

BFUGB14 5

23 January 2007

APPLICATIONS TO JOIN THE BOLOGNA PROCESS: UPDATE

Introduction

1. This paper provides an update on possible applications to join the Bologna Process and invites the Board's views on recommendations to be made to BFUG.

Background

2. Using the procedure agreed during the last period, the requirements and procedures for country members applying to join the Bologna process have been updated and posted on the Bologna Secretariat website (copy at Annex A for info). The deadline for applications has been set as 31 January 2007.

Application from Kyrgyz Republic

3. The Secretariat received an application to join the Bologna Process from the Kyrgyz Republic on 22 December 2006 (copy at Annex B for info). The request also asks if they might attend the London Ministerial conference as observers.

4. In view of the fact that the Kyrgyz Republic is not a signatory of the European Cultural Convention, it is not eligible for consideration. We therefore suggest that the Secretariat recommends to BFUG that the application is refused.

5. We also suggest that we refuse their request to attend the London conference as observers. Places will be limited at the event, and there are other countries likely to have greater priority for invitations to attend as observers.

Application from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

6. The Secretariat has today (12 January) received an application to join the Bologna Process from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. As Board members know, Cyprus already takes part in the Process. This is a politically sensitive area and the Secretariat would welcome the Board views, before formulating a recommendation to BFUG.

Possible application from Kosovo

7. The Board will recall from discussion at the October BFUG meeting that we are expecting an application from Kosovo. In October, BFUG noted that the current status of Kosovo prevented full membership, but there might be other ways in which Kosovo could be associated with the Process.

8. Since then, Kosovo sent an email at the end of October, asking for details of the application process and the deadline. It is therefore possible that an application may be forthcoming.

Possible application from Eurodoc

9. The Board may wish to note that the Secretariat has recently had an inquiry from Eurodoc about the criteria and deadline for becoming a consultative or partner member. It is therefore possible that an application might be forthcoming before the deadline of 31 January.

Conclusion

9. The Board is invited to:

- agree the recommendation to BFUG that the application from the Kyrgyz Republic is refused
- offer views on the recommendation to BFUG on the application from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
- note that further applications might be received by the deadline of 31 January 2007.

Bologna Secretariat
January 2007

November 2006

REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR JOINING THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

BACKGROUND

The criteria for admission of new members to the Bologna Process at the Ministerial Conference in Bergen have been set by the Berlin Communiqué:

Countries party to the European Cultural Convention shall be eligible for membership of the European Higher Education Area provided that they at the same time declare their willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education. Their applications should contain information on how they will implement the principles and objectives of the declaration.

The purpose of this document is to provide applicant countries with guidance on the procedures and requirements for membership of the Bologna Process. It also consolidates both principles and action lines of the Bologna Process into a single document.

PRINCIPLES

While the 10 actions lines are the main focus of members, it is equally important to note the underlying principles of the Bologna Process. The realisation of the European Higher Education Area can only be achieved by incorporating their philosophy within the higher education system of each country. These principles, which all come from the Bologna Declaration and/or from the Prague and Berlin Communiqués, are elaborated below:

- International mobility of students and staff;
- Autonomous universities;
- Student participation in the governance of higher education;
- Public responsibility for higher education;
- The social dimension of the Bologna Process.

Applicant countries are requested to confirm their adherence to these principles in their applications.

International mobility of students and staff

“Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement”
(Bologna declaration).

