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BERGEN TO LONDON 2007
SECRETARIAT REPORT ON THE BOLOGNA WORK PROGRAMME 2005-2007

(text for inside front cover)

This report, prepared by the Secretariat, gives an overview of the key elements of the Bologna Work Programme for 2005 –2007. It includes contributions from the Chairs of Working Groups, seminar organisers, the European Commission and consultative members. It also includes some contributions from individual country members, summarising the main developments at national level over the period 2005-2007. Country members contributed on a voluntary basis. Hence, not all countries are included.

Note – add disclaimer

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BOLOGNA WORK PROGRAMME 2005-2007

The context for the work of the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) between 2005 and 2007 was clearly set out in the Bergen Communiqué¹, agreed by Ministers responsible for higher education in the Bologna signatory countries at their 4th conference in Bergen, Norway in May 2005. The Bergen Communiqué charged BFUG with a number of tasks, including:

- reporting on the implementation and further development of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)
- considering the practicalities of implementing a European register for quality assurance agencies
- preparing report on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes
- elaborating a strategy for the external dimension
- continuing and widening the stocktaking process
- presenting comparable data on the social dimension and student and staff mobility
- exploring the issues around arrangements for supporting the continuing development of the EHEA beyond 2010.

Individual BFUG members also took note of the need to continue to pursue the 10 Action Lines previously agreed in the Bologna Declaration² and the subsequent Prague³ and Berlin⁴ Communiqués, with a view to realising the EHEA by 2010. These are:

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 cooperation in quality assurance
6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education.
7. Lifelong learning
8. Higher education institutions and students
9. Promoting the attractiveness of the EHEA.
10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the EHEA and the European Research Area.

In recent years, there has been a gradual evolution in the working methods

¹ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050520_Bergen_Communique.pdf

² http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/990719BOLOGNA_DECLARATION.PDF

³ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/010519PRAGUE_COMMUNIQUE.PDF

⁴ http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/030919Berlin_Communique.PDF

used by BFUG to pursue Ministerial goals. Bologna seminars, where higher education stakeholders from across the EHEA come together to develop policy, are perhaps lessening in importance. Conversely, working groups and projects are becoming more effective working methods, as policy lines have been largely elaborated and there is an increasing focus on more detailed implementation issues. The need to share good practice and focus on completing the implementation of the Bologna Action Lines at the national level is also becoming more significant, as we approach 2010.

Taking this into account, and based on advice from the UK, as BFUG Chair, and the BFUG Board, the Secretariat prepared a draft Work Programme for 2005-2007. It incorporated suggestions offered to the Secretariat made by BFUG members over the summer. This included identifying Working Group Chairs, based on their experience of the Bologna Process and the particular issue concerned.

The draft Work Programme was issued to all BFUG members for comment in September 2005. It proposed a small number of working groups, policy development seminars, two projects, as defined in the Bergen Communiqué, discussions at BFUG and national priorities for implementation at the national level. All BFUG members were invited to comment the draft Work Programme, suggest topics for policy development seminars and volunteer to take part in working groups.

Comments on the draft Work Programme were received from more than half the BFUG members, including more than 60 volunteers to take part in working groups. This demonstrates the level of interest in working collaboratively to develop the EHEA.

Working Group members were subsequently selected by the BFUG Chair (UK), Working Group Chairs, and the Secretariat, taking account of the need to ensure group membership reflected the geographical scope of the EHEA as well as the particular interests of the BFUG members concerned.

Following discussion at the Manchester BFUG (October 2005), this led to an agreed BFUG Work Programme for 2005-07 comprising:

- 5 working groups (later 6)
- 8 Bologna seminars
- 2 projects
- a number of topics for discussion of BFUG
- agreed priorities for implementation of the national level.

The final Work Programme was agreed by December 2005⁵, posted on the

⁵ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/>

Bologna Secretariat and updated on a regular basis thereafter.

Role of Secretariat

The role of the Secretariat was also agreed at the Manchester BFUG. There, it was agreed that the Secretariat would:

- provide administrative and operational support to BFUG and its Board – including planning meetings; preparing papers; and minute-taking
- assist BFUG and its Board in the follow-up work for the period July 2005 to June 2007 – including planning of activities and following up on BFUG decisions; supporting Bologna Working Groups and carrying out any special tasks concerning the implementation of the Work Programme
- maintaining the Bologna Secretariat website and archives
- acting as an external and internal contact point for the Bologna
- providing representation at external events.

Over the last two years, we have supported all BFUG, Board and Working Group meetings and worked with the BFUG Chairs, UK, Austria, Finland and Germany to ensure delivery of the Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007.

BFUG meetings

During the period 2005-07, BFUG, and its subset, the Bologna Board, has continued to meet regularly. Under the Chairmanship of the UK, Austria, Finland and Germany, meetings took place on:

- BFUG7: 12-13 October 2005, Manchester, United Kingdom
- BFUG8: 6-7 April 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUGB12 Board: 13 June 2006, Vienna, Austria
- BFUGB13 Board: 1 September 2006, Helsinki, Finland
- BFUG9:12-13 October 2006, Helsinki, Finland
- BFUGB14 Board: 23 January 2007, Berlin, Germany
- BFUG10: 5-6 March 2007, Berlin, Germany
- BFUG11:17-18 April 2007, Berlin, Germany

The Work Programme provided the basis of the agenda for each meeting, with Working Group Chairs, EUA, and ENQA (on behalf of E4) regularly

presenting updates on their work, and seeking advice from BFUG on particular aspects of their tasks. Seminar organisers also provided feedback to BFUG, highlighting relevant issues for consideration.

Conscious of the need to ensure all members have an opportunity to consult national stakeholders before each BFUG meeting, we have tried to ensure that BFUG papers are issued around 2 weeks prior to each meeting. We would like to thank our colleagues, particularly the Working Group Chairs, for responding to our many requests for information, more or less on time!

Throughout, attendance at BFUG meetings has been good, with almost all 45 countries taking part in each meeting. Interest in supporting the continuing development of the Bologna Process remains high, with 2 countries and one consortium of three countries expressing an interest in providing the Secretariat for 2007-2009, and hosting the 2009 Ministerial Conference.

Contributions to this report

The rest of this report allows the Working Group Chairs, EUA, ENQA (on behalf of E4), seminar organisers, the European Commission, the consultative members and some country members to describe their contribution to the realisation of the EHEA over the last two years.

Delivery of Bologna Work Programme 2005-2007

Overall, good progress is being made against the goals of the Bologna Process. The key elements of the Work Programme for 2005-2007 have been delivered. All Working Groups and projects have reported against their terms of reference and contributed to the sharing of good practice and policy development within the EHEA. Discussion at seminars and BFUG meetings have helped develop understanding of specific aspects of the Bologna Process, supporting the implementation of the 10 Action Lines in all participating countries by 2010. BFUG has also started to look ahead, giving some initial consideration to what support might be required and how the EHEA might develop over the longer term, to ensure it remain attractive and competitive in response to the new challenges that will inevitably arise.

Ann McVie
Bologna Secretariat

KEY OUTCOMES FROM WORKING GROUP CHAIRS AND PROJECTS

Report from the Stocktaking Working Group

In their Bergen Communiqué ministers requested continuing and widening stocktaking process. In the fields of the degree system, quality assurance and recognition of degrees and study periods stocktaking had to include several new issues such as reflecting on three cycles rather than two, implementation of national qualifications frameworks, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA as well as of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition

Convention.

Stocktaking had to be widened included several new areas: flexible learning paths in higher education, procedures for the recognition of prior learning and awarding and recognition of joint degrees

The Stocktaking Working group drew up and BFUG approved a list of twelve indicators⁶ covering most of the above issues and proposed to cover in the text of stocktaking report those aspects that were not appropriate to be reflected in the scorecard. According to the ministers' statement that the work on the first three priority areas should be largely completed by 2007⁷ the criteria for stocktaking indicators in these areas were made more demanding to measure the success against the final goals rather than checking whether the work had been started. In order to have comparable information from all countries working group prepared a template for national reports⁸.

