions in policy.
- Do you see positive effects that the Lisbon Strategy will have on education?
Right now, I can't think of anything. But the fact that the Lisbon Strategy has put education in the middle of the attention of policy makers is positive.
- Do you see negative effects that the Lisbon Strategy will have on teachers and education workers?

Yes, there are three clearly negative aspects in both the Lisbon Strategy, but also in the Bologna Process. Both processes put more pressure on teachers, by giving them more responsibility. The time division between education and research shifts because of this. They also need to dedicate more time to fundraising. Thirdly, the processes lead to a further casualisation of the profession of teaching.

- Is your organisation a relevant stakeholder in the field of the Lisbon Strategy?

Yes we are. We have members in all European Union Member States and most other European countries.

- Is your organisation included in the decision making process within the Lisbon Strategy?

Yes, our European branch ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education) is a member of the coordination group of the Education and Training 2010 work programme.

El's political priorities concerning lisbon

Opportunities:

- Lisbon has put higher education at the centre of the European agenda.

Threats:

- Lisbon follows a mere economic approach on higher education, while the role and missions of higher education in the European society are less underlined.
- The increasing share of non-public funding of higher education endangers the societal role of education.
- The Open Method of Coordination sets up a European education policy without real consultation of the social partners and the stakeholders.
- Creating excellence in higher education in order to attract more foreign students brings about the risk of a ›brain drain‹.

EI's strategy towards lisbon

EI's strategy is multileveled. EI's strategic priority is to see that the trade union can speak up and that its voice is heard at those places where it can influence the decision making process. These places are the Bologna Follow-up Group, as well as the Coordination Committee and the Working groups within the Education and Training 2010 programme.

EI develops an intensive advocacy strategy towards the EU Commission. As a world organisation, EI is active towards organisations such as the OECD, UNESCO, the World Bank (IBRD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other International Governmental Organisations. EI also acts directly on the national governments via its national member organisations.

Furthermore, EI is a partner of stakeholders and NGO's such as Action Aid, Oxfam or Novib. Last but not least, EI has an agreement of cooperation and support with ESIB to develop joint actions and campaigns in order to work for a system of higher education based on the principle of free access and academic freedom.

5.3 the universities: EUA

what is ...

EUA, the European University Association?

- the representative organisation of the universities and national rectors' conferences in Europe
- representing over 750 individual universities
- and 34 national rectors' conferences
- in 46 European countries
- www.eua.be

EUA's mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research. EUA aims to achieve this through active support and guidance to members as autonomous institutions in enhancing the quality of their teaching, learning and research as well as contributions to society.

interview with lesley wilson, secretary general of EUA

- Does your organisation have a policy on the Lisbon Strategy?

EUA does not have a policy on the Lisbon Strategy as such, but on many of the topics covered by the Lisbon Strategy, like the EIT, EQF, the modernisation agenda for universities and diversifying funding for higher education institutions.

- What is in your opinion the greatest chance that Lisbon will bring to European universities?

The Lisbon Strategy has opened up a debate on the key role of universities in creating a European knowledge society and has underlined in particular the role of universities as research institutions. This has been beneficial in encouraging debate at national and European level and has motivated universities to consider their strategic research priorities, how to enhance the quality of doctoral programmes and the

development of career opportunities for young researchers. Thus the modernisation of universities has moved to the top of the policy agenda. This renewed commitment to higher education provides a window of opportunity to raise awareness and to adapt and reform to meet global challenges.

- What is in your opinion the greatest threat that Lisbon will bring to European universities?

One potential threat is the 'top down' implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. There is much less stakeholder involvement than in the Bologna Process. Thus, institutions and students are less directly involved in decision making processes. Another is the split between the research competitiveness agenda on the one hand, and the more employment and skill development oriented debate on the other hand. This may lead to the needs of higher education being taken into consideration less than those of other parts of the education system, such as vocational education and training.

- What is EUA's strategic priority for the coming years when it comes to the Lisbon Strategy?

Push forward the modernisation agenda for universities, while at the same time ensuring that this happens with active stakeholder involvement and attention to the social dimension of education.

EUA's political priorities concerning lisbon

Opportunities:

- Lisbon acknowledges the importance of European higher education for innovation and sustainable economic development.
- Stressing the inextricable link between implementing the Bologna reforms and meeting the research and innovation goals of the Lisbon Agenda.
- EUA strongly supports the establishment of the European Research Council (ERC) for the enhancement of the quality and excellence of European research. Special attention must also be paid to research training and researcher careers.

Threats/Demands:

- EUA would like to highlight the role of the universities in the wider debate on the construction of Europe and the promotion of European values, cultures and linguistic diversity.
- EUA calls on governments to ensure appropriate levels of funding to maintain and raise the quality of institutions, and view higher education and research budgets as an investment in the future.

EUA's strategy towards lisbon

EUA works closely with its members through the organisation of membership services such as conferences, seminars, workshops etc. as well as the implementation of projects on key topics in order to identify issues of common concern and the members' views on them.

On the basis of their members' feedback, EUA has voiced its positions on various aspects of the Lisbon Strategy. Recent examples include statements on the »Research Role of Europe's Universities« (prepared for the EC Conference on *The Europe of Knowledge 2020* in Liege, April 2004), the European Institute of Technology (EIT) and the European Qualifications Framework. EUA has also responded to the EC communications on »The Role of the universities in the Europe of Knowledge« and »Science and technology, the key to Europe's future—Guidelines for future EU policy to support research«.

5.4 the school students: OBESSU

what is ...

OBESSU, the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions?

- the European school student organisation
- representing 70 Million school students
- and 24 member organisations
- in 25 European countries
- www.obessu.org

OBESSU is a platform for cooperation between the national school student unions active in general secondary and secondary vocational education in Europe. All member-organisations are independent, national, representative and democratic school student organisations.

interview with ingrid gogl, board member of OBESSU

- Does your organisation have a policy on the Lisbon Strategy?

Yes, OBESSU does have a policy on the Lisbon Strategy. We have tackled it in our new political platform, which was approved at the last General Assembly in July 2006.

- Do you see the positive effects that the Lisbon Strategy will have on education?

The targets are not very revolutionary, but they represent a first step towards a real investment in education and training. During the last years, the implementation of the aims has been weak though.

- Do you see negative effects that the Lisbon Strategy will have on school students?

