

**BOLOGNA PROCESS
NATIONAL REPORT: 2005-2007**

A. Background information on your Higher Education system

Details

Country	POLAND
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Main achievements since Bergen

<p>1. Describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms, since Bergen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Act of 27 July 2005 – The Law on Higher Education (<i>Dziennik Ustaw</i>. No. 164, item. 1365) and relevant implementing regulations to the Act, which are a legal basis in particular for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the establishment of a three-cycle structure on a compulsory basis in all higher education institutions; - the issue of the Diploma Supplement; - the introduction of a credit transfer and accumulation system; - the provision of joint study programmes and the award of corresponding (double or joint) diplomas; - the provision of degree programmes in macro-fields of study and
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- interdisciplinary programmes; and
- the establishment of associations of higher education institutions.
- The following documents are relevant to the implementation of the Bologna Process:
 - Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 3 October 2006 on the ECTS credit transfer and accumulation system;
 - Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 13 June 2006 on the names of fields of study for degree programmes provided as first-cycle programmes, second-cycle programmes and long-cycle programmes;
 - Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 19 December 2006 laying down the requirements and procedure for the organisation of doctoral programmes by organisational units of HEIs;
- A regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education on degree programme requirements, which contains rules for the development of curricula in HEIs, is currently being drafted.
- Actions are taken to create internal quality assurance systems within HEIs.
- A regulation on distance education is currently being drafted.

National organisation

2. Describe any changes since Bergen in the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their roles.

Please include:

- whether higher education institutions (HEIs) report to /are overseen by different ministries
- how funds are allocated to HEIs
- areas in which HEIs are autonomous and self-governing.

The provisions of the new Law on Higher Education apply to all types of HEIs.

In addition to the State Accreditation Committee and the General Council for Higher Education, two other bodies, the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland and the Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland, operate on the basis of the Law on Higher Education, performing an advisory role in higher education.

In May 2006 higher education was given separate status and since then has been included in the remit of the newly established Ministry of Science and Higher Education, now independent of the former Ministry of Education and Science.

State-budget subsidies for public HEIs are awarded on the basis of an algorithm which takes into account, in particular, the number of students, academic staff, research potential of HEIs and factors fostering development.

There are 95 public HEIs and 320 non-public HEIs supervised by the Minister of Science and Higher Education, and 35 HEIs supervised, as appropriate, by the Minister of Health, the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Home Affairs, and the Minister of Maritime Economy.

According to the World Bank, HEIs in Poland are autonomous in all areas analysed by this institution, i.e. in terms of owning buildings and equipment, borrowing funds, spending their budgets to achieve their objectives, setting their

organisational structure, developing curricula, employing and dismissing staff, setting salaries and deciding student enrolment levels.¹

3. Describe any changes since Bergen to the institutional structure

Please include:

- the number of public/private HEIs

At present, Poland has 130 public HEIs and 315 non-public HEIs, with a total number of 1,953,800 students, including 1,333,000 at public HEIs and 620,800 at non-public HEIs.²

- are there different types of institutions delivering higher education (i.e. academic/professional, university/non-university etc.)

Article 2 of the Law on Higher Education distinguishes two types of HEIs:

- university-type HEIs: HEIs in which at least one organisational unit is authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor*;
- non-university HEIs: HEIs providing first-cycle, second-cycle or long-cycle programmes which are not authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor*.

Article 3 stipulates that:

1. The word “university” may be used in the name of an HEI whose organisational units are authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor* in at least twelve disciplines, including at least two in humanities, social or theological sciences, in mathematical, physical or engineering and technological sciences, natural sciences and in legal or economic sciences.

2. The words “technical university” may be used in the name of an HEI whose organisational units are authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor* in at least twelve disciplines, including at least eight in engineering and technological sciences.

3. The word “university” together with another adjective or adjectives added to define the profile of an HEI may be used in the name of an HEI whose organisational units are authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor* in at least six disciplines, including at least four in the areas covered by the profile of the institution.

4. The words “university of technology” may be used in the name of an HEI whose organisational units are authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor* in at least six disciplines, including four in engineering and technological sciences.

5. The word “academy” may be used in the name of an HEI whose organisational units are authorised to confer the academic degree of *doktor* in at least two disciplines.

- the number/percentage of students admitted in academic session 2006-2007 to each type of institution

As of 30 November 2005, the numbers of students enrolled in individual types of HEIs were as follows:

Universities: 563,100

Technical universities: 331,100

Agricultural universities/academies: 107,700

Academies/universities of economics: 407,800

Teacher education universities/academies: 111,800

¹ Tertiary Education in Poland, Wydawnictwo Banku Światowego, Warsaw, 2004

² GUS publication, Szkoły wyższe i ich finanse w 2005 (HEIs and their Finance), Warsaw, 2006.

Medical universities/academies: 48,800
Higher education institutions for maritime studies: 11,500
Physical education academies: 28,200
HEIs for art studies: 15,400
Theological HEIs: 10,400
Other HEIs: 79,500
Non-university HEIs: 224,700
Military HEIs: 12,000
Government service HEIs: 2,000
(Non-public HEIs: 620,800 – included)

- the extent to which different types institutions are covered by the same regulations.

All higher education institutions are covered by the same Act: The Law on Higher Education.