The main sources of information for stocktaking were the national reports⁹ and EURYDICE. For the recognition issues national action plans on recognition¹⁰ were used as well. The outcomes were cross-checked with the results of EUA Trends V study and ESIB survey.

The main outcomes of stocktaking are the following:

- there is a good overall progress since 2005,
- the greatest progress since 2005 is observed in the areas of student participation in QA, access to the next cycle, implementation of 2-cycle degree system and implementation of national systems for external QA
- the main areas where more efforts are needed are: implementation of national qualifications frameworks, international participation in QA and Recognition of prior learning.

In some areas some of the reality is hidden within the apparently very good results.

- high scores in implementation of Standards and guidelines for QF testify that most countries have started the implementation. At the same time such aspects as establishing a genuine quality improvement culture, external review of quality assurance agencies and international involvement throughout QA will require time and effort to be completed,
- the good results in implementation of ECTS confirm that most countries are now widely using ECTS for both credit transfer and accumulation. Yet, a much smaller number link credits with learning outcomes.

⁶ http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/uploads/documents/Stocktaking_final_indicators_May_2006.doc

⁷ Bergen Communiqué, page 5

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/uploads/documents/2_1_Bergen_Communique.pdf . . .

⁸ National Report Template <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/uploads/documents/Stocktaking-template4nationalreports-final9May2006.doc>

⁹ National Reports

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list&DocCategoryID=17>

¹⁰ National Action Plans for recognition

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=docs.list&DocCategoryID=17>

- while it appears from national reports and action plans on recognition that legislation is largely compliant with the letter of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, further work is needed at international and national level as there are huge variations in approaches to recognition at both national and institutional level that may not fully embody the spirit of the Convention principles.

Andrejs Rauhvargers, Chair of the Stocktaking Working Group

Report from the Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process

The BFUG Working Group on the External Dimension was approved by the BFUG in November 2005 and was composed of BFUG-representatives from 11 countries: Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, The Holy See, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. In addition, 7 consultative members participated: Academic Cooperation Association (ACA), Council of Europe (CoE), Education International (EI), National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB), European Commission (EC), European University Association (EUA) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO-CEPES).

The Working Group was later extended to include a member from the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE). The Working Group has been chaired by Norway.

The Working Group has arranged six physical meetings and corresponded extensively by e-mail. In addition to this, the use of several subgroups has been of the utmost importance in producing the necessary background documents and proposals for discussion in the group. WG members have also participated actively in the three seminars on the external dimension of the Bologna process arranged during 2006 in the Vatican City, Athens and Oslo. A proposal for a strategy document on the Bologna process in a global setting has been forwarded to the BFUG Secretariat together with a proposal for a London Communiqué text on this issue.

The whole project has been followed by a rapporteur, Professor Pavel Zgaga from University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He has actively contributed to the WG meetings and correspondence as well as simultaneously producing documents for the group. Professor Zgaga's own analyses and reflections, as well as introduction to the significant historical background of the Bologna process will be published in a report under the auspices of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

For further information about the Bologna process in a global setting, please visit the website: www.bolognaoslo.com.

Toril Johansson, Chair of the Working Group

Report from the Working Group on Social Dimension and Data on the

Mobility of Staff and Students in Participating Countries

The terms of reference for the Working Group (WG) could be summarized as follows:

- to define the concept of social dimension based on the ministerial communiqués of the Bologna Process
- to present comparable data on the social and economic situation of students in participating countries
- to present comparable data on the mobility of staff and students
- to prepare proposals as a basis for future stocktaking.

Nine ¹¹ countries and 3¹² organisations have been represented in the group. A subgroup with statistical experts and data providers was established with the task to collect data.

Social Dimension of Higher Education

There are considerable differences and challenges in relation to the social dimension of higher education between the participating countries. The WG has found that it is not appropriate to narrowly define the social dimension or suggest a number of detailed actions for all countries to implement. Instead, the WG proposes that the following overall objective for the social dimension should be agreed by the ministers:

We strive for the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations.

The WG has also found that there are several important data gaps in relation to the social dimension. Not all Bologna countries are covered, there is no comprehensive survey on the social dimension and there is no common deadline for results.

The WG proposes actions at both national and European level:
By 2009 the countries should report to the BFUG on national strategies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to show their impact. The collection of data on the social dimension needs to go beyond the present stocktaking method. The BFUG should entrust Eurostat, in conjunction with Eurostudent, with a mandate to provide comparable and reliable data to follow up the development towards the overall objective.

Mobility of students and staff

We want an EHEA where students and staff can be truly mobile. However, the participating countries face challenges both concerning mobility as such and finding comparable and reliable data on mobility. Among the obstacles to mobility, issues related to immigration, recognition and lack of financial

¹¹ Austria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Russia, Sweden and UK.

¹² ESIB, EUA and Education International – Pan European Structure.

incentives feature prominently. Data are scarce and those that are there show significant weaknesses in giving a full picture of mobility. There is no data for all Bologna countries, no comparable data on genuine student mobility and hardly any data on staff mobility.

The WG proposes actions at both national and European level:
By 2009 the countries should report to the BFUG on actions taken at national level to remove obstacles to and promote the benefits of mobility of students and staff, including measures to assess their impact at a future date.
Countries should focus on the main national challenges: delivery of visas and work permits, implementation of recognition procedures and creation of mobility incentives.

The collection of data on mobility of staff and students needs to go beyond the present stocktaking method. The BFUG should entrust Eurostat, in conjunction with Eurostudent, with a mandate to provide comparable and reliable data on actual mobility across the EHEA.

The BFUG should also consider how best to overcome the obstacles to mobility of staff. Progress in this work should be reported for the ministerial meeting in 2009.

Annika Ponten, Chair of the Working Group

Report from the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Framework

The Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks should as its main tasks consider what further development of the EHEA-framework may be required particularly the linkage between the national frameworks and the EHEA-framework; monitor the development of the EU “European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning”; provide assistance to member countries working to introduce national frameworks.

The working group has conducted four regional workshops on developing national qualifications frameworks and supported especially new Bologna members through participation in conferences and meetings. It has overseen the completion of two pilot projects in Ireland and Scotland on verification on the compatibility of national qualifications frameworks with the overarching EHEA-framework.

The main findings of the Working Group are:

We see for the moment no need for amendments to the overarching Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area agreed in the Bergen Communiqué or to the procedures and criteria for verification of compatibility of national qualifications framework with the overarching framework.

But we see a need for facilitating experience sharing in the elaboration and development of national qualifications frameworks. This is not a job for a new working group, but should be vested in a permanent international

organisation with own resources. The Working Group propose that this task is entrusted the Council of Europe, which already carries out the role of secretariat for the ENIC in the field of recognition and to which notifications of certification of national qualifications frameworks are given.

We are satisfied that national qualifications frameworks compatible with overarching EHEA-framework will also be compatible with the proposal from the European Commission on a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

In order to avoid confusion by the existence of two overarching frameworks it is important that the promotion of the European Higher Education Area should build on the overarching EHEA-framework.

Mogens Berg, Chair of the Working Group

Report from the Working Group on Portability of Grants and Loans

The Working Group took the commitments of the Bologna Ministers regarding portability as mentioned in the Berlin and Bergen Communiqués as starting point.

The Working Group collected information on the different grants and loans systems, the current practice of countries that offer portability for full studies abroad and the legal environment of portable grants and loans for students.

The Working Group sketched the legal environment and concluded that portability of grants and loans is possible. There are no legal barriers. The legal research also showed that students are not likely to get much support from the host country, which confirms the desirability of portable support. In some cases students can get support from the host country, which might cause them to receive double support when they are also eligible for portable support.

The Working Group found that the different countries all have grants- and/or loans systems to support their students and that each country has its own system. And although a lot of similarities are to be found among these systems, none is exactly like the other. That also means that each of them needs different information on the student, the study-program he is attending, his living situation, his income or that of his parents or partner, his achievements etc.