“Ministers reaffirmed that efforts to promote mobility must be continued to enable students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff to benefit from the richness of the European Higher Education Area including its democratic values, diversity of

cultures and languages and the diversity of the higher education systems.” (Prague Communiqué)

Autonomous universities

“European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988¹. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge.” (Bologna Declaration)

“Ministers accept that institutions need to be empowered to take decisions on their internal organisation and administration.” (Berlin Communiqué)

Student participation in the governance of higher education

“Ministers affirmed that students should participate in and influence the organisation and content of education at universities and other higher education institutions.” (Prague Communiqué)

“Ministers note the constructive participation of student organisations in the Bologna Process and underline the necessity to include the students continuously and at an early stage in further activities. Students are full partners in higher education governance. Ministers note that national legal measures for ensuring student participation are largely in place throughout the European Higher Education Area. They also call on institutions and student organisations to identify ways of increasing actual student involvement in higher education governance.” (Berlin Communiqué)

Higher education as a public responsibility

“They [the Ministers] supported the idea that higher education should be considered a public good and is and will remain a public responsibility...” (Prague Communiqué)

The social dimension of the Bologna Process

“Ministers reaffirm the importance of the social dimension of the Bologna Process. The need to increase competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area, aiming at strengthening social cohesion and reducing social and gender inequalities both at national and at European level.” (Berlin Communiqué)

OBJECTIVES

¹ *“The university is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organized because of geography and historical heritage; it produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching.”*

The objectives of the Bologna Process are summarised in its 10 action lines. In common with all members, applicants are equally obliged to reach the common goals by 2010 as defined in the Bologna Declaration supplemented by the Prague, Berlin and Bergen Communiqués.

The Bologna Action Lines

Six action lines were introduced in the Bologna Declaration:

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees;
2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles;
3. Establishment of a system of credits;
4. Promotion of mobility;
5. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance;
6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education.

Three more were introduced in the Prague Communiqué:

7. Lifelong learning;
8. Higher education institutions and students;
9. Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

A tenth action line was introduced in the Berlin Communiqué:

10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and the ERA (European Research Area).

The various action lines of the Bologna Process are reflected in the BFUG Work Programme 2005-2007. The social dimension of the Bologna Process might be seen as an overarching or transversal action line.

REPORTS FROM POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS

All members of the Bologna Process have been asked to produce a national report before the London Ministerial Conference. Potential members will be asked to produce a report in a similar format. The template for national reports is attached at Annex A.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

The decision to accept new members to the Bologna Process will be taken by the next Ministerial Conference (London, 17 – 18 May 2007). The role of the BFUG is to make a recommendation, having satisfied itself of the credentials and commitment of the applicants.

Potential members should send an application for membership to the Minister responsible for Higher Education in the Host Country of the next Ministerial

Conference², with copies to the BFUG Chair³ and the Bologna Secretariat⁴. The application, which should be signed by the (national) Minister responsible for higher education, should declare their commitment to pursue and implement the principles and objectives of the Bologna Process in their own systems of higher education. The application should be complemented by a report, detailing the current higher education policies of the country in the light of the Bologna Process and outlining what reforms they plan to undertake to meet the goals of the Process. The attached template identifies headlines and key questions which should be addressed in the context of this report.

The report should be sent to the BFUG Chair and Secretariat, in English, **before 31 January 2007**.

When an application is received, the BFUG Chair and Secretariat will verify that it satisfies the prescribed procedures. A confirmation of receipt will be sent to the applicant country. At the same time, the BFUG will be informed of the application. The applicant country will then be invited to seminars and other events in the Bologna Process.

Decisions regarding membership will be taken by the Ministerial Conference on 17-18 May 2007.

SUMMARY

- Applications for membership of the Bologna Process should be signed by the Minister responsible for higher education.
- They should be addressed to the UK Secretary of State for Education, as host of the next Ministerial Conference, with a copy to the German Minister of Education as Chair of the Bologna Process in the spring of 2007.
- Applications should be accompanied by – or followed by – a national report in English using the attached template.
- The deadline for submitting applications as well as national reports is **31 January 2007**.

The Bologna Secretariat may be contacted for further information.