OBESSU is concerned by the mostly economic approach that is the basis of the Lisbon Strategy. Europe needs a more social oriented strat-

egy, able to link different sectors in the struggle for a sustainable model of society. The goal of a knowledge based society should have a different starting point: democracy, equality and active involvement

- Is your organisation a relevant stakeholder in the field of the Lisbon Strategy?

We would consider us as an important stakeholder in the field of formal education, but unfortunately school students are very seldomly considered relevant in the Lisbon Agenda.

- Is your organisation included in the decision making process within the Lisbon Strategy?

Sadly no.

OBESSU's political priorities towards lisbon

Opportunities:

- Lisbon represents a coherent approach in order to overcome the actual problems of our economic system, trying to find possible synergies for a better future.

Threats/demands:

- The situation in the field of fighting early school leavers is still serious and steady. We have to ensure compulsory education until the age of 18 through the different educational and training pathways.
- What is clearly missing in Europe is a perspective and a vision about the future of education.
- Without a high level education, the young workers will be condemned to precarity and low expectations. School education therefore urgently needs investment for high quality education.

OBESSU's strategy towards lisbon

The engagement of OBESSU and of its member organisations is aimed to give new inputs to the strategy in the interest of the school students. They are convinced that Lisbon can't work out without a real commitment in improving schools and universities in Europe.

As representatives of the School Student Movement, OBESSU must be active and fight an approach which risks relying purely on econom-

ics and thus being disrespectful to the values of democracy as well as the undisputed social importance of schools. OBESSU will continue their action for another Lisbon Strategy with an active commitment—at the European level, and, through their member organisations, on the national level.

5.5 the employers: UNICE

what is ...

UNICE, the Confederation of European Business?

- the European umbrella organisation of national employers' organisations
- representing 39 member federations
- from 33 countries
- www.unice.org

UNICE—the voice of business in Europe—builds its actions on five priorities: To release entrepreneurial energy, to boost innovation, to unleash the EU internal market, to improve the functioning of the labour market, to make environmental policy more effective and efficient and to foster international trade investment.

interview with dr. christoph anz, deputy director in UNICE's german member:

- Does your organisation have a policy on the Lisbon Strategy?

We have followed the development of the Lisbon Strategy from the very beginning and have a debate with member organisations. UNICE has several statements on issues concerning the Lisbon Strategy.

- Do you see the positive effects that the Lisbon Strategy will have on education?

Yes, of course we do. Especially regular national action plans.

- Do you see negative effects that the Lisbon Strategy will have on employers?

Yes, maybe the point that there are too many different things included and no clarity, on which is the real focus. Also more groups should be included, for example students and maybe some other relevant groups.

- Is your organisation a relevant stakeholder in the field of the Lisbon Strategy?

Yes, we are.

- Is your organisation included in the decision making process within the Lisbon Strategy?

In the decision making process—no. Of course, we have the opportunity to discuss it with, for example, the Members of European Parliament.

UNICE's political priorities towards Lisbon

Opportunities:

- UNICE welcomes the refocusing of the Lisbon Strategy in the relaunch process 2005 and the start of a new governance cycle with the aim of creating stronger ownership on a national level.
- Most of the priorities put forward in the Commission's »Community Lisbon Programme« are supported by the European business community.

Threats/demands:

- Results of recent EU activities are still thin on the ground, in particular concerning the creation of an internal market for services and better regulation.
- UNICE is concerned that certain issues presented in the name of the Lisbon Strategy will not contribute to, or even hamper, growth and job creation in Europe.
- Efforts to deal with the social consequences of globalisation and economic restructuring should not be misused to make Europe's economy less flexible and more burdensome by imposing rules on EU level in areas which can better be dealt with on national or regional level.
- Many of the National Reform Programmes to implement Lisbon could be more ambitious and lack concrete information.

UNICE's strategy towards lisbon

The majority of UNICE Member Federations judged the National Reform Programmes to be a promising basis for actions towards more growth and jobs in Europe. According to them, the National Reform Programmes provide a good analysis of the challenges each country faces and of the changes needed to respond to them. UNICE Member Federations will continue thoroughly assessing the implementation progress of the national reforms over the coming months and years.

UNICE stresses that both for the EU-Commission and for the European Parliament it is important to have an ongoing contact and exchange with the social partners. It is a good tradition that all relevant working groups of the EU-Commission have members not only from the national governments but also from the social partners side. At the same time all UNICE member federations are involved in the different processes on the national level. Therefore UNICE has an excellent background and fundamental information coming from the national level and is able to create the needed strategy towards the EU-Commission and the political processes on the European level.

6 the students' role in lisbon



6.1 the current level of student involvement

Looking over the past 6 years, the involvement of students in the Lisbon Strategy was less than sufficient—obviously, as this strategy is mainly focusing on economic goals. With the »knowledge society« becoming more and more important within Lisbon, the status of education has also increased.

STUDENT INVOLVE-
MENT IN LISBON WILL
REQUIRE SOME MORE
WORK AND LOBBYING

ESIB, however, was involved neither in the development of the »Education and Training 2010« (E&T) programme that was designed in 2002, nor in the production of the EU's communications that followed this programme and define the direction of educational reforms. We are not aware of any cases where students were involved in drafting the National Action Plans for the implementation the E&T programme.

While the relevant actors in the Bologna Process have already understood that the contribution of students as the biggest stakeholder in higher education will enrich changes and reforms, it will require some more work and lobbying towards the EU to reach this understanding within the relevant bodies for education in the European Union.

prepare yourselves

Not only will we have to raise this awareness within the national authorities and the EU, we also need to prepare ourselves for becoming more involved in this Strategy: If we claim to have the right to our voices being heard, we need to offer something.

- *This means content preparation.* We must understand »Lisbon«: Which fields does it cover, how does it work? Where do we see opportunities for improving the education systems, where do we see threats that endanger student needs and educational values? Content preparation will include a lot of reading and intensive discussions for policy development.
- *It means strategic lobbying.* Following the preparation on policy issues we have to define our main priorities and stick to our message in various meetings with the responsables in governing bod-

ies on the European, national and institutional level. We also need to form coalitions with other stakeholders in order to bundle powers.