The information needed is less easy to obtain when students are abroad. Countries need each others assistance to operate their grants and/or loans systems properly when students are abroad.

Although the network has to choose its own structure, we propose to chair it by a troika of countries that periodically changes. For this chair Scotland, Denmark (starting from 2008) and the Netherlands already volunteered. Ireland and Norway indicated they are interested in co-chairing.

Austria, England, Finland, Germany, Lithuania & Sweden pointed out they will be participating in the network. Of course we welcome all other Bologna Partner Countries to join this network as well.

The First concrete tasks foreseen for the network are:

1. Collect and provide general information on the national student support systems and the educational systems of the Bologna Partner Countries
2. Address the issue of data-protection:
 - to prevent double payment of grants and loans (by both the home and the host country)
 - to facilitate the repayment of loans
3. Collect and provide statistical data on the international mobility of students in the EHEA

Aldrik in't Hout, Chair of the Working Group

E4's work on the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies

Since the Bergen ministerial meeting of May 2005 ENQA has followed the mandate of elaborating, in cooperation with EUA, EURASHE and ESIB (E4 Group), the practical aspects of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and of reporting back on the respective developments through the Bologna Follow-up Group. The E4 Group has met nine times since the Bergen summit. The chairmanship of the meetings has rotated amongst the four organisations, while the secretarial functions as well as the reporting to BFUG have been undertaken by ENQA.

The first stage of the process consisted in a consultancy exercise. A consultant studied the Register proposal included in the report *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* and interviewed various quality assurance stakeholders in Europe. On that basis the consultant produced a report on the possible forms and practicalities of the Register. The consultancy project was funded through grants from the Socrates programme and from the Swiss Confederation. During the second stage, the E4 Group discussed further the proposals contained in the consultant's report and consulted a law firm on the legal aspects of the Register. ENQA also consulted the views of its members at its General Assembly of September 2006. The third stage included the drafting of the E4 report on the Register that has been submitted to the BFUG meeting of March 2007.

Peter Willmans, ENQA

EUA project: Developing Doctoral Programmes in Europe

In Bergen, the Ministers mandated EUA to prepare a report, together with other interested parties, on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes set out in the Bergen Communiqué which were in turn based on the ten "Salzburg Principles" adopted at a Bologna Seminar held in February 2006. Doctoral programmes have become a focus of the Bologna

Process since the inclusion of an Action Line in the Berlin Communiqué in 2003 underlining the importance of creating synergies between higher education and research. Doctoral programmes, as the third cycle of higher education and the first stage of a young researcher's career, are the most important link between the European Higher Education and Research Areas. They are the key to realising Europe's ambition to become the most dynamic knowledge-based economy and society in the world, and universities hold the main responsibility for the development of high quality doctoral programmes which will enhance the career prospects of young researchers in all sectors of society.

The project Steering Committee that was established included governmental representatives from Austria and France as well as representatives from ESIB and EURODOC. It was agreed that action should focus on three areas: namely the quality of doctoral programmes, the role of higher education institutions and the role of the state and the question of public responsibility in relation to the funding of doctoral education. A series of events and activities took place around these issues in 2005 and 2006. The goal was to encourage broad discussion among universities across all Bologna countries. The process culminated in a major Conference held at the University of Nice in December 2006 that brought together over 400 people. In addition to the input from the series of preparatory workshops a questionnaire on the funding of doctoral education was sent to the BFUG governmental representatives. The preliminary results received from 36 governments were also debated during the conference, the results of which, entitled "Matching Ambition with Responsibilities and Resources" http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Nice_doctorates_seminar/final_recommendations_in_EUAtemplate.pdf provided the basis for the report EUA has presented to the Bologna Follow Up Group.

The report underlines in particular the responsibility universities have in embedding doctoral programmes in their institutional strategies and policies, and the joint responsibilities of institutions and governments in creating career paths and opportunities for early stage researchers, as well as for the funding of doctoral programmes and candidates. A report setting out the findings of the financing study will be published separately.

Lesley Wilson, EUA

KEY OUTCOMES FROM BOLOGNA SEMINARS

"The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area"

Holy See Bologna Seminar, The Vatican, 30 March – 1 April 2006

Rooted in its conviction that some dimensions less prominent in the initial stages of the Bologna Process need to be addressed to make the European Higher Education Area a living reality, the Holy See hosted an official Bologna

Follow-up Seminar on “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area” at the Vatican from 30 March through 1 April 2006. The Seminar was held in collaboration with UNESCO-CEPES and the Council of Europe.

With the active participation of representatives from more than fifty countries, most but not all of them European, and from various sectors of the worldwide Academy and international organizations, this meeting of minds was successful in achieving some of the objectives set out in the final communiqué released at Bergen, Norway, by the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, in May 2005.

The Seminar emphasized that, however important structural reform, the European Higher Education Area concerns more than structural questions. It underlined that the values and heritage of European higher education are among the factors that make it attractive.

In order to keep the European university attractive to the nations of the continent as well as to the rest of the world, the Seminar recommends to the Ministers at the 2007 London meeting to further develop and discuss the themes treated by this Seminar, among which are, in particular, the following:

- the indispensable and irreplaceable role of the European university for the integration of Europe and the formation of a wisdom society;
- the commitment to Europe’s cultural heritage and its humanistic values as a living and expanding tradition which the university receives, enriches and transmits to succeeding generations;
- the core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation/exchange among institutions are necessary components of the European university’s competitive advantage in the global marketplace and thus instruments at the service of society;
- the positive value of unity in diversity and diversity in unity is a way to foster interaction, interdisciplinary studies and dialogue among different cultural and religious traditions;
- the conviction that religious faith marks the various national cultures of Europe in their literature, architecture, approach to human rights and other crucial matters, and that questions of meaning and ethical responsibility should be recognized in all the university’s programmes and research projects.

Father Bechina, Holy See

“Putting European Higher Education Area on the map: developing strategies for attractiveness”

Greek Bologna Seminar, Athens, 25-26 June 2006

The key outcomes of Athens Bologna Seminar can be summarized according to the following parameters.

With regard to the *competitiveness and attractiveness horizon* it was pointed out that competition should not necessarily be seen in opposition to cooperation, since through projects and quality networks we can increase the competitiveness of European Higher Education and enhance institutional cooperation. In order to attract international students the organization of European HE fairs and media campaigns and the creation of European study centres and centres of excellence were suggested. Moreover, other proposals include extra budget provided for international students, the creation of a European standard of acceptance for international students, a code of good conduct for dealing with visa problems, the enhancement of Europe's alumni-networks worldwide, and the establishment of a network of ambassadors or "Europe Promoters".

As far as the *partnership and cooperation horizon* is concerned an important step towards the improvement of the current practices would be the creation of consortia of universities, higher education stakeholder organizations and third countries and also the joint delivery of graduate-level study programmes with integrated mobility phases of study in the other continent.

In connection with the *dialogue horizon* it is recommended that the countries of the Bologna Process share their good practice with other countries and organizations from all over the world. The policy dialogue can be accomplished through the existing fora, by giving the interested countries and organizations the chance to participate in Bologna events or even by creating a "Bologna Visitor Programme" or a higher education policy forum, involving representatives from European and third-country governments and higher education stakeholders.

Finally, with regard to the *information horizon* it was unanimously recommended by all the working groups to create an Internet portal on the European Higher Education Area and Greece through the Minister of Education Marietta Giannakou has already expressed its willingness to host such a portal. This should be easy to understand and navigate, in a variety of languages and customised for different constituents and audiences.

Foteini Asderaki, Greece

"Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area?"

German Bologna Seminar, Berlin, 21-22 September 2006

Under the auspices of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and co-financed by the European Commission, an official Bologna seminar on questions and strategies related to the awarding of "Joint Degrees" in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was held on September 21-22, 2006 in Berlin.