Partnership

4. Describe the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country.

Please include:

- the membership and role of any national Bologna group (for example policy committee, promoters' group) the membership and role of students, staff trade unions, business and social partners in any national Bologna Group.

The tasks related to the Bologna Process are performed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education which is supported by:

1. **The Council for the Bologna Process**, which is a consultative and advisory body for the minister responsible for higher education. The first Council was set up already in 2004. The present Council was established on the basis of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 3 October 2006. The Council is composed of: representatives of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the State Accreditation Committee, the General Council for Higher Education, the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland, the Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland, the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland, two representatives of Poland in the Bologna Follow-Up Group, a representative of the Team of Bologna Promoters, the Bureau for Academic Recognition and International Exchange, the Foundation for the Development of the Education System, the Coordinator of the Socrates/Erasmus Programme, and a representative of the National Section for Higher Education and Research of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity".

The Council stimulates and monitors the implementation of the Bologna Process in Poland.

2. **The Team of Bologna Promoters**, established in July 2004, is composed of 15 members. They include representatives of academic staff, administrative staff and students. They represent academic centres situated in all regions of Poland. The Promoters are in direct contact with the academic community and are actively involved in the promotion and implementation of the aims of the Bologna Process. They organise seminars, conferences and workshops, produce publications, etc.

3. **The Working Group for the National HE Qualifications Framework**

Since October 2006, the Group has been working to develop a proposal of the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework.

Moreover, within the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland, there is a Bologna Team involved in the implementation of the Bologna Process.

5. Describe the arrangements for involving students and staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

Please include:

- precise references (preferably with web links) to any legislation (or equivalent) in place to ensure students and staff are represented on HEI governing bodies
- the role of students in the governance of HEIs
- the role of staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

Students, doctoral students and trade unions are represented on the senate of an HEI (Article 61 of the Law on Higher Education) and on its faculty boards (Article 67 of the Law on Higher Education). www.mnisw.gov.pl

Students and doctoral students account for 20% of HEI senate and faculty board members; thus, they take an active part in the management of HEIs, in particular by being involved, for example, in:

- adopting the statutes of HEIs, study regulations, rules for admission to degree programmes and doctoral programmes;
- defining the main lines for the activities of their HEIs;
- evaluating the activities of their HEIs and approving annual reports of the rector, and evaluating the rector's performance;
- adopting resolutions on the establishment of a branch or teaching centre in another location and the establishment or abolition of a degree programme in a given field of study.

In the case of public HEIs, representatives of students and doctoral students in the HEI senate are also involved, among others, in:

- adopting activity-and-finance plan of HEIs;
- approving financial reports of HEIs.

A relevant body of the student and doctoral student self-government gives its opinion on the rules for awarding financial support proposed by the rector.

In accordance with the regulations, representatives of students, doctoral students and trade unions are consulted on a compulsory basis about all draft legislative acts (both institutional and national). Trade union representatives are members of decision-making bodies (Article 61 (7) of the Law on Higher Education).

On the basis of the Law of Higher Education (Article 46), students and doctoral students are members of the General Council for Higher Education. As members of its Presidium, they are involved in all types of the Council's activities.

6. Describe the measures in place to ensure the co-operation of business and social partners within the Bologna Process.

Cooperation with social and business partners is ensured through their participation in the Council for the Bologna Process (see: point 4) and the Committee for the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework, the latter currently being established.

A large number of HEIs have various types of collective bodies (e.g. councils), composed of representatives of social and business partners.

B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements

Degree system

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle.

7. Describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycle.

- *Please include:*

the percentage of students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2006/07

The Law on Higher Education has established a three-cycle system across the higher education sector. Whereas this system is being introduced on a voluntary basis in the academic year 2006/2007, it will be compulsory in all HEIs as of 1 October 2007 (in accordance with the Regulation of 13 June 2006 on the names of fields of study for degree programmes provided as first-cycle, second-cycle and long-cycle programmes).

(Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the third cycle

8. Describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of structured doctoral programmes
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- the elements that are included in doctoral study programmes, e.g. do they include taught courses or independent research only
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies
- are doctoral studies included in your country's qualifications framework and are they linked to learning outcomes
- are interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills integrated in doctoral studies
- are credit points used in measuring workload in doctoral studies.

- Doctoral programmes are the third cycle of programmes defined by the provisions of the Law on Higher Education. Their maximum duration is four years.
- The academic degree of *doktor* may be awarded not only upon completion of a doctoral programme but also on the basis of individual research. The responsibility for assessing the quality of education lies with HEIs. The quality of doctoral theses is also assessed by the Central Committee for Academic Degrees and Titles.
- The Regulation of 19 December 2006 on doctoral programmes provided by organisational units of HEIs lays down the requirements and procedure for the organisation of doctoral programmes, the provision of, and attendance at, such programmes, as well as the procedure, conditions, amounts and criteria for the award of doctoral scholarships and financial support benefits to doctoral students (Article 201 of the Law on Higher Education).
- Students enrolled on a doctoral programme are also required to undertake internships which involve the teaching of courses for a maximum number of 90

hours per year. Other duties of doctoral students are laid down in doctoral study regulations.

- Doctoral programmes will be included in the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework.
- Doctoral programmes are not covered by ECTS.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Access³ to the next cycle

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

Please include:

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

All first-cycle graduates may apply for admission to second-cycle programmes. Admission rules are laid down by a given HEI.