- *It means informing the students.* There is a general lack of discussion on European developments in all European countries. We should see the Lisbon Strategy as a chance to start a discussion among students—on developments in the field of education, as well as on »Europe« in general.
- *And it means co-ordinated action.* While the broad frame and goals are decided on the European level, especially in the field of education the concretisation and implementation takes place on the national level. Decisions are taken on all levels, so if we want to achieve anything, we need to appear as a serious, prepared and co-ordinated actor in each step of creation and implementation of Lisbon.

where are we starting from?

WE TOOK PART IN SEVERAL PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

We are not starting from nothing: Some work has already been done over the past years. At the 47th ESIB Board Meeting (November 2004) we adopted a policy paper on the »Social objectives and the economic perspective of the Lisbon Strategy in relation to Higher Education«. We took part in several public consultation processes, such as the consultation that followed the EU Communication on »The role of the universities in the Europe of knowledge« (2003), or the consultation on the creation of a »European Institute of Technology« (2005). In the course of creating the mid-term report of the Lisbon Strategy (2004), ESIB was included in two working groups, »making the best use of resources« and »increasing recruitment to mathematics and science«. ESIB representatives participated in the conference on »enabling universities to make their full contribution to the knowledge economy« (2005) and in several meetings with EU representatives. The ESIB Student Convention in Vienna (2006) was, as a whole, dedicated to the Lisbon Strategy. This was the point when ESIB put a strong and coordinated focus on the EU Lisbon Agenda, and intensified lobbying work. At the EUs Spring Education Minister meetings we put forward a statement on the E&T programme, and we published statements commenting the two EU Communications in 2006, »Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda« and »Equity and Efficiency«. We established strong contact with the actual and upcoming gov-

ernments of the respective EU-presidency countries, invited EU officials to meetings and took part in as many EU conferences, meetings and workshops as possible. One of ESIB's top priorities in all those activities are tuition fees—coming EU Communications, statements and reports will show whether our lobbying efforts were at least partly successful.

On the national level, national student unions followed and analysed the reforms of their education systems and raised their voice—some were listened to, others were ignored.

Those actions provide some groundwork, but also show the necessity of making our strategy towards Lisbon more coordinated, more coherent and effective—on the European, national and institutional level.

6.2 content preparation

The first step in preparing ourselves for Lisbon is the information stage. In this stage, you gather relevant statistics, you get to know what your government is up to and how different stakeholders have reacted. You can find this information in national reports⁶, on education ministries' websites and parliamentary meeting minutes. Also rector's conferences and ministries of education gather a diverse range of statistics about students, and it is advisable to give them a call once in a while to update your own. A useful source of information is the network of ESIB: you can anytime send an e-mail to coco@esib.org or board@esib.org.

education, education, education

Local NUSes need education. CoCo members are always happy to give trainings to NUSs, and people from organisations in neighbouring countries are very useful for input. The creation of a »Lisbon info pool« in local representation offices is a good idea, or webpages collecting all relevant information on the Lisbon Strategy and its implementation.

Each country has its own Lisbon implementation and those issues that are most relevant to local NUSes need to be analysed. At the ESIB Student Convention in Vienna (March 2006) we analysed education issues within Lisbon, trying to figure out where we see opportunities for improving the education systems, and where we find threats that endanger student needs and educational values. In the following table you can find the most fundamental opportunities and threats that came out of the discussions:

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Business for education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice opportunities • funding of equipment, infrastructure, research • jobs 	<p>Education for business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • neglecting basic and non-private research, social sciences • vicious cycle of research funding: the »better« ones get more money get better get more money ... • academic autonomy gets lost
<p>Social inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans for social diversity • equal financing in mobility • LLL creates opportunities 	<p>Social exclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating access barriers, for example through promoting tuition fees • strive for »excellence« ignores people with lower education background
<p>Quality Assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strive for increasing the quality of education • strive for increasing financing of HE • comparability of HEIs 	<p>Quality Assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • definition of excellence and evaluation on the basis of business indicators • lack of involvement of students • competition between QA-agencies becomes more important than education quality
<p>Lisbon puts education high on the agenda: we have to use it</p> <p>Lisbon could make the universities more connected to the outside world</p>	<p>Lobbying of industry is stronger and more taken into account than the student voice</p> <p>involvement of outside stakeholders (business and industry) comes at the expense of students involvement and democracy</p>

If local NUSes could create such tables, it would be most likely that there are some issues where information still lacks, and where the organisations did not develop a comprehensive policy yet. These content gaps need to be detected and filled.

setting priorities for NUSes

With this ground prepared, the next step is set action priorities for Lisbon.

Define the priorities for developing visions and policies of your organisation:

DEVELOP LONG TERM VISIONS FOR A HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM YOU'RE FIGHTING FOR	You will probably stumble across questions that need a thorough discussion in your organisation to develop proper policies. What is the role of education in a knowledge society? How to deal with the issue of excellence, access and elite? Create/use a discussion forum in your organisation to investigate those questions in order to develop/update long-term visions of a higher education system you're fighting for.
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Define your organisation's lobbying priorities:

Where can you really influence your government? What is your government's agenda for implementing Lisbon in the field of education? Do you want to focus on the opportunities that arise within the Lisbon Strategy, or do you rather see the need to focus on avoiding the biggest threats for your educational system?

In our statement to the EU education ministers in March 2005, ESIB put forward three priorities: the abolishment of tuition fees, the involvement of students in the strategy, and equity in higher education. When discussing the opportunities and threats that came out of the Vienna ESC, we detected the following areas as issues on which we still have to develop a more thorough ESIB policy: employability, governance, social inclusion and ranking. Those will be issues to be dealt with in the coming ESIB board meetings.

6.3 lobbying strategy

Student Unions want to influence the Lisbon Strategy through lobbying the right people. This article gives an overview of where decisions are taken and gives some concrete ideas on who to lobby and how to achieve results that will satisfy the members.

where are decisions taken?

Within the Lisbon Strategy, most of the work is done by the European Commission. The Commission does so by drafting recommendations, organising consultations and conferences. Recommendations sent out by the commission have to be adopted by the European Parliament and the Ministerial Council on Education, Youth and Culture. This means that there are several lobbying opportunities on the European level. Most of these European institutions have a clear national pendant as well. The commission has nationally appointed staff, the participants at conferences are civil servants from national ministries and the council of ministers is a meeting of 25 national ministers for education. The national component also clearly exists in the implementation of the Strategy, as the European Union does not have the formal power to do so. For student unions, this means that coordinated lobby-activities are crucial in reaching goals. Information-sharing between ESIB and the national unions is key.