The seminar agreed on ten conclusions and recommendations fully documented in the publication "Joint Degrees – A Hallmark of the European Higher Education Area. Conference Report and Relevant Documents." The main items are, inter alia,

- Joint programmes are a step forward to a truly bottom-up process in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). They combine international experience, enhanced linguistic, cultural and social competence. If these contributions to the coherence of a European Higher Education Area are in fact considered as valuable and appreciated, specific funding for them on national and/or European is needed for enhanced marketing.
- A survey and reliable statistics/databases describing existing double, multiple and joint degree programmes at national and European level are needed.
- A list of "good criteria" that can be derived from the Stockholm, Mantova and Berlin seminars and other relevant documents should set up as a Bologna document of reference and relevance.
- Countries, where legal provisions do not allow joint degrees are asked to incorporate in their national legislation on higher education at least the written option for the awarding of joint degrees and to make sure that they are quality-assured according to national standards and European principles. To ensure quality assurance, the implementation of the ENQA Standards and Guidelines have to be used and specific criteria assessing the added value of joint degrees as opposed to national degrees need to be developed.
- Ministers are asked to make sure that the procedures for obtaining visas and other necessary documents will not produce obstacles for the realisation of joint study programmes.

For further information, please consult the homepages

http://www.hrk-bologna.de/bologna/de/home/9145_3007.php

<http://eu.daad.de/eu/bologna/bologna-germany/veranstaltungen/06335.html>

Andrea Herdegen, Germany

"Looking out: Bologna in a global setting"

Nordic Bologna Seminar, Oslo, 28 – 29 September 2006

The Nordic countries - Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden - together with the Nordic Council of Ministers, hosted the Nordic Bologna Process Official Seminar 'Looking out! Bologna in a global setting' in Oslo 28 - 29 September 2006. This was the third and final seminar held in order to give input to a strategy document on the external dimension of the Bologna Process. The first seminar was arranged in the Vatican in March/April 2006, hosted by the Holy See, and the second in Athens, Greece in June 2006, hosted by the Greek Ministry of Education. About 160 delegates from 39 countries, representing universities, university colleges and central authorities as well as organizations from all continents, participated in the Nordic seminar. The seminar was scheduled from lunch to lunch and was structured

with plenary sessions, including a panel discussion, as well as six parallel sessions.

The main outcome of the Nordic Bologna seminar was the broad discussion and feedback on the most important issues presented in a draft strategy document from the Working Group and a draft report from the rapporteur Professor Pavel Zgaga. The main topics discussed in the parallel sessions were: Conditions for institutional co-operation between European and non-European Higher Education Institutions; International mobility – transparency – recognition; Recognition of different student programme structures; Strategy for international cooperation, attractiveness – brain drain – capacity building; What makes the European Higher Education Area attractive?

As this was the third and last seminar before proposing a strategy document, it was the last possibility to discuss issues raised in the Working Group documents within a broader community of experts. Especially, the views presented from the outside Bologna representatives gave valuable input to the final discussion in the Working Group.

For more detailed information about the seminar outcome, please refer to the seminar report on the website: www.bolognaoslo.com.

Toril Johansson, Norway

“New Challenges in Recognition”

Latvian Bologna Seminar, Rīga, 25-26 January 2007

The seminar was co organized by the Latvian authorities and the Council of Europe in Rīga on January 25 – 26, 2007. It gathered some 120 participants and focused on two important but difficult areas of recognition policy: the recognition of prior learning and recognition issues between the European Higher Education Area and other parts of the world. It considered the recognition of prior learning in the context of lifelong learning on the basis of a background report by Professor Stephen Adam (United Kingdom) and an overview of practice and developments in Belgium (Flemish Community), Canada, Estonia and France.

The conference explored recognition issues between the European Higher Education Area and other regions of the world on the basis of presentations by Dr. E. Stephen Hunt (United States) and Ms. Nina Gustafsson Åberg (ESIB) as well as through a panel debate and conducted in depth-discussions on the two main themes of the conference in four working groups. The conference also considered the main issues raised in the national action plans for recognition, submitted by all countries party to the Bologna Process, on the basis of a presentation by Professor Andrejs Rauhvargers (Latvia and President of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee).

More information on the conference, including all presentations and the report by the General Rapporteur, Professor Pavel Zgaga (Slovenia), is available at <http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007/>.

The conclusions and recommendations are available at http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007/presentations/P_Zgaga_Recommendations.htm.

Andrejs Rauhvargers, Latvia
Sjur Bergan, Council of Europe

“Making Bologna a Reality: Mobility of Staff and Students”

The seminar, organised in collaboration with ESIB and UCU (the University and College Union, UK), took place in London on 8-9 February 2007, and was very well attended by stakeholders at national level. A Steering Committee and a Rapporteur were appointed and two studies on mobility of staff and students were commissioned. Over 180 participants from 35 countries were present.

The first part of the agenda included a presentation of the two studies on mobility of staff and students, a presentation by Annika Persson-Pontén (the chair of the BFUG Working Group on Social Dimension and Mobility), and a panel discussion on “Increasing Academic Staff and Student Mobility: From Individual to Institutional Responsibility”. Parallel workshop sessions followed, on:

1. Social Rights and Conditions – Tools or Obstacles
2. Mobility, the External Dimension and Brain Drain
3. Recognition of Qualifications
4. Student Mobility: Factor for Societal and Economic Growth?

After the workshop reports, the final panel then discussed “Realising the Potential of Mobility”, and was followed by the closing presentation on the general report, and a discussion and adoption of recommendations.

The report and conclusions of the seminar, which were welcomed with a large degree of consensus, referred to the need for data collection; the need to ease visa regulations for students and staff and to address economic and social conditions in which mobility takes place; a positive attitude towards staff and students taking matters into their own hands; and a suggestion that ESIB and EI undertake a project on mobility under the authority of the BFUG, for the period 2007-2009, to build on the constructive work they have undertaken so far. The documents from the seminar are available from www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/calendarshow.php?id=68&theme=highereducation. As a follow-up to this work, EI is currently working with EUA on the possibility of producing a section on mobility of staff and students for the EUA Bologna Handbook.

Monique Fouilhoux, Education International

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND CONSULTATIVE MEMBERS

Business Europe

To follow

Council of Europe

The Council of Europe has continued to be one of the major contributors to the Bologna Process in the period between the Bergen and London conferences¹³.

Policy development

The Council of Europe has been a very active participant in the work of the Bologna Follow Up Group and Board as well as in the working groups on the Bologna Process in a global context (“external dimension”) and on qualifications frameworks. Throughout, the Council of Europe has worked to promote the Bologna Process as a pan-European development of overarching policies to be further developed and implemented in the participating countries. We have argued in favour of a European Higher Education Area that looks beyond the immediate horizon of 2010, that takes account of the full range of purposes of higher education, including its economic and citizenship aspects as well as its role in the personal development of learners and in giving societies a broad, advanced knowledge base and that develops its key reforms within a broader vision of the role and importance of higher education in modern societies.

The Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention remains the only internationally binding legal text of the Bologna Process. Ratification of the European Cultural Convention remains a key criterion for membership of the Bologna Process, along with a firm commitment to the goals and principles of the European Higher Education Area. The Bureau of the Convention Committee, the ENIC Bureau and the NARIC Advisory Board submitted the proposal for guidelines for National Action Plans for recognition, which were subsequently adopted by the BFUG. The Council of Europe provided the Secretariat for this work.

To further policy development, the Council of Europe co-organized a Bologna seminar on “New Challenges in Recognition”¹⁴ with the Latvian authorities (Rīga, January 2007) and collaborated in the Bologna seminar on “The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of European Universities and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area”¹⁵, organized by the Holy See in Vatican City in March 2006.

¹³ For a more complete overview, see

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/CoEPresent_en.asp

¹⁴ <http://www.aic.lv/bologna2007/> and

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Riga07/default_EN.asp#TopOfPage

¹⁵ <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/index.cfm?fuseaction=events.view&EventID=21&Archived=1&Month=1&Year=2007&QuickEventID=&StartRow=21>

The plenary sessions of the Council's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR), which is the only pan-European forum for policy makers from both public authorities and institutions, provides a unique platform for considering higher education reform and has consistently considered developments in the Bologna Process. In this vein, the Council of Europe co-organized a conference on the student contribution to the Bologna Process with the Russian authorities and the Russian University of Peoples' Friendship under the Russian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe (Moscow, November 2006)¹⁶.