- if appropriate, the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to both the second and third cycles

Access to doctoral programmes is open to persons who hold the degree of *magister* or an equivalent degree and fulfil admission conditions laid down by a given HEI.

- the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle

All second-cycle and long-cycle graduates have access to doctoral programmes.

- specify any first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle

Only first-cycle programmes are provided in some fields of study.

- specify any second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle.
- Specify any examples where bridging courses are necessary to transfer between cycles in the same subject area
- any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles.

First-cycle graduates who wish to continue their studies may be enrolled on a second-cycle programme in a different field of study. The same option is available for graduates of second-cycle or long-cycle programmes.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Implementation of national qualifications framework

10. Describe the stage of implementation of the national qualifications framework to align with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA⁴.

Please include:

- the stage of development of your national qualifications framework (for

³ Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education.

⁴ A Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

example has a working group been established; have national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications been prepared)

Whereas the work was initiated in July 2006, the Minister of Science and Higher Education set up the Working Group for the Higher Education National Qualifications Framework in October 2006.

The group members participated in an international training course organised in Budapest. The group has prepared a timetable, a preliminary activity plan and a glossary of basic terms.

- the extent to which your national qualifications framework is in line with the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA

Proposals are developed strictly in accordance with the guidelines of the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA.

- the role of stakeholders in the development of your national qualifications framework.

The Committee for the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework will include representatives of sector ministries supervising HEIs, the State Accreditation Committee, the General Council for Higher Education, the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland, the Conference of Rectors of Non-University Higher Education Institutions in Poland, the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland, the National Representative Body of Doctoral Students and employers.

11. What measures are being taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?

Please include where possible:

- the percentage of first cycle graduates who found employment after graduating in 2005/06
- the percentage of first cycle graduates who continued into the second or third cycles in 2005/06
- the extent to which this is expected to change in 2006/2007.

Employability of first-cycle graduates is taken into consideration in programme requirements developed for individual fields of study. Programme requirements address general competencies which aim to increase the employability of graduates.

Quality assurance

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA⁵

12. To what extent is your national system of QA already aligned with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA?

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of the national quality assurance system in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA

The quality assurance system in Poland includes all elements listed in the ENQA Standards and Guidelines. They are based on the Law on Higher Education and included in the Statutes and other regulations of the State Accreditation Committee (SAC). The principles concerning quality reviews to be carried out on a cyclical basis and to cover all HEIs, external quality assurance to draw on internal quality

⁵ <http://www.enqa.net/files/BergenReport210205.pdf>

assurance, accreditation agencies to be independent, as well as other principles included in the Standards and Guidelines are applied in the following way:

Most universities have introduced elements or comprehensive systems of internal quality assurance; thus they may be subject to assessment. First-cycle and second-cycle programmes provided by both public and non-public HEIs in all fields of study are subject to assessment and accreditation conducted on an obligatory, non-paid and regular (standard interval of 5 years) basis by the SAC. The SAC is independent in its decisions, which are taken in the form of resolutions. The SAC's decisions are final, and no authority has the right to change or influence them.

Every HEI or faculty may apply for external review and accreditation carried out on a voluntary and paid basis by so-called peer (non-state) accreditation commissions (University Accreditation Commission, Accreditation Commission of Technical Universities, the Foundation for the Promotion and Accreditation of Economic Education, Accreditation Committee of Agricultural Universities, Accreditation Commission of Medical Universities, Accreditation Commission of Higher Education Institutions for Art Studies), working under the auspices of the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland. These accreditation institutions have been established on the HEIs' own initiative.

- any action that has been taken to ensure the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA

The Standards and Guidelines were adopted by the plenary session of the State Accreditation Committee on 13 October 2005 as the basis for the development of a new version of the SAC's mission, strategy, evaluation criteria, rules for the publication of assessment results and international cooperation. From among the SAC's members, three working groups and their chairpersons have been appointed to carry out tasks in the following areas:

- (1) establishing criteria and procedures for the SAC's self-assessment;
- (2) establishing criteria for giving ratings;
- (3) defining the type and scope of information about the SAC's activities to be made available to the general public;
- (4) appointing a standing group for international cooperation.

This year basic documents covering the above areas of the SAC's activities have been drawn up. The SAC has adopted the rules and recommendations of ENQA as the basis for the development of its own criteria for the external quality assessment of higher education in Poland. At present, the SAC is working intensively to formalise mechanisms for the introduction of these rules into its everyday practice.

In their working practices, the SAC's evaluation teams pay more attention than previously to the elements of quality assessment mentioned in the ENQA Standards and Guidelines. For example, every site visit report contains detailed information on the progress made by a given HEI in the development of an internal quality assurance system, the internationalisation of education, the use of ECTS for mobility, the role of students, etc.

Moreover, peer accreditation commissions existing in the Polish higher education system are important partners for the SAC. In 2005 the SAC launched the so-called Higher Education Quality Forum; within this framework, it organises annual meetings for joint reflection on the quality of the system. The first seminar took place in 2005. The next one, devoted to the model of internal quality assessment systems in HEIs, was held on 6 and 7 November 2006.