What makes lobbying on Lisbon hard for student unions:

- You are not an obvious partner (no social partner)
- You are representing only a small group of students affected
- You are mainly volunteer organisations
- You are only dealing with education, not with economics
- You don't see the people involved on a regular basis

how to cooperate with national stakeholders?

In the stakeholder chapter, you have read that the organisations to target are primarily the ministries and social partners. They are the

primary actors drafting national action plans and the reports. As these organisations are specialised in the reform programmes, it is hard to get your foot in the door. You have to show that you are a representative organisation, that students are directly affected and that you are informed about the reform plans.

Start off by defining the activities for the coming year and looking for windows of opportunity, where a student organisation may be able to contribute. For example, you can attend conferences, or organise your own conference or debate about something related to the Lisbon Strategy. Then you need to define goals within a certain timeframe.

You will first have to answer questions such as what kind of position do you want to achieve as a student union and what kind of content points do you want to achieve for the group you are representing? The strategy that you are building needs to focus on a long and a short term. On the long term, you want to be a full partner in negotiations about reforms and achieve results for your members. On the short term you need to gain recognition as a relevant organisation. This short term goal can be achieved in half a year, while the long term goals might take years.

Goals have to be:

- Realistic
- Linked to activities
- Linked to a timeframe
- Linked to a responsible person
- Written in a way you can evaluate them

Lobbying is mainly a matter of presentation. You can maximise your influence on other people by presenting the right arguments and in this way give them a direction and make sure they have at least thought about the student perspective. Successful lobbies have the right mixture of personality, argumentation and catching opportunities when they are available. However, you have to start from the beginning. When you want to get your organisation established as a serious partner, make sure that if you attend conferences, you meet, greet and discuss most people dealing with the Lisbon Strategy and start asking them how they see the role of students within such a process. There are obvious partners to go a step further with university associations and teacher unions. Take a good look at the table in the article on stakeholders and decide which organisations you see most oppor-

tunities for co-operation with. You can invite them for strategic discussions, have a common press strategy and draft agreements. Mostly they know you already and are at least slightly positive towards the involvement of students in the reforms. Use their knowledge and experience as a stepping-stone by meeting their policy makers and asking for internal documents. They will know that the payback will come when you are actually an actor in negotiations and supporting their ideas. Along the way, you can begin sending out press releases, letters or lobby documents, while keeping your members up to date with newsletters and internal discussions.

what is the strategy on the european level?

ESIB has set a goal for establishing this organisation as a long-term recognised partner within the Lisbon Strategy. Our work can provide you with some examples on how you can try to tackle the Strategy on the national level. What we do is try to attend all conferences on the »Education and Training 2010« work programme and discuss the issue with other stakeholders whenever we can. We use an internal strategy document which defines our long and short term goals, linked to concrete activities. The Committee on Commodification has a workplan outlining activities up to a year in advance which follows these guidelines and in this way at least five people are working to achieve these goals.

We are trying to reach our goals with the following activities:

- Participating in consultations organised by the European Commission on every topic related to higher education.
- Attending conferences organised by other stakeholders which are closely linked to the Lisbon Strategy.
- Sending out statements on the Lisbon Strategy whenever there is an opportunity, such as an internal conference or an external necessity such as a parliamentary discussion.
- Having regular appointments with the European Commission, Parliament and stakeholders about the student view on Lisbon.
- Attending peer learning conferences in which civil servants discuss national implementation plans (not yet achieved).
- Attending Coordination group meetings where benchmarks are set for the Education and Training 2010 work programme (not yet achieved).

WE PRESENT OUR-
SELVES AS CONSTRUC-
TIVE, CRITICAL EXPERTS

Consequently we present ourselves as *constructive, critical (student) experts*, who are always available to give a speech or other forms of input on what is going on.

7 annexes



7.1 policy paper on the EU lisbon agenda

Preamble

ESIB—The National Unions of Students in Europe has existed since 1982 to promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at the European level, and towards all relevant organisations and institutions. ESIB currently has 45 member organisations from 34 countries.

Introduction

At the European Council Meeting in March 2000, the Member States of the European Union set an ambitious goal for the EU: To become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010, capable of sustainable economic growth and greater social cohesion. This so-called Lisbon Strategy treats higher education as a central means: Higher education systems should produce marketable research results and employable individuals in order to boost European economy.

The Lisbon Strategy thus affects European students to a considerable extent. The students of Europe therefore have a qualified interest in having a say in this Strategy. With this paper, ESIB reaffirms core principles that have to be respected in any reform related to higher education and addresses the actual and potential effects of the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy in higher education.

General remarks on the Lisbon Strategy

Social objectives within the Lisbon Strategy

ESIB notes that the follow-up and implementation of the Lisbon Strategy have focused far more on eliminating barriers to trade and improving economic growth rather than directly addressing some of the most important elements of the process, namely sustainability, more and better jobs, welfare state and social objectives.

We conclude that the lack of commitment to those concepts and values is a political decision. ESIB rejects arguments that are solely based on the »natural forces« of economic necessities. We think that political programmes and reforms can—and have to—follow the commonly agreed values in a society. A definition of »European values« without doubt should include democracy, justice, tolerance, solidarity, social mobility and equality.

When modernising the political and economic system in Europe, the term »modernisation« must not be abused to implement reforms that work against those above mentioned values. Instead, policies should be designed to build upon what societies and movements in Europe have been and still are fighting for.

ESIB therefore stresses that the main objective of the Lisbon Strategy must not be reduced to a purely economic goal, but that the social objectives it already encompasses must be truly put at the heart of the process and form its main priority.

The Open Method of Coordination

Within the Lisbon Strategy, the EU established the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) as a new method of policy making, based on applying economic management techniques to public governance. For several reasons, ESIB is concerned about this new way of policy making.

Obviously, the OMC is needed in order to include also parts of policy in the work towards the Lisbon goals that are not within the competency of the EU according to the EC Treaty, such as education. We do see the need to stick to the defined legal framework in its real meaning. We would like to point out, that—although not legally—the EU practically is clearly overstressing its competencies.