The Committee of Ministers will consider a Recommendation on the public responsibility for higher education and research in spring 2007, exploring the affirmations in the Prague and Berlin Communiqués that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility.

The Council of Europe Higher Education Fora¹⁷ has considered higher education governance (September 2005), the responsibility of higher education for democratic culture (June 2006, with US higher education organizations) and the legitimacy of quality assurance (September 2006).

The Council of Europe Higher Education Series¹⁸ has published books on the public responsibility for higher education and research, the Lisbon Recognition Convention, higher education governance, recognition policy and practice in the Bologna Process and the heritage of European universities (second edition). Volumes on quality assurance, democratic culture and the concept of qualifications are under preparation.

In June 2006, the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly adopted Recommendation 1762 (2006) on Academic Freedom and University Autonomy¹⁹, which is a unique statement by a pan-European parliamentary body in strong support of one of the fundamental values of the European Higher Education Area.

Developing the Bologna Process in newer member countries

Within the Bologna Process, the Council of Europe has assumed a particular responsibility for providing assistance and advice to countries that acceded to the Bologna Process in recent years²⁰. In this context, the Council provided support for the participation of newer member states in the regional workshops on qualifications frameworks organized by the Bologna working group.

In autumn 2006, the Council of Europe organized two informal Ministerial

¹⁶

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Moskva06/MoskvaNov06_EN.asp#TopOfPage

¹⁷ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Forums/default_EN.asp

¹⁸ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Resources/HEseries_en.asp

¹⁹ <http://assembly.coe.int/main.asp?Link=/documents/adoptedtext/ta06/erec1762.htm>

²⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Default_en.asp

conferences – for the Western Balkans²¹ and for the countries that acceded to the Bologna Process in 2005²² – with a view to preparing for the London conference.

During 2005 and 2006, the Council of Europe has provided advice on the development of a Master Plan for higher education in Albania, including advice on legislation as well as a major conference on main issues in higher education reform and thematic conferences on qualifications frameworks and quality assurance. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Europe has provided extensive advice on legislation and has run a joint project with the European Commission on the development of a qualifications framework, on quality assurance and on the recognition of qualifications. Since 2002, the Council of Europe has also co-chaired and funded the Higher Education Working Group/Bologna Committee (HEWG) for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The HEWG convenes all major stakeholders in higher education every two months, rotating between public universities and is a trusted body enabling all the main stakeholders in higher education to meet on a regular basis in order to share information and to assist in advancing the reform process. The Council has further organized thematic conferences in Armenia, Georgia and Moldova and provided advice on “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. The Council of Europe has also been involved in the development of higher education in Kosovo.

Sjur Bergan, Council of Europe

Education International

Since recognition of EI’s Pan-European Structure as a consultative member of the Bologna Process, EI has endeavoured both to make a constructive contribution to the Process at European level, as well as to strengthen the position of its member unions in the ongoing implementation of the Process at the National Level.

Involvement in the Bologna Follow-Up Structures: Apart from attendance to all the BFUG meetings held since May 2005, EI has been present at nearly all Official Bologna Seminars, and has made contributions at some of these. EI has also been a member of two of the working groups set up by the BFUG, namely the External Dimension Working Group and the Social Dimension and Mobility Working Groups.

The HERSC (Higher Education and Research Standing Committee): The EI Pan-European Structure has held four meetings of its HERSC, in September 2005 (Brussels), February 2006 (Sesimbra), September 2006 (Oslo), and February 2007 (London). During these meetings, debates took place on the following issues: doctoral studies, research, mobility of staff and students,

²¹http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Min.%20Conference%20W.Balkans/Default_EN.asp#TopOfPage

²²http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/EHEA2010/Min.%20conference%20new%20Bologna%20countries/default_EN.asp#TopOfPage

recognition of qualifications, the external dimension, and EU matters on higher education. The HERSC adopted the following statements: on the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment; on the EU Commission May 2006 Communication on “Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: Education, research and innovation”; on the EU Commission September 2006 Communication on “Efficiency and Equity in European Education and Training Systems”; on Academic Freedom; and on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions. Reports are available from: www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/documentation.php

The External Dimension: At the EI International Conference on Higher Education and Research in December 2005 (Melbourne, Australia) the Bologna process, and the EU Commission Recommendation for a European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, (in relation with the OECD project on “future scenarios for universities”) were included in the debates. EI has also been involved in an ongoing discussion with a number of non-European affiliates on the issue of the external dimension. The publication of the paper entitled “The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps” called for particular attention from EI and its Australian affiliate, NTEU (National Tertiary Education Union).

Mobility of Staff and Students: The primary focus of EI’s work on the Bologna Process during the past year has been the organisation of the Official Bologna Seminar: “Making Bologna a Reality - Mobility of Staff and Students” in collaboration with ESIB and UCU (the University and College Union, UK) which took place in London in February 2007. Two studies have been prepared and results presented to the seminar. The documents from the seminar are available from www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/calendarshow.php?id=68&theme=highereducation. As a follow-up to this work, EI is currently working with EUA on the possibility of producing a section on mobility of staff and students for the EUA Bologna Handbook.

Cooperation with other BFUG Consultative Members: EI has been collaborating closely with the other BFUG consultative members. There has been two-way cooperation in terms of attendance and contributions made by EI to conferences organised by other consultative members, and vice versa. In particular, EI has collaborated with ESIB, EUA and EURASHE on a number of issues, and has also co-organised training sessions for student and staff representatives with ESIB. EI is also looking to acquire Observer status on the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research.

Information, Capacity Building and Publications: EI updated its Higher Education and Research webpage (www.ei-ie.org/highereducation/en/). This includes links and news on the Bologna Process. In preparation for the HERSC meetings of September 2006 and February 2005, EI compiled two readers on Bologna issues, which were also circulated to EI affiliates. Several EI affiliates (in Russia and Serbia particularly) have issued publications and held training sessions and conferences on the Bologna Process. EI also organised training on Bologna issues for teachers unions in Albania in May

2006.

Other Activities and Ongoing Work: EI has also given a high profile to Bologna issues during other general events organised by EI. Recent activities include: the EI Central and Eastern European Round Table (Sofia, September 2006); the EI/ETUCE Pan-European Assembly (Luxembourg, December 2006); EI's ongoing work on the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services) Negotiations (including ongoing publications issued thereon) as well as its extensive collaboration with UNESCO and the ILO have also contributed to enhance EI's contribution to Bologna issues.

Monique Fouilhoux, Education International

EC – to follow

ENQA

E4 Group

ENQA has participated actively in the work of the E4 Group (ENQA, ESIB, EUA and EURASHE). The nine E4 meetings since May 2005 have concentrated on developing the practicalities of implementation of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and on the organisation of the European Quality Forums 2006 and 2007. ENQA has briefed the BFUG and BFUGB regularly on the E4 activities and submitted a final report on the European Register to the BFUG in March 2007.

Organisational change and external reviews of the ENQA member agencies
ENQA has gone through a considerable organisational change over the past two years. It has become an independent membership association and developed its membership criteria to correspond to the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#). Consequently, starting from 2005, ENQA members are required to undergo an external review on a five-yearly basis. The reviews examine whether the agencies meet the ENQA membership criteria and, thereby, the ESG. The reviews are normally organised through national arrangements but, if this is not possible or the agency so requests, they can also be co-ordinated by ENQA. ENQA has published a set of [National Review Guidelines](#), which provide guidance on the characteristics of national reviews that will be necessary for acceptance by ENQA for its membership purposes. Three agencies have so far had their ENQA membership reconfirmed on the basis of their national reviews. The decisions are taken by the ENQA Board on the basis of a rigorous examination of the review reports. Approximately ten member agencies are expected to undergo an external review in 2007.