- any action planned to ensure the national quality assurance system is in line

with the standards and guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

The SAC intends to carry out a questionnaire survey on the quality of its work among all Polish HEIs. It plans to undergo external evaluation by ENQA experts and to apply for registration in the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies. As a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA), the SAC undertook to observe the rules set out in the ECA's Code of Good Practice. Consequently, the compliance of the SAC's activities with the Code of Good Practice will be assessed by a team of ECA experts within two years. The SAC together with the accreditation committees of the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland and Spain have recently been awarded an EU grant of 216,000 euro for activities aiming at mutual recognition of accreditation decisions. Moreover, most peer accreditation commissions make arrangements to be included in the Register.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of development of external quality assurance system

13. Describe the quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system
- the scope of your external quality assurance system: does it operate at a national level; does it cover all higher education⁶
- which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:
 - internal assessment
 - external review
 - publication of results
 - peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

The external quality assurance system in Poland is founded on the principle of education quality assessment conducted on an obligatory and non-paid basis for all HEIs by the State Accreditation Committee (SAC) and accreditation carried out on a voluntary and paid basis by commissions appointed by academic communities. The SAC, established in 2002, is the only body acting for the quality improvement of education whose remit covers the entire higher education sector (public and non-public HEIs) and whose opinions and resolutions are legally binding. The legal basis for the activities of the SAC is the Act of 27 July 2005, the Law on Higher Education.

The SAC aims to improve the quality of education in Polish HEIs, and thus to ensure their competitiveness and to facilitate the mobility of graduates on Polish and international labour markets. This aim is achieved through the quality assessment of degree programmes in individual fields of study offered by all HEIs in the public and non-public sectors. Moreover, the SAC submits to the minister responsible for higher education its opinions on the establishment of new HEIs and authorisations for HEIs to provide degree programmes in a given field of study and at a specific level of study. The quality assessment of education as well as opinions concerning applications from HEIs refer to first-, second- and long-cycle programmes. Although

⁶ higher education: all types of courses of study or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to a country's higher education system.

in principle the SAC grants accreditation to programmes in specific fields of study, in practice it also uses elements of institutional evaluation (usually covering the organisational unit visited) – in so far as it is necessary in order to assess the quality of education in a given field of study and in a given organisational unit of an HEI. The SAC applies consistent evaluation criteria, the same for all HEIs.

The quality assessment procedure consists of many stages – in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines. Assessment proceedings begin with the SAC Presidium identifying fields of study and HEIs to be assessed in a given calendar year. Then the organisational unit of an HEI to be assessed submits its self-evaluation report. An evaluation team appointed by the Secretary of the SAC analyses the documentation received from the HEI and prepares a list of issues which need to be clarified or supported by additional documents. The evaluation team is composed of academic teachers representing a given field of study, students delegated by the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland and "legal" experts whose responsibility is to assess the compliance of a given programme with formal and legal requirements. Subsequently, the evaluation team conducts a site visit at the HEI concerned in accordance with a programme forwarded earlier on. The programme includes: meetings with the authorities of the HEI and of the organisational unit under assessment, academic staff responsible for the programme assessed and students; observation of classes; inspection of study, residential and social facilities; assessment of curricula and final theses; and examination of documents concerning the schedule and progress of studies and student affairs. At the next stage, the evaluation team drafts a report which assesses the extent to which the requirements for degree programmes, as laid down in the legislation, are fulfilled and gives an opinion about the quality of education. The criteria used by the SAC to assess individual elements take into account programme requirements for every field of study laid down in a relevant regulation of the minister responsible for higher education. The HEI's authorities receive the report in order to present their position on the comments contained therein. The report and the HEI's response are analysed by the relevant SAC's Section for Fields of Study which then proposes a rating. The chairperson of the section presents the proposed rating together with its justification at a Presidium meeting. The Presidium adopts a resolution giving the final rating awarded to the organisational unit concerned. If a negative rating is given, the minister responsible for higher education takes a decision withdrawing or suspending the authorisation of the unit to provide a given degree programme. An outstanding rating may be the basis for increasing the level of funding granted from the State budget to a given HEI.

The external quality assurance process and procedures take into account the results of the self-assessment in a given field of study carried out by the HEI concerned and the results of the site visit undertaken by the SAC's experts.

All ratings and accreditation decisions (including negative ones) are published on the website of the SAC. This year new rules for publishing the SAC's assessment results have been developed.

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, the correctness of the assessment procedures applied by the SAC is subject to verification by administrative courts.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)
Level of student participation

14. Describe the level of student participation in your national quality assurance

system.

Please include:

- whether students are included in the following aspects of quality assurance:
 - the governance of national agencies for QA
 - as full members or observers in external review teams
 - as part of the decision making process for external reviews
 - in the consultation process during external reviews (e.g. arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students)
 - in internal evaluations.

In the Polish system of quality assessment in higher education, student representatives participate in all phases of the assessment process and accreditation of HEIs. In the process of arriving at a reliable result of assessment, the State Accreditation Committee (SAC) frequently refers to students to obtain their feedback.