The blurry structure of policy making makes it difficult to find out where policies are rooted, and where responsibilities are located: The policies are outlined and proposed on a European level, while the concrete creation and implementation of the reforms happens on the national level. This allows EU institutions to point at national governments when problems arise, while national governments can refer to the EU when pushing forward unfavourable reforms. ESIB fears that through this behaviour, which is inherent in the OMC, democratic structures are overruled, and the responsible policy makers sneak out of their responsibility to fully argue what they are doing—both towards the public, and towards stakeholders and NGOs.

As the shaping of policies and their evaluation within the OMC is based on indicators and benchmarks, numbers are a central point of reference. ESIB is very concerned that political concepts that can hardly be translated into numbers, such as academic freedom, student participation or personal development and creativity, are left aside by the method as such.

Higher education within the Lisbon Strategy

ESIB welcomes the intensified discussion on higher education on the European level. We are very aware of the benefits that an international approach brings to our education systems and societies as a whole in solving similar problems and challenges that exist in our education systems, as well as overcoming national barriers—be they physical or mental. In those discussions, however, we think that the broad range of purposes that education serves in societies have to build the basis of any further considerations: The most important ones being the role of education as a means for social development and democratic empowerment, as a means of accumulating and sharing knowledge, of economic competitiveness, as well as a means for personal growth and well-being.

The students of Europe don't often find these multiple roles reflected in policies deriving from the Lisbon Objectives. Furthermore, on the European level, established structures of student involvement don't yet exist, which brings about the danger of leaving aside the student voice when developing European higher education policies. We therefore see the necessity to define the opportunities and threats more clearly so as to see and experience in the impact that the Lisbon Strategy has on our higher education systems.

Opportunities for our higher education systems

Coherent European approach

ESIB welcomes a coordinated European approach for the development of our societies. We agree with the principles of sustainable development, coherence and comprehensiveness. We furthermore agree that in this approach higher education should take a central role in the design of policies. Higher education should continue to be seen as a central element in shaping future society and therefore experience

considerable and continued investment on both the national and the European level.

Autonomy and academic freedom

In the process of transformation to a knowledge economy, higher education institutions are faced with a diversification of their mission. External expectations and internal steering organization in higher education institutions are undergoing changes, which are reflected in the models of internal governance of higher education institutions and external legislation, suggested by the Lisbon Strategy.

ESIB supports the model of governance of higher education institutions, in which they are accountable to serve external expectations, and autonomous enough to put the goals of their mission into practice. Such a model of governance of higher education institutions must focus on the public responsibility of higher education and its link with the challenges and demands of society, as well as a real inclusion of students in the decision making process.

Making the best use of resources

One of the major goals of the Lisbon Strategy is to raise the quality and effectiveness of European education and training systems. The students of Europe agree that making the best use of existing resources is a crucial element in improving our higher education systems.

ESIB therefore supports the efforts to achieve the goal of effectiveness of European education systems. However, we are very concerned about a political culture in which efficiency—measured in terms of input and output—turns to become the goal of policy making, instead of a means for achieving the purposes of higher education. ESIB points out that the latter must be the central aim in reforming our higher education systems, and strongly opposes a political culture that mainly focuses on playing with numbers.

Measures towards inclusion

ESIB fully supports the idea of lifelong learning as a means for involving more people of different age and from different backgrounds into higher education. ESIB welcomes efforts by the European institutions to raise attention to inequalities in higher education and increase the inclusiveness of higher education systems. Still, we are aware that a lot has to be done yet to achieve this goal.

Emphasis on Innovation

The emphasis that the Lisbon Strategy places on innovation opens the opportunity for education that is truly transformative rather than reproductive. Conditions must be established to enable students to develop their full potential, rather than being oppressed by a lack of political and academic imagination and invention.

ESIB remains a strong proponent of student-centric learning, while constantly insisting on high quality, up-to-date education. Continual innovation is an excellent way to achieve this. ESIB therefore welcomes the introduction of a culture of innovation. Innovation does not only happen in the field of research, but can bring benefits to all other fields of education systems, particularly when applied to increasing the quality of teaching and learning systems. ESIB welcomes this new approach as a tool to really improving our education systems.

Threats for our higher education systems

Focus on marketable results

Economic strategies are strongly affecting higher education when it comes to demands of skilled labour force and research results. ESIB is strongly concerned about a system in which the marketability of a subject determines the focus that is put on this subject when it comes to financing and organisational priorities. Not only do we see a violation of the purposes of education in this approach. We would furthermore like to point out that leaving aside non-marketable and humanistic subjects ignores the overall purpose of economic growth and sustainable development, which we see in greater equality, self-fulfilment and quality of life.

Academic freedom includes the guarantee for a financial basis to perform high quality teaching and research, as well as accurate information, also on issues that are not of interest to the economic performance of a state. Governments have to secure this academic freedom instead of endangering it with the hunt for economic goals—be they short-term or long-term.

Excellence and elite

The Lisbon Strategy promotes political reforms that put higher education institutions in competition for financial resources, for the »best« students, teachers and researchers, and that strive for establishing elitist institutions. Instead of providing for well-balanced

development all over Europe, this approach creates and expands the gap between different higher education institutions. Those who benefit are high-ranking higher education institutions with international prestige and a sustainable financial basis. Those who lose are underfinanced institutions that will have to cut down on teachers, research projects, and on the long run experience heavy losses in the quality of education.

ESIB strives for a broad, tight and well developed network of high quality higher education institutions all over the continent. Therefore, national and European governments have to guarantee sufficient financial and administrative basis for all institutions alike, no matter which places they reach in international rankings, and no matter which region they are rooted in.

ESIB furthermore stresses its rejection to political concepts that want to create a »knowledge elite«. Those concepts strengthen socio-economic and cultural elites in our societies. Instead of reproducing those elites, we see the task of modern governments in creating a system that allows for equity of all citizens.

Introduction of tuition fees

Within the Lisbon Strategy, the introduction of tuition fees is frequently suggested to national governments by the European Commission. This is argued with three points: That tuition fees provide an extra financial resource to close the funding gap; that they would create an extra factor of student motivation and raise the quality of higher education; and that they would, combined with student support schemes, create greater social equity among the students.

ESIB stresses that the provision of free and accessible higher education lies within the responsibility of the state. Higher education that is accessible according to one's desire to learn, rather than one's ability to pay, becomes threatened, when the problem of lack of funds is addressed by such measures.

