



Bologna Seminar,  
“Employability and its links to the objectives of the Bologna  
Process”

Slovenia, Bled, 22-23 October 2004

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## **Working Group III**

**The contribution of different recognition tools towards the  
improved mobility and employability of graduates**

## **Introduction**

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# BOLOGNA PROCESS BERLIN COMMUNIQUE

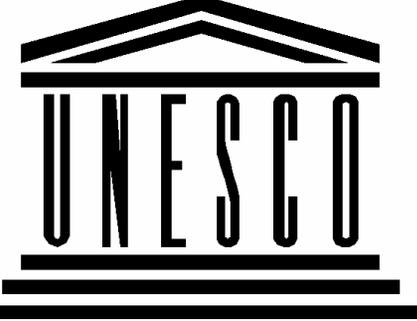
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The Ministers in charge of Higher Education adopted the Berlin Communique (September 2003) – three immediate priorities:

- ❑ quality assurance,
- ❑ two cycles systems and
- ❑ the recognition of degrees and periods of studies.

By 2005 they expect detailed reports on the progress achieved in each country in these three areas.

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# BOLOGNA PROCESS: BERLIN COMMUNIQUE

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- importance of the Lisbon Recognition Convention – call for ratifications by Bologna signatories;
  - every student graduating as from 2005 should receive the Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge and that it should be issued in a widely spoken European language;
  - Recognition tools for employability: ECTS, Europass etc.
  - Quality assurance and accreditation: indispensable additional link
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# BOLOGNA PROCESS: BERLIN COMMUNIQUE

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Quality Assurance: the primary responsibility with each institution; by 2005 all should have national quality assurance

- ❑ A definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.
  - ❑ Evaluation of programs or institutions, including internal assessment, external review, participation of students and the publication of results.
  - ❑ A system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.
  - ❑ International participation, co-operation and networking.
  - ❑ ENQA: develop an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance.
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Missing: QA of cross-border higher education provision



# CONVENTIONS ON THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

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UNESCO: 6 regions, Europe one of them

Regional Conventions for Africa (Arusha Convention), the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America (Lisbon Recognition Convention), the Mediterranean, Latin America and the Caribbean

Unique legal framework that has 160 ratifications from 116 Member States of UNESCO

Existing decentralized implementation mechanisms administered by UNESCO regional offices/units in Bangkok, Beirut, Bucharest, Caracas, Dakar, Paris: regional intergovernmental committees that meet every two years to review progress made and obstacles encountered

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## UNESCO: regional frameworks in a global context

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### UNESCO's regional conventions:

- ❑ 1970s/1980s: six regional/international conventions ratified by over 120 Member States: towards a universal convention?
  - ❑ 1992: concept of universal convention rejected, strengthen regional frameworks
  - ❑ 1997: Lisbon Recognition Convention adopted
  - ❑ 1998: World Conference on Higher Education/Sorbonne D
  - ❑ 1999: Bologna Process launched
  - ❑ 2001: The external dimension of Bologna
  - ❑ 2002 : The regional Vs. the interregional approach: launch of the Global Forum on International QA, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications
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# First Global Forum: Action Plan (17 – 18 October 2002)

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## Standard-setting activities:

- Initiate revision of conventions on the recognition of studies to respond to new challenges: linking recognition and QA and responding to TNE
- Promote research on role of new providers in widening access to higher education and on the concept of higher education as a public responsibility;
- Develop guiding principles

## Capacity-building:

- Develop regional and national frameworks for quality assurance;
- Informed decision-making for stakeholders in the education process

## Clearinghouse:

- Develop information tools for students;
- Study Abroad data-base and publications;
- Other data-bases to promote consumer protection;



## UNESCO/OECD Guidelines

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- UNESCO/OECD Guidelines will build on existing national and international initiatives.
  - The role of the drafting sessions is to prepare guidelines that meet the policy objectives of:
    1. Learner protection
    2. Greater transparency of qualifications
    3. Fair and transparent recognition procedure
    4. Increased international co-operation in quality assurance and accreditation
    5. societal development
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# Suggested content and procedures for working on the guidelines

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- Five main actors who need to interact nationally and internationally:
    1. Higher education institutions/providers (including academic staff)
    2. Student bodies
    3. Quality assurance and accreditation agencies
    4. Recognition and credential evaluation agencies
    5. Professional bodies
    6. Governments
  - It is suggested that the guidelines address possible actions to be taken by the five actors in order to meet the policy objectives.
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# Guidelines: more information

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- Inclusive drafting process: all stakeholders are involved
- Active participation through:

(a) UNESCO web-site:

<http://www.unesco.org/education/amq/guidelines/qualityprovision.html>

(b) OECD web-site:

<http://www.oecd.org/edu/internationalisation/guidelines>

~~(c) An Electronic Discussion Group (EDG) has been set up for all participants in the drafting sessions.~~



# Recognition tools – mobility/employability

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Existing challenges:

- ❑ Not all Bologna signatories at the same level of development – Western Balkans
  - ❑ GDP in S&M, B&H: in 2002 50% of 1989 level; only Albania surpassed it by 20%
  - ❑ GDP/capita: 10-30% of EU average, wide differences (Croatia over \$6,000, 3x higher)
  - ❑ Industrial production even sharper fall (in B&H to 28%, in S&M to 38% of 1989 level) - dramatic consequences
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# Investment in R&D...

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- In Croatia (1995-2000): Ministry for S&T got only 1.1-1.3% of GDP, of which
    - 31-26% for R&D, but a large part for staff salaries, *only 17-20% for research projects*
    - 57-65% for higher education
    - 10% Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences
  - Still, Croatia's investment in R&D higher than of some EU acceding Cs (Hung, Eston)
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# Investment in R&D...

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- ❑ In Serbia, R&D spending much lower: 0.32% of GDP in 2003, though rising - plans to increase public spending to 1% of GDP by 2005 and further to 1.4% by 2010
  - ❑ In Macedonia: only 0.025% of GDP in the 2001 budget for the 375 projects funded by the Ministry of Education and Science
  - ❑ B&H: no reliable statistics, only estimates
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## HE: a new context

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UNESCO figures presented in the Synthesis Report (WCHE+5):

- ❑ Massive increase in demand for HE with a view to development: 40-50% enrolment rates needed; some countries below 5%
  - ❑ Demographic expansion: developing countries population 7 – 8 billion people in 2025
  - ❑ Growth of student enrolments; historic threshold of 100 million students worldwide has been crossed, 125 million before 2020.
  - ❑ Access and equity: sustainable development of higher education systems
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## The way ahead: **TOWARDS A 'QUALITY CULTURE'**

A great diversity but some converging elements:

- ❑ A new emerging concern for quality assurance explicit in all Member States, both OECD and UNESCO;
- ❑ A resistance to change;
- ❑ Lack of human, institutional and financial resources;
- ❑ Change of mentalities: towards a "quality culture" / "une logique de la qualite"
- ❑ Confusion with terms (Anglo-Saxon dominated?)

However, a sense of urgency to move forward...

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## Common elements

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### Prerequisites for efficient capacity-building

- To be part of wider HE reforms;
  - To have support from the government;
  - To be independent from the government;
  - To involve other relevant stakeholders at national level: HEIs, academic staff and students;
  - To address issues of new providers;
  - Private providers, ODL and cross-border HE;
  - To be part of long-term processes to assure sustainability;
  - To have adequate funding to assure impact
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# What conclusions for Bologna?

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## The global context

- the growing importance of the knowledge society/economy;
- the development of new trade agreements which cover trade in education services;
- the innovations related to ICTs; and cross-border provision of HE

## Capacity-Building

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