In accordance with the Law on Higher Education, the President of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland is a member of the SAC's Presidium. Trained representatives of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland work in the SAC's evaluation teams as experts (about 40 students this year). The SAC concludes an agreement with each student-expert which specifies the latter's duties during site visits. The student-expert is also obliged to present a report on the work performed during the quality assessment in a visited HEI. In addition to opinions formed during site visits, student-experts submit at the end of each year an overview report which summarises their observations and feedback received from students of visited HEIs. During site visits, evaluation teams meet with representatives of student organisations and all interested students of a given organisational unit in order to collect their opinions on the quality of education. Obligatory observation of selected classes by members of the evaluation team is another good opportunity to obtain feedback from students. Moreover, the evaluation team examines how the authorities of a given HEI use results of the students' evaluation questionnaires, and this is a major element in the assessment of the internal quality assurance system. Information on the outcomes of such meetings is an integral part of the site visit report prepared by the evaluation team. Student representatives take an active part in the internal quality assessment process (e.g. by filling in student questionnaires, participating in institutional committees for the quality of education, etc.)

Students are also consulted as part of the appraisal of teachers' performance.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Level of international participation

15. Describe the level of international participation in your national quality assurance system.

Like in the previous years, the State Accreditation Committee (SAC) has followed several lanes in its international co-operation. However, efforts in this area of the SAC's activity have clearly focused on the implementation of the Bologna Process guidelines and decisions taken by the Conference of European Higher Education Ministers in Bergen. The SAC increased its participation in international QA networks, bilateral contacts, conferences and seminars on QA.

Please include:

- whether there is international participation in the following aspects of quality assurance

- the governance of national agencies for quality assurance
- the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies

Within two years, the SAC will be subject to external evaluation by experts of the European Consortium of Accreditation. The SAC also plans to undergo an evaluation by ENQA experts in connection with its application for ENQA membership and the registration in the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies.

- teams for external review

The SAC has drafted a preliminary list of international experts to be appointed as members of external evaluation teams. They will be selected according to the same criteria as those used for national experts. This means that they are required to hold at least a doctoral degree and must not be associated in any way with the organisational unit of an HEI to be assessed. The financial plan of the SAC includes funds necessary to cover costs linked with the involvement of international experts, i.e. transport, accommodation, translation, fees. The experience related to the involvement of Spanish experts in the evaluation of two HEIs (Warsaw, Łódź) in 2004 is encouraging and has enabled the SAC to develop detailed rules for the implementation of this system in the nearest future.

- membership of ENQA

In 2003 the SAC applied for membership of ENQA and was granted observer status. Due to the change of criteria and rules for the admission of new members in ENQA, a new application will be submitted this year (2007). The representatives of the SAC take part in most seminars held by ENQA.

Between 14 and 16 February 2005, the SAC organised an international conference on "Cooperation between accreditation committees/agencies". The conference was officially included in the calendar of the Bologna Follow-Up Group.

- membership of any other international network.

The SAC has been a member of the Central and East European Network of Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (CEEN) since the beginning of its existence. In December 2005 the SAC became a member of the ECA. It also plans to submit an application for the membership of INQAHE.

In 2004 the SAC signed a cooperation agreement with the Spanish national agency for quality assessment and accreditation (ANECA), and in 2005 started to co-operate with the German federal agency for quality assessment and accreditation (Akkreditierungsrat).

Representatives of the SAC take part in conferences and seminars on the quality of education organised by UNESCO, OECD, the World Bank and other organisations.

Furthermore, the SAC has applied for a Polish grant for the project "Mutual recognition of accreditation decisions in the European Higher Education Area", which will enable it to finance research in this area and to increase the number of accreditation projects undertaken jointly with other European institutions interested in cooperation in the area of quality assurance.

Recognition of degrees and study periods

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of diploma supplement

16. Describe the stage of implementation of the diploma supplement in your country.

Please include:

- the percentage of students graduating in 2007 who will receive a Diploma Supplement
- which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:
 - issued in a widely spoken European language
 - free of charge
 - automatically
 - correspond to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format.
- As from 1 January 2005 the Diploma Supplement was issued to all graduates of HEIs operating on the basis of the Higher Education Act previously in force. Since 1 September 2005 it has been issued to all graduates, in the Polish language, without any extra costs. The DS is designed in accordance with the recommendations of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, and it is issued together with a HE diploma. An additional copy of the DS may be issued in a widely spoken EU language.

(Scorecard)

National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementing documents⁷ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Please include:

- whether your country has ratified the convention (including depositing ratification instrument at either CoE or UNESCO)
- whether national legislation has been reviewed against the main principles of the convention
- which of the following principles are included in national legislation
 - applicants' right to fair assessment
 - recognition if no substantial differences can be proven
 - demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted
 - provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions
- whether you have a fully operational ENIC
- any action being taken to ratify or fully implement the convention.
- Poland ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention on 12 December 2003. It entered into force on 1 May 2004.
- The national legislation has been adjusted to the main principles of the Convention. The following principles have been introduced into the national legislation:
 - applicants' right to fair assessment;
 - recognition if no substantial differences can be proven;
 - demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not

⁷ Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001); Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004); Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001)

granted;

- provision of information about HE programmes and institutions in a given country.

Poland has a fully operational ENIC.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of ECTS

18. Describe the credit and accumulation system operating in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of ECTS in 2007
- the percentage of first and second cycle programmes using ECTS in 2007
- how any other credit or accumulation system in use relates to ECTS: is it compatible with ECTS; what is the ratio between national and ECTS credits.
- ECTS has been introduced in Poland on the basis of the Regulation of 3 October 2006. As of 1 January 2007, all HEIs are required to introduce ECTS.
- The national ECTS-based system reflects student workload and is linked with learning outcomes.
- Until now ECTS has been applied on a voluntary basis, mainly as a transfer system in the Erasmus programme.
- ECTS is not used for doctoral programmes.