ESIB firmly states that the introduction of tuition fees with the intention of disciplining students by burdening them financially is not worth any serious consideration. Financial troubles do not motivate students to study, but rather keep them from being able to focus on learning, discussing and developing knowledge, or from taking up higher education at all. ESIB furthermore points out that the idea of creating greater equity among students by charging tuition fees obviously fails its target for the above mentioned reasons.

Changing grant systems into loan systems

Tuition free education systems alone are of course not a guarantee for free and equal access yet, but have to be accompanied by adequate student support systems. As those support systems are being reformed, we are observing a trend to change grant systems into loan systems.

ESIB strongly criticises these tendencies. Loan systems put students in a situation where they have to face huge piles of debts once they finished their education. This threat is not at all a motivation to start studying, but can keep especially students from lower socio-economic classes from taking up higher education. ESIB reaffirms its stand that education is not a marketable good to be acquired in exchange for money, but a fundamental human right. We strongly oppose any form of charging money for attending higher education, be it up front or ex post.

Jeopardising autonomy

Autonomy of higher education institutions is one of the major buzzwords used in higher education reforms within the Lisbon Strategy. While our definition of autonomy is a guarantee of academic freedom, the meaning of this term within the policies deriving from the Lisbon Strategy mainly encompasses the duty of higher education institutions to acquire their own financial resources. ESIB is very concerned about the effects this will have on the academic freedom of higher education institutions.

Private sources expect something in return for giving money to those institutions. This return can take several forms: A mandate in the steering body of the institution, intellectual property rights over research results, or direct influence on the curricula and teaching utilities used in the respective higher education institution. ESIB is in favour of a stronger contribution from industry to higher education, be it through financing, internships or other forms of support. We insist, that this contribution must happen in a way that does not in any way influence the independence, academic freedom and mission of the respective higher education institutions.

We are furthermore concerned about developments that deal with the distribution of public funds on the basis of management by objectives. The criteria used are often based on mainly economic considerations, which forces higher education institutions to concentrate on reaching those criteria rather than focusing on their actual mission.

Lisbon as argumentation for unpopular and short-sighted policies

Many countries already implemented reforms in higher education and more reforms are expected to be suggested to governments by the EU. However, narrow policy suggestions, without broad consideration of social implications, will not serve to reach the goals of the Lisbon Strategy. Instead, governments are provided with a basis for legitimising short-sighted measures in order to fill budget holes or deprive democratic structures of their power within higher education systems.

ESIB is highly concerned about this manner of policy making and stresses that national governments must not abuse the »call from Brussels« for student-hostile reforms. ESIB perceives it as the responsibility of the EU to closely follow the national implementation processes of Lisbon in higher education in order to avoid an abuse of policy suggestions for such purposes.

Further demands for policy on higher education within Lisbon

ESIB is firm in its conviction that education is a public responsibility

Education must not be used for making profit. This has to be reflected not only in the regulation of the education sector, but also in the public provision of higher education. Higher education institutions should respond to societal needs and publicly agreed visions and ideas. In order to fulfil those tasks, higher education systems need to act on a sustainable, long-term and healthy basis.

Considering the central role of higher education institutions and their importance for our societies, states have to guarantee that higher education is safeguarded from being abused by the intention of making profit, and that it is not exposed to market effects.

Stronger efforts towards access and equity

In our current societies, education is the main precondition for social mobility. Social cohesion and equity are therefore strongly linked to the social inclusiveness of our education systems. It is a core mission of these systems not to reproduce or create social inequalities, but

instead to take their responsibility for a socially just system serious and increase efforts to reach this aim.

Ensuring equity is strongly connected to the issue of financing higher education, especially to the system of financing students. ESIB is alerted about the rhetorics of presenting tuition fees as a means to reach equality, as argued by recent EU publications. Serious efforts to increase the social inclusiveness of higher education must instead include stronger financial support for students with a special focus on students from lower socio-economic classes and underrepresented groups. Factors like gender, ethnic background, skin colour, disability, regional disparities and others have to be included in designing the profile of financial support and affirmative action. When it comes to systems of lifelong learning, ESIB stresses that they must be free and equally accessibly by all.

ESIB urges the European Commission, national governments and higher education institutions to implement effective measures for widening access and increasing equity. Financial support measures have to be strengthened together with affirmative action such as financial incentives, outreach programs, improvements in admission practices, quotas or positive discrimination in favour of underrepresented groups.

Stronger involvement of students

As opposed to most national systems, there exist no formalised and established structures for student involvement on the European level. While education is being more and more dealt with on the European level, so far the inclusion of students in discussions and decision making did either not happen at all, or it depended on the good-will of the respective policy makers.

ESIB reaffirms that high quality development of education policies can only happen when the ones concerned—the students—are intensively involved in all steps of the process. We see the urgent need to establish and formalise a system of strong and real student involvement, including participation in decision making.

So far, policy making within the Lisbon Strategy showed low commitment to the principle of participatory democracy, including all stakeholders of the respective field. When designing policies for the education sector, the first ones to include must be students, education institutions, education workers and school students. ESIB believes that legitimacy and quality of reforms can only be achieved with involvement of all internal and consultation of all external stakeholders.

Free knowledge in a real knowledge society

Higher education institutions play a key role in the creation, transmission and dissemination of knowledge. They are of central importance when trying to realise a knowledge-based society. However, the use of patents and other regulations of intellectual property limit the free accessibility of knowledge.

ESIB stands firm in its position that knowledge must be open, free and easily accessible to all. Instead of limiting those opportunities, ESIB regards it as a central responsibility of governments to support the establishment of open knowledge structures, amongst other by making use of the new possibilities of information and communication technologies and the internet. Such efforts would bring us closer to a real knowledge society.

Deal carefully with external effects

The Lisbon Strategy can have a negative impact on »developing« and »least developed« countries and regions, amongst other through initiatives from the EU to drain skilled labour force from other parts of the world. ESIB believes that the principle of solidarity should form the basis of the organization of our societies. The main beneficiaries of this principle must be the poorest people, countries and regions in the world.

Furthermore, high priority must be given to supporting our neighbours. The Lisbon Strategy should benefit the whole European continent, rather than just the Member States of the European Union, in order to avoid unbalanced development in social and economic terms.

Develop a long-term vision for the development of higher education

Strong higher education systems are the key to creating a knowledge society. In order to achieve this aim, the role of higher education institutions has to be defined broader than just providing competent labour force, tools for innovation and enabling the European Union to become a leader in the global economy.

