

Poland in the context of the Bologna Process: presentation of the expected New Bill on Higher Education

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I. Introduction and general remarks

Bologna Process: System of education quality assurance

- I. Amendment of the 2002 to the current Act on Higher Education:
 - Education standards (Minister, the Main Council of Higher Education, the State Accreditation Committee)
- II. Accreditation community commissions:
 - established by the informal conferences of rectors of the various types of schools
 - coordinated by the Accreditation Commission attached to the CRASP →
 - Accreditation Commission – CRASP Bologna Team (2003)
- III. Promoting the Bologna Process by Ministry of National Education

All of the mentioned collegial bodies:

- publicize the Bologna Process idea
- take part in preparing the position of Poland's representatives in the Bologna Follow-up Group
- help develop the contribution of CRASP to EUA work and the positions of this organization to be adopted with regard to Polish institutions of higher education

The ideas of the Bologna Process as the base for the new academic law

- Making the implementation of the Bologna Process obligatory

- Main consideration:

**–creation of an open higher
education area in Europe →**

e.g.

- Mobility of students
- Flexibility of studies system
- Supplements to graduation diplomas

**–Polish schools forced to become more competitive
internationally.**

Acts being in force

- Acts in force are:

- 1) the Act on Higher Education (1990)
- 2) the Act on Vocational Institutions of Higher Education (1997)
- 3) the Act on the Military System of Higher Education (1965)

- The future act on higher education is intended to replace those acts.

Diversity of the institutions of higher education

Mass scale of
higher education

→ Diversity of expectations
of young people



→ Diversity of the
institutions of higher
education and what they
have to offer

Autonomy

The autonomy of higher education institutions, guaranteed by the proposed legislation, gives them considerable freedom in:

- developing their educational offer and identity,
- shaping their organizational structures in conditions of a higher education system

Responsibility of state authorities:

- regulatory functions of the minister
- Financing public institutions of higher education
- Possibilities to contribute to the finances of non-public higher education institutions

2003-2005: The new Bill on Higher Education

Legislation:

- Work on the new Bill commenced in 2003 under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland
- The President put the Bill before the Parliament in 2004
- We expect the Bill to become law by April 2005

Creators:

- Team of experts

In cooperation with:

- Minister of National Education
- CRASP
- Parliament of Students of the Republic of Poland

Bologna Process

■ *Bologna Declaration:*

- common framework of reference of easily readable and comparable degrees,
- two main cycles (undergraduate/graduate)
- system of credits (such as ECTS),
- mobility,
- European cooperation in quality assurance,
- European dimensions in higher education.

■ *Prague Communiqué:*

- higher education studies in the context of lifelong learning,
- involvement of students in reforms,
- competitiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

■ *Berlin Communiqué:*

- doctoral level as the third cycle.

II. New Bill on Higher Education: Reflecting the directions of Bologna Declaration, Prague Communiqué and Berlin Communiqué

Three levels of study - Article 147

Article 147

1. *The studies at institutions of higher education shall be offered in the form of first- or second-level studies, or integrated master studies. (in some cases only)*
2. *The first-level studies shall be those leading up to bachelor (licencjat) or bachelor of engineering degrees (inżynier).*
3. *The second-level studies shall be studies leading up to master degrees (magister).*
4. *The integrated master studies, shall be offered in fields of study specified pursuant to Article 9, paragraph 1 and 2 herein (standards given by minister).*

Third level of study - Article 179

Article 179

1. Doctoral studies shall be third-level studies.
2. Doctoral studies shall be available to persons holding the master title or an equivalent title, and satisfying the enrolment conditions laid down by the given institution of higher education. (...)

Transfer of students' achievements

Article 153

1. The organization and course of studies shall provide for the transfer and recognition of students' academic achievements at other institutions of higher education, including foreign institutions, in keeping with the achievements transfer system.

Diplomas and diploma supplements

Article 155

1. *Studies graduates shall receive state diplomas of higher education completion, confirming the award of the relevant professional title. Graduates of doctoral studies, post-graduate studies and additional study courses shall receive certificates confirming the completion of the said studies or courses.*

(...)3. Diplomas of first- and second-level studies, and of integrated master studies shall be accompanied by a supplement giving a brief description of the given studies.

4. *The minister with responsibility for higher education shall authorize the printing of diplomas and certificates referred to in paragraph 1 above.*

Jointly issued and double diplomas

Article 156

1. Studies may be offered jointly by various institutions of higher education and scientific institutions, including also foreign ones, based on mutual agreements between the entities concerned.
2. Rules and procedures for the organization of the studies referred to in paragraph 1 above, as well as rules of awarding joint diplomas to graduates of such studies shall be described in their regulations being part of the agreement referred to in paragraph 1 above, subject to Article 155, paragraph 6(i) herein.
3. In cases referred to in paragraph 1 above, graduation diplomas may be awarded by one institution of higher education together with a suitable certificate confirming the involvement of the remaining institutions of higher education and scientific institutions in the completion of the study program.

Context of lifelong learning

Article 8

(...) 6. Institutions of higher education may offer postgraduate study programs connected with their respective fields of study.
(...)