19. Has your country produced a national plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.

During the last two years, three legislative acts regulating the recognition of foreign qualifications were adopted; these include the regulations on the nostrification of school leaving certificates and higher education diplomas and the award of academic degrees. In accordance with these regulations, holders of foreign higher education diplomas may be exempted from the formal nostrification procedure for admission to second-cycle programmes and – in the case of qualifications awarded by an institution operating within the education system of an EU Member State – also for admission to doctoral programmes, and admission to the procedure leading to the award of the academic degree of *doktor habilitowany*.

Lifelong Learning

(Scorecard)

Recognition of prior learning

20. Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning.

Please include:

- the stage of development of any procedures or national guidelines to recognise prior learning

These issues will be discussed and decided during the development of the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework.

- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for assessing prior learning as a basis for entry to HE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a description of any procedures or guidelines for allocating credits as a basis of exemption from some programme requirements.
<p>21. Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any flexibility in entry requirements <p>Admission to first-cycle and long-cycle programmes is based on results of the secondary-school leaving examination.</p> <p>Access to second-cycle programmes is open to persons who hold the degree of <i>licencjat, inżynier, magister</i> or an equivalent degree and fulfil the requirements specified by a given HEI.</p> <p>Access to doctoral programmes is open to persons holding the degree of <i>magister</i> or an equivalent degree.</p> <p>The ultimate responsibility for the admission of students to degree programmes at all levels lies with the authorities of a given HEI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any flexible delivery methods • any modular structures of programmes. <p>According to the Law on Higher Education, HEIs which provide the highest quality education have the right to develop curricula for degree programmes within fields of study, macro-fields of study and so-called special fields of study, interdisciplinary degree programmes, and doctoral programmes. The rules for providing degree programmes in macro-fields of study and interdisciplinary degree programmes will be defined in a regulation on degree programme requirements.</p> <p>Distance education methods, which enrich the educational process, are used increasingly widely in HEIs.</p>

Joint degrees

<p>(Scorecard and Eurydice)</p> <p>Establishment and recognition of joint degrees</p> <p>22. Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.</p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether joint⁸ degrees are encouraged or at least permitted in national legislation • whether joint degrees are permitted in all three cycles • the percentage of students following joint degrees • any action being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles 167 and 168 of the Law on Higher Education allow several HEIs, including foreign institutions, to provide joint degree programmes and award joint diplomas. • Joint diplomas may be awarded upon completion of first-cycle, second-cycle and long-cycle programmes. <p>Joint degrees are promoted by the National Agency for Lifelong Learning Programme and the Team of Bologna Promoters.</p>

⁸ a joint degree is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, and where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.

C. Current issues in Higher Education

Higher education and research

23. Describe the relationship between higher education and research in your country - what percentage of research is carried out in HEIs; are any steps being taken to improve the synergy between HE and other research sectors.

- Research is carried out in every HEI providing second-cycle programmes.
- Most academic staff members combine research with teaching.
- Research is also carried out in a large number of HEIs providing first-cycle programmes, although this is not obligatory.
- Involvement in research is a regular element of periodical academic staff appraisal. The authorisation to establish a degree programme in a given field of study depends on research achievements in a given area of the staff members counted towards the so-called minimum staff resources. The correspondence between the research and teaching areas is one of the basic elements taken into account in the quality assessment of education carried out as part of the accreditation of degree programmes in individual fields of study.
- Research constitutes one of the parameters used to allocate funding to public HEIs.

24. What percentage of doctoral candidates take up research careers; are any measures being taken to increase the number of doctoral candidates taking up research careers?

On 31 November 2005, Poland had 32,700 doctoral students, including 23,200 doctoral students enrolled on full-time programmes.

All doctoral students take part in research.

The social dimension

25. Describe any measures being taken in your country to widen access to quality higher education.

Please include:

- any financial or other measures to widen access in higher education amongst socially disadvantaged groups
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to widen access to higher education, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the widening access measures already in place.

Poland has a comprehensive financial support system.

26. Describe any measures to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background.

Please include:

- any guidance or counselling services and any other measures to improve retention
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to improve retention, including results if possible

- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the retention measures already in place.

System of financial support for students

The rules underlying financial support for students are defined in the Law on Higher Education and the detailed regulations for the calculation, award and payment of financial support benefits to students, the latter laid down by the rector of an HEI in consultation with the institutional student self-government body on the basis of statutory authorisation (Article 186 of the LoHE).

The following categories of students are eligible to apply for financial support:

- a) students of public and non-public HEIs operating on the basis of the Law on Higher Education;
- b) civilian students of military HEIs;
- c) students of church HEIs established and administered by the Catholic Church.

These students are eligible to apply for student financial support regardless of the mode of study (full-time and part-time programmes) and age.