ESIB calls upon the EU to look beyond the 2010-deadline and to develop such a long-term vision for higher education, based on the multiple roles and purposes that education fulfils in a society. This vision has to be developed together with students, higher education institutions representatives and education workers.

Conclusion

ESIB appreciates the fact that a broad and concerted strategy is the main driver of reforms in the current Europe. However, we are aware that the core and the goal of this strategy are of economic nature, and that most of the reforms being proposed have a managerial and marketised character. We are convinced that this approach is not appropriate when it comes to higher education. Furthermore, we notice that the social objectives of the Lisbon Strategy are not prioritised, partly even forgotten or neglected. Students, as well as other stakeholders, can not rest on any basis of formalised inclusion mechanisms, but instead depend on the good-will of policy makers.

We are convinced that the function of government structures is not only to ensure sustainable economic growth and hunt for economic benchmarks, but to organise society based on values such as solidarity, equity and cooperation. ESIB therefore calls upon the EU and the national governments to develop the Lisbon Strategy further and adjust it to these principles. Concerning higher education, the strategy should focus on the responsibility of higher education to society, and not limit its role to that of a tool for competitiveness in a globalised economy.

7.2 EU-documents—where to find them?

All official EU documents have a number, which makes it easier to identify them and find them when surfing through the web. The general homepage of EU documents is:

http://europa.eu/documents/index_en.htm

commission documents

You can search for Commission documents on this page:

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/recherche.cfm?CL=en>

Enter the Type (COM, SEC ...), the year and the number, and the page will lead you to the document you're searching for. In the bibliography you find in this handbook, we added all details necessary to find those documents in their original version.

council documents

All Conclusions of meetings of the European Council can be found on:

http://europa.eu/european_council/conclusions/index_en.htm

They are listed for each year, which provides a good overview and makes it easy to find what you're looking for.

education & training webpage

The EU has a webpage that gives an overview on actions and papers in connection with the Education & Training 2010 Work Programme:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/index_en.html

The section dealing with higher education can be found on:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/lisbon_en.html

For the national reports and the joint interim reports, you can surf through:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/nationalreport_en.html

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7.4 footnotes

- ¹ Find the minutes of all EU Council conclusions on http://europa.eu/european_council/conclusions/index_en.htm [08.11.2006].
- ² e.g. the development of an overarching Qualifications Framework for Life-long learning by the EU, the Information Project on Higher Education Reform supporting European higher education institutions in implementing reforms, through the dissemination of reference material and the training of Bologna Promoters active at national level, the issuing of labels for proper implementation of the Diploma Supplement or ECTS.
- ³ such fora are for example the regular exchange of Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark in the Association of Nordic University Rectors Conferences.
- ⁴⁵ TEMPUS—the Trans-European mobility scheme for university studies enables universities from EU Member States to cooperate with those in Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the Mediterranean partner countries in higher education modernisation projects. Established in 1990 following the fall of the Berlin Wall, Tempus has been renewed three times with Tempus III lasting from 2000 to 2006. As part of the programmes providing assistance for economic and social reform in the countries of central and eastern Europe (PHARE) and the republics of the former Soviet Union and Mongolia (TACIS), Tempus is a Community aid scheme for the restructuring of higher education systems in these countries in order to adapt them to the requirements of a market economy.
- ⁶ All national reports can be found on http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/nationalreport_en.html.
- ⁷ The European Commission has a website dedicated to these reports in the »Education and Training 2010« programme: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/nationalreport_en.html

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7.6 abbreviations

BP	Bologna Process
CULT	Committee on Culture and Education, European Parliament.
E&T 2010	Education and Training 2010 Work Programme.
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System.
EEA	European Economic Area.
EFTA	European Free Trade Area.
EHEA	European Higher Education Area.
EIT	European Institute of Technology
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy.
EU	European Union.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
HE(I)	Higher Education (Institution)
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies.
MEP	Member of the European Parliament.
NAP	National Action Programme.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation.
NUS	National Union of Students.
OECD	Organisation for Co-Operation and Development.
QA(A)	Quality Assurance (and Accreditation).
R&D	Research and Development.
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises.
TEU	Treaty of the European Union.

7.7 glossary

autonomy

Autonomy refers to the capacity of an individual to make an informed, independent decision. In the context of HE, autonomy of HEIs is perceived 1. in the traditional meaning as the academic freedom of teaching and research, 2. in current political discussions as the »freedom« of HEIs to take more decisions in their governance themselves, including the responsibility to acquire their financial resources.

bologna process

The purpose of the BP is to create a European HE area by—amongst other—harmonising academic degree standards and quality assurance standards throughout Europe, introducing the ECTS and enhancing mobility. It was signed in 1999 by ministers of education from 29 European countries in the Italian city of Bologna, hence the name. The process was opened up to other countries, with nowadays 45 countries taking part in the Process.

comparative advantage

The theory of comparative advantage was developed by the British political economist David Ricardo. It explains why it can be beneficial for two parties (in this case countries) to trade, despite the possibility that one may be able to produce every item more cheaply than the other. It is not the cost of production which matters, but rather the ratio between how easily the countries can produce different goods.

communication by the commission

Communications issued by the Commission are proposals for policy-making, but they have no legal status. They represent the voice of the Commission, suggesting political reforms to the EU Member States. Member States are often compelled to adhere to the principles, opinions and action plans laid out in these communications.

council of europe

International organisation of 46 Member States in the European region, that accept the principle of the rule of law and guarantee fundamental human rights and freedoms to their citizens. Its main success was the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Funda-

mental Freedoms, signed in Rome in 1950, which serves as the basis for the European Court of Human Rights.

council of the european union

Regular meetings of the ministers of the EU Member States who are in charge of the issue to be discussed.

economic growth

Economic growth is the increase in value of the goods and services produced by an economy. In the dominant economic theory, it is measured as the increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

education and training 2010

Work Programme of the EU in the field of education and training within the Lisbon Strategy. The E&T 2010 Work Programme was decided by the Education Ministers Council at their meeting in 2002 in Barcelona.

european commission

The European Commission is the executive body of the European Union. Its primary roles are to propose and implement legislation, and to act as »guardian of the treaties« that provide the legal basis for the EU.

european community (EC)