Bologna-related activities

Since the Bergen summit, the following ENQA workshops and seminars contributing to the goals of the European Higher Education Area have taken place:

[After the Bergen Ministerial meeting - results and stocktaking on subsidiarity and convergence](#), Paris, 9-10 June 2005;

[Employer involvement in quality assurance](#), Berlin, - November 2005;
[Improvement and Development of Evaluation Methodologies](#), Birmingham, 8-9 December 2005;
[Language of European Quality Assurance](#) University of Warwick, 29-30 June 2006;
[Student involvement in external quality assurance](#), Madrid, 19-20 October 2006;
[Implementation of Part 3 of the European Standards and Guidelines](#), Vienna, 4-5 December 2006 (with contributions from the CEEN network).

In 2006 ENQA conducted a review of the present accreditation and quality assurance practices in Portuguese higher education, resulting in a final report [Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Portugal - An Assessment of the Existing System and Recommendations for a Future System](#) as well as the Quality Convergence Study II, concentrating on terminology and epistemology of quality assurance. The Transnational European Evaluation Project II (TEEP II) was concluded in August 2006 with the publication of a [Methodological report](#). In 2006 ENQA also published two reports from the European regional networks, both dealing with the ESG: [Mapping External Quality Assurance in Central and Eastern Europe](#) by CEEN and [European Standards and Guidelines in a Nordic Perspective](#) by NOQA. Other recent publications include: [Student involvement in external quality assurance](#) and [Terminology of quality assurance](#).

Peter Williams, ENQA

ESIB

ESIB organised a training seminar on the Bologna Process and other developments in European higher education in September 2006. A wide range of topics, such as employability, equality, qualifications frameworks and quality improvement, were tackled. The training prepared European student organisations for meaningful input into the London summit and subsequent Events.

ESIB organised the seminar “The Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area and the External Dimension of the Bologna Process” in Malta, April 2007. The seminar served as a platform for discussing this theme but also as a preparation for the London ministerial summit.

European Students’ Conventions

During each EU Presidency ESIB organised European Students’ Conventions. In London (December 2005) the Convention focussed on research and doctoral studies. The EU Lisbon Strategy was discussed in Vienna (March 2006). In Helsinki (October 2006) a discussion on the future of higher education after 2010 was launched. In March 2007, ESIB organised together with the National Union of Students in Germany (fzs) the 13th European Students’ Convention, "Students Taking Stock" in Berlin. Some 100 student representatives from 40 countries gathered to discuss their views on 8 years of Bologna reforms in Europe. The Berlin Student Declaration outlines

the key demands of students in Europe regarding the further shaping of the European Higher Education Area.

Bologna with Student Eyes

For the third time, ESIB developed and carried out a survey amongst student representatives on experiences, assessments and perspectives of the Bologna Process, with a particular focus on the impact of the Process on student affairs and student representation. The report “Bologna with Student Eyes 2” will be published in time for the London Summit.

EQF Project

Together with five partners, ESIB initiated the EQF Stakeholder Project. It aims at exchanging the experience of national stakeholders with the implementation of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF-LLL) and the elaboration of national qualifications frameworks in their countries. The five partners will organise national dialogues, involving all stakeholders in their country.

Information and capacity building of national student unions

ESIB provided its members and candidate members regularly with up-to-date information on current developments within the Bologna Process. A set of Information Papers provides a deeper analysis and explanation on certain topics. ESIB has carried out trainings and taken part in numerous conferences on the Bologna Process organised by its members.

ESIB cooperated with Education International and local student unions in the organisation of a series of training seminars for student unions in Albania and Ukraine. The seminars aimed at increasing the capacity of student unions in dealing with the implementation of Bologna reforms.

The trainings were carried out in May (Albania) and November (Ukraine) 2006. In total about 180 student representatives took part in these trainings. ESIB has supported its candidate member in Georgia through taking part in a seminar organised by the Students League of Georgia.

Participation in the Bologna Follow-up structure

ESIB has participated in all official Bologna Follow-up Seminars. ESIB has contributed actively to most of the seminars through speeches and papers or by acting as working group rapporteurs. ESIB representatives have also taken part in other Bologna-related seminars. ESIB has also contributed to the work in a number of BFUG working groups, the EUA project on Doctoral Studies and the E4 group together with ENQA, EUA and EURASHE. ESIB co-organised the seminar on Mobility of staff and students together with Education International in London, February 2007.

ESIB took active part on the Advisory Board of the Bologna Information Project coordinated by the EUA and spread information about the Process to student Bologna Promoters.

ESIB also took active part in organising the Quality Assurance Forum held by EUA in Munich November 2006.

Nina Gustafsson Åberg, ESIB

EUA

The *Glasgow Declaration*, adopted in April 2005, sets the framework and priorities for universities' contribution to the Bologna Process 2005 – 2007, emphasising that as we move towards 2010 the Bologna reforms necessarily refocus more and more on implementation in higher education institutions and underlining *universities willingness to accept their responsibility* in driving forward the implementation process.

The *Trends V Report* analyses the present state of implementation of the Bologna Process and reports on the main challenges faced by institutions. Trend V is conceived of as a necessary complement to the governmental stocktaking exercise, and thus constitutes one of EUA's main contributions to the Process. For the first time it has been possible to underpin the analysis through the use of comparable data as over 900 institutions provided answers to the same questions asked in 2002. The data analysis has been supplemented by information gathered through site visits and the incorporation of views expressed in numerous focus-group discussions.

The Bologna Handbook, published together with Raabe Academic Publishers, represents a further major contribution of the association to the Bologna Process. The Handbook seeks to offer academics and administrators at all levels a practically-oriented and flexible tool for understanding, introducing and implementing all aspects of the Bologna Process. The first edition of this reference publication, that includes four annual updates, appeared in mid 2006.

In support of the implementation of the process in institutions EUA, in cooperation with Eurashe, ESIB, the Tuning Project and the EAIE, coordinates the work of national Bologna Promoters across Europe. This work is carried out on behalf of the European Commission as part of the 'Information Project on Higher Education reform' and involves the organisation of training seminars and the preparation of relevant materials and case studies. While the EC funded project only includes Socrates countries EUA has taken the initiative to support the introduction of, and involve in this project, Bologna Promoters from all Bologna countries.

As a further demonstration of EUA's support to the more recent Bologna countries and specifically as a continuation of ongoing work with universities in South Eastern Europe, a conference on higher education and research in the Western Balkans was organised in Vienna from 1-3 March 2006, the results of this meeting were later presented to European Ministers of Higher Education. In late 2006 a Bologna seminar was also organised in Tbilisi for the benefit of Georgian universities.

EUA also contributes to the work on specific Bologna action lines. Substantial energy has been put into participating actively in the different

Bologna working groups on: the social dimension, data on mobility of staff and students, the qualifications framework follow-up, the external dimension and stocktaking.

In the field of Quality Assurance, EUA continued its cooperation with the E4 partners in elaborating the conditions for the establishment of a European Register of Quality Agencies as well as taking the lead in launching the first of a series of E4 annual Quality Fora. The first European Quality Forum took place in Munich, in November 2006. EUA has also continued its project work with members on this key topic, looking in particular at enhancing creativity in universities and continuing its work on joint degrees through the publication in 2006 of European guidelines for ensuring the internal and external quality of joint degrees.

In relation to doctoral programmes EUA has, as requested by Ministers in the Bergen Communiqué, prepared a follow-up report on doctoral programmes, taking forward the basic principles elaborated by the association in 2005. This work has been carried out with the support of the Austrian and French authorities and also involved ESIB and EURODOC. Activities have included the organisation of a series of seminars and of a major conference in Nice in December 2006 as well as carrying out a major survey on the funding of doctoral programmes and candidates across all Bologna countries that will be made available as a separate publication. This activity is closely linked to other EUA actions in this area, in particular in relation to career development and employability prospects for young scientists, both inside and outside academia.