Forms of financial support:

Financial support may be awarded to students in the following forms:

1. a maintenance grant
2. a scholarship for learning or sporting achievements
3. a special grant for disabled persons
4. a scholarship for learning achievements awarded by the minister
5. a scholarship for outstanding sporting achievements awarded by the minister
6. a meals grant
7. an accommodation grant
8. an aid payment

General rules of awarding financial support benefits to students:

Grants and scholarships are awarded to students for one semester or one academic year, except for the minister's scholarships for learning achievements or for outstanding sporting achievements which are awarded for one academic year, unless the final year of study, as provided for in the study schedule, includes only one semester.

Students may obtain the above grants and scholarships for a period of up to ten months in an academic year. They are paid every month, except for an aid payment which is a one-off benefit and may be awarded to a student twice in one academic year.

Students who have completed a degree programme before the time limit specified in the study schedule or have been stricken from the register during the academic year lose their entitlement to scholarships and grants. The only exceptions are the minister's scholarships for learning achievements or for outstanding sporting achievements; students who have been awarded this type of scholarship and have completed a degree programme before the time limit specified in the study schedule receive the remaining amount of the scholarship in a single payment within 30 days of their graduation.

Students may obtain a maintenance grant, a special grant for disabled persons, a meals grant and an accommodation grant throughout the duration of studies, including the first year of study. However, a scholarship for learning or sporting

achievements and the minister's scholarships (points 4 and 5) may be awarded to students only upon successful completion of the first year of study. This does not apply to students in the first year of a second-cycle programme; in this case scholarships may be awarded already during the first-year of study if a student has taken up studies within one year of the completion of a first-cycle programme. The scholarships are awarded and paid by the second HEI.

Maintenance grants, special grants for disabled persons, scholarships for learning or sporting achievements, meals grants, accommodation grants and aid payments are awarded at HEIs by single-person authorities (dean, rector) or – at the request of the institutional body of student self-government – by student grants committees. Students may appeal against a decision awarding or refusing a grant, scholarship or aid payment to the rector or the grants appeal committee within 14 days of receipt of the decision. Decisions made in the appeal process may be appealed against to an administrative court – in accordance with Article 207 of the Law on Higher Education.

The minister's scholarship for learning achievements and the minister's scholarship for outstanding sporting achievements are awarded by the minister responsible for a given type of HEIs.

Students following simultaneously degree programmes in more than one field of study may be awarded a maintenance grant, meals grant, accommodation grant, scholarship for sporting achievements and minister's scholarships (points 4 and 5) in one of those fields of study as chosen, whereas a scholarship for learning achievements and a special grant for disabled persons may be awarded in each of those fields of study.

Students who, upon completion of a degree programme in one field of study, continue to follow a degree programme in another field of study are not eligible for a maintenance grant, meals grant or accommodation grant unless, upon completion of a first-cycle programme, unless they continue their studies to obtain the degree of *magister*, though not longer than for a period of three years.

Students may simultaneously receive several financial support benefits, e.g. a maintenance grant together with a scholarship for learning or sporting achievements and a special grant for disabled persons. The exceptions are scholarships for learning or sporting achievements and the minister's scholarships for learning achievements or outstanding sporting achievements. Students who have been granted the minister's scholarships may not receive a scholarship for learning or sporting achievements from their HEI. Moreover, students receiving scholarships awarded on the basis of Article 22 (3) of the Act of 18 January 1996 on Physical Culture (*Dziennik Ustaw* 2001. No. 81, item. 889, as amended by subsequent legislation) may not receive simultaneously a scholarship for sporting achievements or the minister's scholarship for outstanding sporting achievements.

Funding for student financial support

The main source of funding for student financial support is the State budget. HEIs receive a subsidy for this purpose (separately for each calendar year) which is distributed by the rector in consultation with the institutional student self-government body. This is done in accordance with the rule (Article 174 (4) of the Law on Higher Education) that the amount of funds allocated from the student and doctoral student financial support subsidies for grants and other welfare benefits (maintenance, meals and accommodation grants and aid payments) may not be smaller than the funds

allocated for scholarships for learning or sporting achievements.

The subsidy is included in the financial support fund for students and doctoral students, established at HEIs on the basis of Article 103 of the Law on Higher Education. The fund is also based on fees for meals in student canteens and accommodation in student dormitories, as well as on other revenues, including fees for renting premises in student dormitories and canteens.

Scholarships, grants and aid payments, including those awarded by the minister, are paid by HEIs.

In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Transport **students** are entitled to a reduced fare on public transport (*Dziennik Ustaw* No. 153, item 1098; in force since 31 August 2006)

As of 1 October 2006, **doctoral students** enrolled in HEIs which operate on the basis of the Law on Higher Education are eligible to apply for State-budget financial support in the form of: maintenance grant, aid payment, scholarship for learning achievements, meals grant, accommodation grant and special scholarship for the disabled persons (Article 199 of the LoHE).

Financial support is provided to doctoral students in accordance with the provisions concerning the financial support for students (Article 199 (3) of the LoHE), whereas a scholarship for learning achievements:

- 1) may be awarded to a doctoral student in the first year of a doctoral programme who achieved very good results in the admissions process;
- 2) may be awarded to a doctoral student in the second and further years of a doctoral programme who fulfilled all of the following conditions in the academic year preceding the award of a scholarship:
 - a) achieved very good or good results in examinations provided for in the curriculum of the doctoral programme;
 - b) demonstrated progress in research work and in the preparation of the doctoral thesis;
 - c) demonstrated particularly strong commitment to teaching.