The European Community (EC) was originally founded in 1957 by the signing of the Treaty of Rome (it was initially called the European Economic Community). The »Economic« was removed from its name by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, which at the same time effectively made the European Community the first of three pillars of the European Union.

european economic area (EEA)

The European Economic Area (EEA) was founded in 1994, following an agreement between the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Union (EU). It is based on four »freedoms«—free movement of goods, persons, services and capital.

european free-trade association (EFTA)

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) was established in 1960 as an alternative for European states that were not allowed or did not wish to join the European Community. The Convention was initially signed by seven states, but today only Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein are members.

european institute of technology (EIT)

The EIT is a controversial proposal by the European Commission, adopted by the European Council, intended to be a groundbreaking research »university for excellence« in higher education, innovation and research. It should attract students and researchers from all over the world to Europe.

european integration

European integration is the process of political and economic (and in some cases social and cultural) integration of European States into a tighter bloc.

european neighbourhood policy (ENP)

The European Neighbourhood is the region beyond the geographical frontiers of the European Union. It is comprised of primarily developing countries who may one day become either States of the European Union itself or simply more closely in line with the economy of the European Union. The objective of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) is to share the benefits of the EU's 2004 enlargement with neighbouring countries.

european parliament

The European Parliament is the parliamentary body of the European Union, elected by citizens and with a five year mandate. Together with the Council of Ministers, it composes the legislative branch of the institutions of the Union.

european qualifications framework (EQF)

One of the top priorities of the EU in the field of education. The EQF will enable qualifications systems at the national levels to relate to each other. This reference structure will be voluntary and should facilitate the transfer and recognition of qualifications between the different States.

european union (EU)

The EU is a supranational and intergovernmental union of 25 independent and democratic European States. The most important pillar the EU is based on is the European Community (EC).

human capital

Human capital is a way of defining and categorizing people's skills in terms of their contribution to economy. Many economic theories consider h.c. a commodity—homogenous and easily interchangeable.

indicators and benchmarks

A system used in modern governance to set goals and measure the results of an organisation's or a State's work. An indicator is e.g. the number of researchers in the European Union, a benchmark is e.g. to reach the number of 700,000 by 2010.

intergovernmental organisation (IGO)

An IGO is an organisation whose members are sovereign states or other IGOs. Such organizations usually function according to the principles of intergovernmentalism, which means that unanimity in decision-making is required.

joint interim report

In the EU, within the frame of Lisbon and education, a report produced biannually to measure the EU Member States' progress in the field of Education & Training.

knowledge based economy

The use of knowledge in order to produce economic benefits, through high-technology business, computer software, telecommunications and virtual services, as well as through research and education of »human capital«. Improving the European knowledge based economy is the core of the EU Lisbon Strategy.

lifelong learning (LLL)

LLL is a concept that should provide people with learning opportunities at all ages and in contexts that do not just involve traditional channels such as university. LLL is one of the cornerstones of the Lisbon Strategy.

maastricht treaty

The Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992 in Maastricht, Netherlands, between the Member States of the European Community. It entered into force in 1993 and led to the creation of the European Union.

management by objectives

A process of steering organisations (in this case States and HEIs) through defining outcomes of their work and leaving the process of reaching those objectives more or less up to the individual organisations. This concept stands in contrast to the traditional way of policy-making, which would put the focus on the processes rather than on the outcomes.

national action plans (NAPs)

In the context of Lisbon, NAPs give an overview over the countries'

plans for a defined period of time to reach the objectives that were agreed upon in the respective field of policy. Those NAPs are followed and evaluated by national progress reports.

new public management (NPM)

NPM is a management philosophy used by governments to »modernize« the public sector by applying managerial and business methods to public governance. It is intensively used since the 1980s. The main hypothesis in the NPM-reform wave is that more market orientation in the public sector will lead to greater cost-efficiency.

non-traditional students

This term refers to students who don't match the typical type of student, mainly in terms of age, origin (socio-economic, geographic, ethnic) or background (working students).

peer learning

In the context of Lisbon, an improvement of developing and implementing political strategies and reforms that should be achieved through learning from other countries. In order to enable peer learning, the EU coordinates meetings and seminars of countries that share geographical, political and historical similarities which led to similar HE systems.

polytechnic

HEIs that—in contrast to traditional universities—put their focus not on academic teaching and research, but rather on vocational education of the students. In the German-speaking areas, polytechnics are referred to as »Fachhochschulen«.

quality assurance (QA) and accreditation

QA covers all activities from design, development, production, installation, servicing and documentation. In the world of HE, QA is a system that is continuously introduced in order to increase the quality of courses offered. Accreditation systems give universities the confirmation that they are recognised as universities within their HE system.

qualifications Framework (QF)

see EQF: QFs are to be defined on a national, as well as on the European level.

social cohesion

Social Cohesion is a state in society in which the vast majority of citizens respect the law, one another's human rights and values, and

share a commitment to retain social order. Social cohesion as such is not equal to the concept of equity.

social exclusion

Relates to the alienation or disenfranchisement of certain people within a society. It is often connected to a person's social class, educational status and living standards and how these factors affect her/his access to various opportunities.

social inclusion

Denotes affirmative action to change the circumstances and habits that lead to social exclusion.

socio-economic background

Relates to the conditions into which an individual is born. This is related to the income and social class or standing of the household in which she/he was raised.

socrates-erasmus mobility programme

The aim of Socrates-ERASMUS is to encourage and support academic mobility of HE students and teachers within the EU, the EEA countries, and also the EU candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.

stability and growth pact

Agreement by EU Member States to facilitate and maintain the Economic and Monetary Union of the EU. The Member States must respect the actual criteria of an annual budget deficit no higher than 3% GDP, and a public debt lower than 60% GDP.

stakeholder

A person or organization that has a legitimate interest in a project or entity. Education stakeholders are students, school students, teachers and university administration.

subsidiarity

The principle which states that matters ought to be handled by the lowest competent authority.

supranational

A supranational organization is an organization of a group of countries that has some of the traits of a federal state or a confederation. In most of these organizations though, some decisions need the member states' consensus (intergovernmentalism) and others need only a majority, either of the Member States or of elected representatives (supranationalism).

welfare state

The concept of the welfare state implies that citizens pay taxes which are re-distributed by the state, which has to guarantee welfare and access to basic rights (health, education, quality of life ...) to all citizens.