The different elements of EUA's Bologna Process related activities 2005-2007 will be drawn together in discussions to take place in the Lisbon Convention (March 29-31 2007) when some 700 university leaders will meet to agree on university priorities for the development of the Bologna process in the coming years. The results of TRENDS V will be presented for the first time at the Convention, the outcomes of which will feed into the Lisbon Declaration, to be adopted formally by the EUA Council in April 2007, thus just in time for the London Ministerial meeting.

Lesley Wilson, EUA

EURASHE

The Working Agenda of EURASHE in relation to the BFUG Work programme 2005-2007

EURASHE participated in the workings of the BFUG work programme by contributing to Working Groups, attending official and Bologna-related seminars, conferences and meetings organised by stakeholders and professional associations.

We have continued our activities as a member of the E4 Group, have strengthened our ties with sister organisations in European and International Higher Education, and liaise more closely with representative sectoral and professional bodies relevant for professional HE.

Activities of the Association

In the period between the two Ministerial meetings EURASHE held two conferences for members and stakeholders in Higher Education (Dubrovnik, 2006 and Copenhagen 2007). Various committees/working groups met on a regular basis to work out policy documents and prepare contributions to the Bologna and Lisbon Processes: those of Quality Assurance, Life Long Learning (formerly Short Cycle HE) and Sustainable Development are the most prominent ones. The LLL working group organised two seminars, in Blois, FR (February 2006) and in Stuttgart, DE (March 2007), respectively on 'the intermediate degree in the EHEA and beyond' and on 'the involvement of stakeholders (employers) in the Lifelong Learning strategy'. The WG on QA provided the necessary feedback for our involvement in the E4 Group, and the committee for Sustainable Development conducted surveys on entrepreneurial attitudes in professional HE, including the non-profit sector.

Policy of the Association

EURASHE has also brought its policies in line with the evolution in Higher Education and reflecting societal tendencies. These policies bear on the implementation of internal and external Quality Assurance processes, the alignment of the Qualifications Framework of the Bologna Process to the EQF related to Life Long Learning within the Lisbon strategy, and our communication with other regions in the world on the Bologna reform in a spirit of cooperation and competition, depending on the degree of social and economic development of the area. The stresses we are putting here are the involvement of all stakeholders in HE processes: Quality Assurance, governance and the content of education offered. The guiding principles are: fair access to and wider participation in HE, institutional responsibility and accountability, employability of graduates in the two cycles, life long learning.

Membership Issues

The membership of EURASHE has broadened to include professional tracks outside the professional HE sector, non-state/private HEIs, and will further be broadened to include stakeholder organisations in the HE reform process, thus reflecting the reality of the changing landscape of HE, and the growing differentiation in HE which is in line with the new demands of the labour market and the response to it by the jobseekers.

In an effort to build bridges with regions bordering on the EHEA, we are increasing our contacts and affiliations with partner countries of the European Union through projects and joint activities, such as the planned Eurasian conference on 'QA in a National and Transnational context' to be held in Kazakhstan in July 2007.

Andreas Orphanides, EURASHE

UNESCO-CEPES

While the activities of UNESCO-CEPES are an integral part of UNESCO's global programme in the field of higher education, its thrust and focus are in

close synergy with the vision of higher education in Europe that is being implemented within the Bologna Process. Having been a 'Consultative Member' of the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) since 2003, the activities of UNESCO-CEPES have been on the one hand, oriented towards specific activities relevant to the Bologna Process in the context of global developments in higher education, and, on the other hand, on promotion of the Bologna Process as an example of a successful regional response for necessary transformations in higher education at the institutional, national and international levels.

In the context of its participation in the BFUG Working Group on the External Dimension of the Bologna Process, it was one of the principal partners of a Seminar on the Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area, organized jointly with the Holy See, in collaboration with the Rectors' Conference of Pontifical Universities, the Pontifical Academies of Sciences, and the Council of Europe, 30 March - 1 April 2006, Vatican City. As a follow-up UNESCO-CEPES published the main texts of the meeting in a special issue of its quarterly review, Higher Education in Europe, vol. 31. no.4, 2006 [in English, and also in e-format in French and Russian available at <http://www.cepes.ro>].

UNESCO-CEPES together with the Council of Europe, and in collaboration with the European Commission, assures the implementation of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region – the Lisbon Convention, which is an important, and, until now, the sole international legal framework for undertaking activities directly relevant to the Bologna Process, such as ECTS, accreditation, student and staff mobility. In close collaboration with the Council of Europe and the European Commission, UNESCO-CEPES has addressed in this context issues of regional and global relevance for the recognition of qualifications.

As an evolutionary and collective experience, the implementation of the Bologna Process has unfolded gradually and organically throughout the countries involved, while also bringing to the fore a daunting thematic range that is being echoed around the world. Through its pan-European mission and the backing of UNESCO's global vocation, UNESCO-CEPES is a unique institution in that it deals with a variety of issues in higher education in the Europe Region (the countries of Europe, North America, and Israel). Thus it is well positioned to contribute to the realization of the goals integral to the Bologna Process, in particular those related to its external dimension. It is in this context that UNESCO-CEPES has undertaken analytical work and provided a forum for discussion, among other things, on the following issues:

- extensive information activities, both in traditional form of printed publications as well as those using ICTs dealing with specific issues of the Bologna Process (see list of publications on UNESCO-CEPES Website: <http://www.cepes.ro>);

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- an in depth comparative analyses of doctoral degrees and qualifications between Europe and North America in the context of the European Higher Education Area;
- an extensive study of private higher education in Europe, seen as a particularly important component of higher education systems in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, taking into consideration the quality and accreditation considerations as a basis for closer involvement of private higher education institutions in the Bologna Process;
- an assessment of the phenomenon of ‘world-class universities’ and university ranking/league tables which resulted in the adoption of the Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions in May 2006 (see:<http://www.cepes.ro>).

Jan Sadlak, UNESCO CEPES

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM COUNTRY MEMBERS

ARMENIA

1. After the submission of the National Report in December 2006, progress has been made with the adoption of readable and comparable degrees. The Diploma Supplement was discussed among the HEIs. The comments were integrated in the final version and it is planned that in 2007 Master level students of several universities will get free of charge Diploma Supplements both in Armenian and English Languages.

Another important aspect is that more and more private universities are getting involved in the implementation of the Bologna principles.

2. As a newer member of the Bologna process the seminars have its important role play in the smooth integration into the European Higher Education Area. Each seminar that Armenia has participated is a an opportunity to share the knowledge and good practice in implementing the reforms, discuss the general problems and try jointly to come up with possible solutions, meet the main shareholders of the process ENQA, ESIB, EUA and others. The documentation that is available on the websites www.enic-naric.net, www.enqa.eu, www.coe.int, www.ec.europa.eu, www.eua.be is used by the country during its future works.

3. Armenia Is not involved in any project or a member of any working group.

Gayane Harutyunyun, Armenia

AUSTRIA

Austria has been a driving force in the start-up phase of the Bologna Process and has remained fully committed to it ever since. We have already made

great progress in implementing almost all of the Bologna objectives. Still, it is evident that the development of the European Higher Education will remain an on-going process beyond 2010 – Austria will continue to be an active partner for all stakeholders in keeping the momentum of the Bologna Process going.

Besides, synergies between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area play a major role as the Austrian government is not only fully dedicated to the Bologna Process, but also to implementing the re-launched Lisbon strategy in the context of the European Union. A number of concrete measures to enhance human potential (e.g. support for doctoral schools and post docs for universities), to foster excellence (e.g. funding of clusters of excellence for our universities), and to strengthen international cooperation in higher education and research (e.g. expanding scholarship programmes) has been included in its programme for the coming four years (2007 – 2010).

However, Austria also faces challenges, the main one being the question of access and admission to our universities for EU and international students, while maintaining high quality higher education equally accessible to all. This is something we will have to solve in the coming four years.