Detailed rules for granting benefits are laid down by the rector in consultation with the institutional student self-government body and the institutional doctoral student self-government body (Article 199 (2) of the LoHE).

Mobility

27. Describe any measures being taken in your country to increase student mobility.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward mobility
- any measures to increase outward mobility

Student mobility in the framework of the SOCRATES-Erasmus Programme has been steadily increasing, in terms of both the number of higher education institutions involved in the Programme and the number of student flows.

Academic year	Number of HEIs sending students	Number of outward student flows	Number of HEIs receiving students	Number of inward student flows
1998/99	40	1426	No data	220
1999/00	72	2813	No data	466
2000/01	90	3691	42	614
2001/02	94	4322	50	750
2002/03	115	5419	77	996
2003/04	129	6278	86	1459
2004/05	149	8390	107	2332
2005/06	163	9974	<i>Data to be provided by the EC</i>	<i>Data to be provided by the EC</i>

This visible increase has been achieved not only due to strong interest among students to undertake a part of their studies at a partner HEI abroad, but also due to better understanding of recognition mechanisms and improved quality of services offered to both outgoing and incoming students.

It is also a result of decisions taken by Polish HEIs which fully recognise the importance of internationalisation of the teaching process and the role of student and staff mobility in the internationalisation process. Moreover, improvement in mobility, mainly in qualitative terms, has been encouraged to some extent by the activities of the Team of Bologna Promoters and the National Erasmus Committee within the National Agency of the SOCRATES Programme, such as seminars, workshops and information meetings organised, among others, for Institutional Co-ordinators and focusing on the issues of recognition and quality of mobility.

Particular attention was given to measures increasing inward student mobility: the development of new courses in widely spoken EU languages (mainly English); arrangements making International Relation Offices in HEIs more efficient so that they could provide better services to foreign students. However, despite gradual improvement, the disproportion between outward and inward mobility is still substantial.

Although much has already been done in the area of mobility, further constant improvement is still necessary: there is a need to increase the range of courses taught in widely spoken EU languages, to promote the idea of joint programmes, and to streamline the procedures for the recognition of study periods undertaken in other HEIs.

28. Are portable loans and grants available in your country? If not, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants and loans.

The portability of grants and loans awarded to a student before a mobility period is a strictly observed rule in the Erasmus Programme. Any breach of the rule, reported to the National Agency, is thoroughly examined in order to avoid such situations in the future.

29. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to student mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.

The Erasmus Programme is open to any public and non-public higher education institution which is subject to quality assessment conducted by the European Commission and the national authorities.

Monitoring activities carried out by the National Agency ensure proper understanding of the exchange rules and conditions, their proper implementation and

improvement. The rules for the allocation and re-distribution of funds received for the financing of the exchange ensure their efficient use.

30. Describe any measures being taken in your country to increase staff mobility.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward mobility
- any measures to increase outward mobility

Like student mobility, staff mobility within the Erasmus Programme has been steadily increasing in terms of both the number of higher education institutions involved in the Programme and the number of staff flows.

Academic year	Number of HEIs sending academic staff	Number of outward academic staff flows	Number of inward academic staff flows
2000/01	82	678	488
2001/02	94	800	573
2002/03	113	884	640
2003/04	111	947	749
2004/05	133	1394	1026
2005/06	146	1741	<i>Data to be provided by the EC</i>

Staff mobility, which differs from student mobility in terms of traditions and organisational arrangements, is an equally important element in the internationalisation of higher education.

Further qualitative and quantitative increase in staff mobility requires:

- increasing the role of teaching achievements in the evaluation of progress made by academic staff in their career;
- promoting the delivery of courses in foreign languages, including teaching assignments abroad;
- using academic staff mobility for the development of high-quality human resources;
- improving students' knowledge of widely spoken EU languages.

31. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to staff mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.

See point 29. There are no restrictions in this area.

The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world

32. Describe any measures being taken in your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA.

- The Ministry of Science and Higher Education has a separate department responsible for the promotion of higher education.
- Activities aiming to promote Polish higher education are also undertaken by the Rectors' Conferences and individual HEIs; these include in particular:
 - development of a database of programmes and courses offered in widely spoken foreign languages by Polish HEIs;
 - publication and dissemination of promotional materials;
 - activities promoting higher education undertaken jointly by representatives of

individual universities in various parts of the world.

Future challenges

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

- 1) Implementation of the aims of the Bologna Process, in particular:
 - development and implementation of the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework;
 - full implementation of the two-cycle structure based on ECTS;
 - development of doctoral programmes;
 - wider opening of HEIs towards international cooperation and internationalisation of education;
 - increase in student and academic staff mobility
- 2) Increase in the number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology
- 3) Development of mechanisms ensuring high quality and effectiveness of education
- 4) Development of cooperation between HEIs and social and business partners
- 5) Adaptation of education to the needs of changing labour market, development of entrepreneurship and skills and competencies necessary on the labour market
- 6) Changes in the system of higher education financing, including increased funding from sources other than the State budget
- 7) Development of a lifelong learning system
- 8) Enhancing the role of HEIs in the development of links between education, research and innovativeness
- 9) Participation of Poland in the creation of the European Institute of Technology
- 10) Reform of the organisation and financing of scientific research.