All about the Bologna Process at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/>

Bologna Secretariat
November 2005

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⁴ ann.mcvie@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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БИЛИМ БЕРҮҮ, ИЛИМ ЖАНА
ЖАШТАР САЯСАТЫ МИНИСТРЛИГИ



МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ,
НАУКИ И МОЛОДЕЖНОЙ ПОЛИТИКИ
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The Right Honourable Alan Johnson MP
Secretary of State for Education and Skills
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street, London
SW1P 3BT, United Kingdom

cc: The UK Bologna Secretariat

Honoured Colleague,

For several years the Kyrgyz Republic has followed a policy of great attention to the international context of Higher Education. We have followed the development of the Bologna Process with great attention and have taken a series of actions to bring the Higher Education system of our country into that great stream of development.

- In 1992 our Education Law instituted the two cycles of higher education, that is the “Bachelor” and the “Masters” which correspond to the first two cycles of the Bologna declaration. The Law also gave academic freedom, instituted a licensing and accreditation mechanism and created the necessary normative structure to permit international exchange;
- In 1994 various Kyrgyz higher education institutions began cooperation with European Universities through the TEMPUS Tacis Programme;
- In 1995, thanks to the cooperation programmes, several Kyrgyz Universities began implementation of module-rating systems, management systems and quality control;
- In 2003 a revised Education Law as well as other strategic educational programmes stated that the Kyrgyz Republic intended to follow the Bologna Process;
- In the previous years many Universities had instituted various credit systems according to different international models. The Kyrgyz Republic determined that it was necessary to find a common model and instituted a Presidential work group to examine the implementation of ECTS
- In 2004-2005 a pilot project was carried out under the authority of the Ministry of Education by 7 Kyrgyz Universities in order to use ECTS and Tuning methodology to create new degree programmes for the first and second cycle in “Economics”. The pilot Bachelors programme was implemented in the 2004-2005 academic year in those 7 Universities;
- In 2005 the Kyrgyz National University carried out a pilot experience on credit accumulation and transfer in conjunction with the University of Grenoble;
- In 2005-2006 other Universities adopted the new Economics programmes; four Universities implemented programmes using the same model in Agricultural Studies, Engineering, Pedagogical Studies and Humanities;

- In 2005-2006 the Ministry of Education as a member of a Consortium (Bologna.KG) including 13 Universities (Pisa, Gent and 11 Kyrgyz Universities) thanks to a TEMPUS Tacis Structural Measure created two National Information Centres on the Bologna Process (in the capital Bishkek and in Osh);
- The Consortium has a website (www.bolognakg.net) containing information in Russian and English on the Bologna Process and related projects; it constitutes the main source of information on the Bologna process in the Russian language and is used by all CIS countries;
- In 2005-2006 the Bologna.KG also created a Network of 44 experts on the Bologna Process and, using ECTS/Tuning methodology, formulated new programmes of study for the subject areas of Ecology, Tourism, Mathematics, Business, Management; these programmes will be implemented in 2007-2008 and provide a general methodological model for programmes of study in all fields;
- In November 2006 the Ministry of Education has created a National ECTS-Bologna Coordinating Centre to coordinate and advise the ECTS Coordinators present in each University of the Republic;
- In 2007, thanks to a new TEMPUS Tacis Structural Measure, the Ministry of Education with the Bologna.KG Consortium (now including 17 members), will create new Bologna Process Dissemination Centres for the Universities in the Talas , Naryn and Jalal-Abad regions; it will train new experts and assist in the formulation of new study programmes according to Bologna criteria;
- The Bologna.KG Consortium will also include a pilot experience in self-evaluation of Universities according to the TEEP-ENQA model.

On 1 December 2006 the Kyrgyz "Corpus Academicus" during the Conference of Rectors of Institutions of Higher Education approved the path of development of higher education in Kyrgyzstan based on the principles of the Bologna Process and it expresses its general desire to join the common European Higher Education Area.