Article 13

1. The fundamental tasks of institutions of higher education, subject to paragraphs 2–4 below, shall be as follows:

(...) 5. to conduct educational activities aimed at knowledge acquisition and improvement; (...)

Article 91

1. The revenue of public institutions of higher education shall include in particular:

(...) 3. fees for educational services, in particular for extra-mural higher education and doctoral studies, and for artistic services performed by artistic institutions of higher education; (...)

Education standards

Article 9

The minister with responsibility for higher education shall issue ordinances regulating the following:

1. names of fields of study, including those of integrated master studies;

2. teaching standards for the various fields and forms of study, and levels of education, taking into account the desired profile of studies graduates, framework curricula, and duration of internships)

(...) 4. the conditions to be met by organizational units offering studies on the various levels, including in particular the numbers and form of employment of academic staff holding scientific titles or degrees, comprising the minimum required staff (subject to the rule whereby any single academic teacher may be included separately in the minimum required staff in one field of master or bachelor, or equivalent studies in the principal place of employment, and in one field of bachelor or equivalent studies in an additional place of employment), and the ratio of this staff to the number of students in the given field of study; (...)

State Accreditation Committee(1)

Article 46

1. The Committee shall present to the minister with responsibility for higher education its opinions and propositions concerning the following in particular:

(1) the creation of institutions of higher education, granting institutions of higher education the right to offer higher education studies in specific fields of study and on specific levels of education, and the creation of organizational units in other localities by institutions of higher education;

(2) any assessments of teaching in a given fields of study, including assessments of teacher training and conformity with conditions for offering higher education studies;

(3) propositions in draft State Budgets of funds to be disposed of by the minister with responsibility for higher education, and on the rules of allotting state subsidies to institutions of higher education.

2. The Committee may request explanations and information from institutions of higher education and carry out inspections in connection with matters referred to in paragraph 1 above.

State Accreditation Committee (2)

Article 10

5. In the event of the State Accreditation Committee submitting a negative assessment of education quality, the minister with responsibility for higher education shall make a decision to either revoke or suspend the right to offer higher education studies in the given field of study and on the given education level, depending, in particular, on the kind and scope of reported breaches.

Inter-institution units

Article 28

1. An institution of higher education may agree with other institutions of higher education to create inter-institution units and jointly operated units.

2. An institution of higher education shall have the right to create jointly operated units also with other entities, in particular with scientific institutions, also foreign, pursuant to paragraph 1 above.

3. The agreement referred to in paragraph 1 above shall specify the organization structure, manner of functioning and financing of the inter-institution unit or jointly operated unit concerned, the rules for offering studies or other forms of education, and rules for granting graduation diplomas and certificates of completion of other forms of education programs.

III. Some other regulations

New element of systemic order

New element of systemic order is being introduced in the polish higher education by:

- defining the various types of institutions of higher education, by way of lending specific meaning to words like "university", "technical university" or "academy" that are being used in names of institutions of higher education (Article 4);

Advisory and opinion-providing institutions

Bodies proposed to be formally established in the Bill on Higher Education as organizations aiding public authority organs :

- the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland, and the Conference of Rectors of Non-Academic Schools in Poland — national conferences of rectors of the various types of institutions of higher education (Articles 50 and 51)
- the Parliament of Students of the Republic of Poland (Articles 186 and 193),

The Principle of Convergence

- The bill provides for the integration of the public and non-public systems of higher education, and creates conditions for the state to safeguard the development of institutions from both of those sectors, provided they maintain the prescribed quality standards.

Employment and mobility

In a bid to ensure greater effectiveness and rationality of solutions, the bill provides for more flexibility in human resources and pay policies in public institutions of higher education, encouraging academic staff to exercise greater diligence in their work and be more mobile.

Employment and tenure

Article 111

1. The establishment of an employment relationship with an academic teacher holding the positions of professor (so-called extraordinary) and full professor shall be by nomination, or based on an employment contract, subject to Article 106, paragraph 4 herein.

(...)

Relations between institutions

- The bill creates new possibilities for:
 - cooperation between academic and scientific institutions,
 - consolidation of institutions,
 - aggregation of resources in the higher education system, both in the public and non-public sectors – to enhance the competitiveness of polish academic institutions and their attractiveness.
- Mechanisms are being put in place to facilitate cooperation and indirect institutional consolidation – by creation of federations (Articles 25 and 28).

Statutes as the source of law

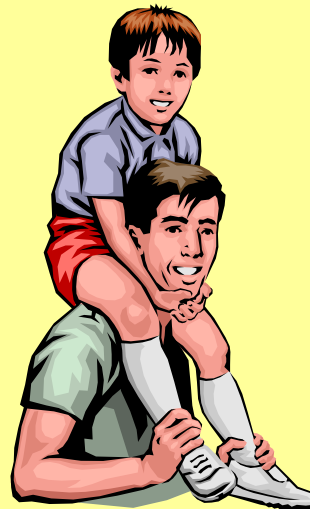
- Respecting the constitutional requirement to safeguard the autonomy of institutions of higher education, the bill provides for a greater role of statutes as a source of regulation

Article 11

Matters relating to the functioning of institutions of higher education not regulated herein shall be regulated by the statutes of the respective institution of higher education, hereinafter referred to as statutes.

Conclusion

New Bill – the best chance for



young Bill

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