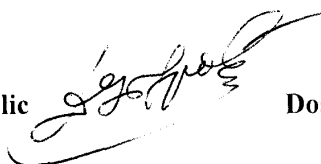
As you can see, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Ministry of Education and the Kyrgyz Universities have implemented many measures to align with the Bologna Process. These actions are continuing and expanding. We add that the Kyrgyz Republic, its Ministry, its Rectors' Conference and its Universities promotes the Bologna Process in the entire Central Asian region. We are aware that Bologna declaration was originally signed only by European countries. We know however that the Bergen communiqué expresses the willingness of the signatory countries to explore extension to other geographical areas that look to the Bologna Process as their guideline for quality in Higher Education.

On this basis we express our desire to attend the London Conference as observers and, if possible and as soon as possible, to sign the Bologna Agreement and to become full partners with the other signatory countries.

I ask you to consider our request, taking into account the importance of our region and the seriousness of our desire to adhere to this great common endeavour and to help and advise us on any further actions we should take to reach a successful conclusion.

Very truly,

**Minister of Education, Science
and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic**



Dosbol Nur uulu

Bishkek, DATE 19.12.2006



TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

11 January 2007

Excellency,

I am writing to apply on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot people for the inclusion of North Cyprus in the Bologna Process. First of all, however, I would like to bring to your kind attention some relevant information on the matter.

The Republic of Cyprus, established jointly by Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in 1960 became a member of the Council of Europe in 1961⁵, and a signatory to the European Cultural Convention in 1969⁶. The Constitution of this now Greek Cypriot run Republic empowers each community separately to conduct its own local, religious, cultural and educational affairs with its own competent authorities (*attachment 1*). Both communities, regardless of the as-yet unsettled political problems existing since 1963, exercising this right and power since 1960 through their own separate and governing themselves through their own elected representatives and organs in all fields of life.

I, therefore, make this application in accordance with the vested rights of the Turkish Cypriot people in the field of education in accordance with the 1960 International Cyprus Treaties.

In view of the peculiar nature of our current status, I feel it necessary to make, at the outset, the following clarifications in respect of our situation and the supporting arguments in respect of our application:

1. The “Republic of Cyprus” is already a member of the Bologna Process. However, the “national education” authority, which made the application on behalf of the “Republic”, has jurisdiction and authority only over the educational affairs of the Greek Cypriot community, as stated very clearly and explicitly in the Articles 20 and 83 of the constitution of the 1960 Republic of Cyprus (*attachment 1*). This was, in fact, admitted by the Greek Cypriot leader Mr. Tassos Papadopoulos, in a recent statement he made to the media on 14 November 2006 in response to the call made by the newly elected Archbishop of Cyprus for greater involvement of the Greek Orthodox Church in education (*attachment 2*). Therefore, the existing membership of Cyprus to the Bologna Process binds the educational activities of

⁵ Cyprus was admitted as a member to the Council of Europe in 1961 (Council of Europe, CM28 Session of the Committee of Ministers, RESOLUTION (61) 14 (24/5/1961))

⁶ Cyprus ratified the European Cultural Convention on 23 September 1969

the Greek Cypriot community only and does not include politically, practically or in any other way, the educational matters of the Turkish Cypriot people.

Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson
Secretary of State for Education and Skills of the United Kingdom
London

2. The Turkish Cypriot people, since 1960, have legally been in possession of competent authorities legislating and governing its communal affairs, including educational and cultural matters. Although the as-yet unresolved issue of the Cyprus problem excludes Turkish Cypriot people from taking part as a national state in relations with other countries or with international bodies since the Republic of Cyprus, albeit unlawfully, is the only recognized government in Cyprus, this should not and does not exclude the Turkish Cypriot institutions, organs or authorities from participating in competency-based or subject-specific international organizations or associations. For example, two “elected representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community” sit in the of the Council of Europe, based on the Resolution 1376 adopted by the PACE in April 2004. These two representatives of the Turkish Cypriots are able to speak in the Chamber (*attachment 3*). It is clear that the central issue in the Cyprus problem is and has always been the composition, powers and functions of the central Federal government in a new partnership state as attested by numerous agreements since 1975 (*attachment 4*). The competency, legality or the authority of the organs pertaining to communal issues has never been a matter for contention or discussion between the two peoples. Since education is clearly one such matter, we believe that we have the legal and the moral right to represent and act on behalf of our own people at the local as well as at the international level. Therefore, we have the right to participate in the Bologna Process in our own right, on behalf of ourselves for ourselves.
3. Following the failure, as a result of the majority “no” vote by the Greek Cypriot people, of the UN assisted efforts to reunite Cyprus and enable the two Cypriot peoples to join the European Union together on 1 May 2004, the European Union, and the Council of Europe expressed their profound disappointment and resolved to end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot people in welcoming the majority “yes” vote in the simultaneous referenda of the UN plan in Cyprus on 24 April 2004 (*attachment 3*). Both the EU and the Council of Europe are in the process of taking, albeit slowly, various steps aimed at ending the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots as well as helping them to prepare “for implementation of the *acquis communautaire* in view of the withdrawal of its suspension in accordance with Article 1 of Protocol No 10 to the Act of Accession following a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus” (*attachment 5*).

The Turkish Cypriots have established a total of seven institutions of higher education, three of which are state owned, one is trust and the remaining three are privately owned. These institutions have been active in the international arena, establishing and running joint degree programmes as well as research projects, publishing in internationally renowned scholarly journals, exchanging academic staff and students, receiving accreditation for its programmes or departments from reputable internationally active bodies, and joining as members to various regional or international scientific and academic associations,

including the European Universities Association, the International Universities Association, the Islamic Universities Association, and the Mediterranean Universities Association. It is our sincere desire and right to further develop and improve our activities in the field of higher education, increase quality of our institutions and participate fully with our sister institutions and their associations in Europe through participation in the Bologna Process. Our Higher Education and Accreditation Authority as well as the individual higher education institutions are following closely all the developments in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), and are pursuing and implementing the objectives of the Bologna Process unilaterally. Based on these, and the fact that Europe has already committed itself to including in the EU the northern part of Cyprus upon the entry into force of a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus, it would make no sense to exclude the Turkish Cypriots from the EHEA and the Bologna Process until a solution is found in the island. Therefore, our application, we believe, needs to be accepted and supported.

I remain confident of the fact that the Turkish Cypriot people not only fulfil the requirements for application for membership to the Bologna Process, but that we have also demonstrated and continue to demonstrate the desire and the will to be an active partner within Europe, share its values and heritage, and contribute to its development to the best of our ability. As individuals, we are citizens of Europe, and possess equal rights with any other EU citizen. However, the continuation of the Cyprus problem despite our expressed will for reunification is being used against our people and our institutions. Education is a public good. Education is one of the fundamental rights of every human being. Politics cannot and should not be allowed to prejudice education at any level. Morally, and legally, the Turkish Cypriot people and our educational institutions cannot be declared as “illegal” or cast aside as “unrecognized”. Education, and particularly the higher education, can and should be used as a means to bring together the youth of both sides in Cyprus to facilitate mutual understanding and cooperation, and accelerate a comprehensive solution.

My people declared and continue to declare our clear desire, determination and commitment to finding a solution to the Cyprus problem. My people have declared and continue to declare our desire, determination and commitment to taking up our rightful place in Europe along with the rest of the Europeans. We believe Europe is also committed to receiving us.

I shall be sending before the application deadline our national report in the prescribed format, which I am sure, will reveal clearly our endeavours to implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in our higher education system.

On this note, I declare on behalf of my people our commitment and our willingness to pursue and implement the objectives of the Bologna Process in our systems of higher education. I hope and trust that our application will be considered favourably and our rightful demand to participate in the Bologna Process will be realized.

Please accept, Excellency, assurances of my highest consideration.

Mehmet Ali Talat
President