Barbara Weitgruber, Austria

CYPRUS

Cyprus has initiated a major Educational Reform which was proposed by a group of seven academics and was inaugurated by the President of the Republic. Within this reform there are significant suggestions for the Higher Education Sector, such as the substantial increase of the available university places, the upgrading of the private institutions of tertiary education into quality-based Private Universities and the enhancement of the quality of higher education with the introduction of the Cyprus Quality Assurance and Accreditation Board, in line with the agreed ENQA Standards and Guidelines. These proposals are progressing well with the introduction of the Engineering School in the University of Cyprus, the establishment of the Open University of Cyprus in 2006 and of the Technological University of Cyprus in 2007. Also the first Private Universities are expected to be operational by the next academic year.

A further challenge for the Cypriot educational system is the formulation of a systematic and comprehensive Life Long Learning strategy and mechanisms for implementation, while the introduction of a National Qualifications Framework is under consideration. The government policies aim also at establishing Cyprus as a regional and international education and research centre and already the number of the international students studying in Cyprus is about 20% of the total student population of the country.

As the research activities in Cyprus are relatively low, at about 0.38% of GDP, and the major part (60%) of this research is being carried out at the University of Cyprus, the situation is expected to improve significantly with the

establishment of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Cyprus and even more with the operation of the Cyprus University of Technology and the Private Universities. Furthermore, the Cyprus International Institute for Public Health in Association with the Harvard School of Public Health (USA) was set up in 2005. This is an educational and research institute aiming at important public health issues in Cyprus and the Middle East. Another institution of similar nature, the Cyprus Institute, is being established with the aim of dealing, among other areas, with the environmental and water problems in the region.

Christina Valanidou, Cyprus

CZECH REPUBLIC

In the period 2005-2007 Czech Republic has concentrated on improvements of the national higher/tertiary education system. To gain open evaluation of the system we participated in the OECD Project Tertiary review of Higher Education. This complex evaluation was also a good inspiration for implementation of the main priorities in the Bologna Process. The legislative bases were here, the Amendment to the Higher Education Act, which came into power on 1 January 2006, brought more support to fulfilling some particular goals. Thus since 2006 the Diploma Supplement next to the diploma *serves as the document attesting to the completion of studies and the awarding of an academic degree*. The Amendment further supported directly the development and recognition of “joint degrees”.

Implementation needs right instruments to motivate HEIs to turn Bologna into practice. We opted for system which depends on congruence between the Long-term Plans of individual institutions and the Long-term Plan of the Ministry, which have been prepared for the period of 2006-10; and allocated 7 – 8% of the education part of higher education budget to this purpose. The mechanism is based on the Development Programmes published by the Ministry annually. The programmes (projects of HEIs) have been reflecting innovation and/or development of new programmes towards the three level - structure, based on extensive curriculum reform, future employability of graduates and education outcomes. Furthermore we supported internal quality assurance, enlargement of mobility, development of joint degree programmes, ECTS implementation, delivery of Diploma Supplement in proper format etc. The experience so far has been showing that the Long-term Plan of the Ministry and Long-term Plans of HEIs have contributed to a greater openness in the state education policy, have been promoting its implementation and have made HEIs formulate their own goals more precisely.

Next to this was a systemic project on Quality Assurance carried out by the Centre for Higher Education Studies and supported by the Ministry. Its aim has been to develop complex methodology of quality evaluation of all activities of HEIs resulting in recommendations for continuous quality improvement. The methodology compiles from standard phases: self-evaluation process, visit of external experts, final evaluation report presented

to the HEI management and follow-up stage. It enables to focus on particular activities which are significantly important, need specific interest, make long-term problems etc. The evaluating teams involve academia and important external stakeholders. Recent phase was focused on self-evaluation, which is considered the key part of the developed methodology. Piloting Czech HEIs assessed positively their participation in the project. The importance of the project is increased by the collaboration with Accreditation Commission. It uses the results also for developing mechanisms of evaluation of its activities in accordance with the ENQA requirements. The project was positively evaluated internationally by the OECD teams in the framework of Thematic Review of Tertiary Education project. The main project results and the proposal on the wide use of developed methodology are expected in 2007.

Vera Stastna, Czech Republic

GEORGIA

Joining the Bologna Process in 2005 was the genesis of a new era in the higher education system of Georgia hence it became possible to draw a distinctive line between higher education systems prior to and post the introduction of the Bologna reforms.

The government had to transform the input-oriented, corrupt, authoritarian, non-accountable, non-responsive, centralized, incompatible system to knowledge-based, output-oriented and learner-centred system via increase in public expenditures, information technology, teachers' development, modern textbooks, refurbished buildings and based on justice, quality, decentralization, deregulation, accountability, capacity-building, meritocracy, freedom of choice and social inclusion.

To achieve these goals the Government of Georgia has committed itself to triple public expenditures on education by 2010. Also a number of radical legislative, institutional and administrative changes occurred:

- (i) a new law on higher education was adopted that envisage all the action lines of the Bologna Process;
- (ii) accreditation system was established and National Education Accreditation Centre established. Consequently, the number of accredited HEIs decreased to 43 compared to more than 250 existing in 2003. The report on the procedure and results of accreditation was published in 2006;
- (iii) Student-centred and grant-based financing called "money follows student" model was introduced;
- (iv) Unified National Admission Exams was held by the newly established National Assessment and Examination Centre.
- (v) Teacher Professional Development and Training Centre was established and new standards of the profession of teacher introduced;

- (vi) Elections of the new rectors and managerial bodies were held;
- (vii) Research grants were allocated by the newly established Georgian National Science Foundation;
- (viii) Social grants had been earmarked for the socially and economically disadvantaged groups of students;
- (ix) student loan system was introduced in cooperation with the private banks of Georgia;
- (x) draft law on professional education was submitted to the parliament that envisages separation of vocational and higher professional education, introduction of national qualifications framework and recognition of prior learning paths;
- (xi) The National teams of Bologna supporters and Bologna promoters were established and the decrees on DS and ECTS issued;
- (xii) All the major documents of the Bologna Process were translated, published and distributed among HEIs etc.
- (xiii) Georgia was elected as a member of BFUG Board and involved in the work of London Communiqué Drafting Group etc.

Reforms took place in all fields of public activity therefore in 2006 Georgia was named the number 1 reforming country in the world by Doing Business Report of the World Bank, Georgia was also named among the three most successful fighters against corruption in Eastern and Central Europe by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development.

One of the priorities for Georgia at present is to increase the attractiveness of the Georgian higher education system through strengthening the European dimension. It is put on top of the reform agenda to promote international co-operation and adopt the best practices existing abroad. Curriculum development, training of academic and administrative staff, elaboration of textbooks, and National Qualifications Framework, strengthening partnership with business sector, involving employers and professional associations, establishing quality culture and accrediting educational programmes, increasing research potential at HEIs, establishing centres of excellence, increasing student and staff mobility, attracting international students and foreign experts for peer review as well as introducing joint degrees are the reform areas that can be effectively resolved only through international assistance and co-operation.

Lela Maisuradze, Georgia

GERMANY

Germany holds the EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2007 and therefore also chairs the Bologna Follow-up Group during this period and – jointly with the British hosts – the Conference of Ministers in London. In this function, Germany supports in particular the continuation of the Bologna reforms in the signatory countries and the definition of further important steps for the coming years.

The Bologna Process is making good progress in Germany. The Federal Government and the Länder actively support the reform process and the related demand to increase student mobility and to improve the quality of European cooperation in the field of higher education. As the national report on the implementation of the reforms clearly shows, Germany has made considerable efforts over the past years and achieved visible progress with the introduction of the various elements of the Bologna Process.

Between the Conference of Ministers in Bergen and the Conference in London, a number of measures were introduced in order to inform the national stakeholders and in particular the institutions of higher education about the Bologna Process and to support them with their reform efforts. These measures include:

The national Bologna Working Group, which is a permanent body comprising the Federal Government, the Länder and the institutions of higher education as well as all stakeholders, regularly discusses all Bologna-related issues in a national context. In order to include a wider circle of actors, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Standing Conference of Länder Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) organized a national Bologna Symposium in January 2007 with participation by more than 100 experts in the field of higher education.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) supports and advises the German institutions of higher education in their reform efforts jointly with the so-called Bologna promoters within the framework of the Promoting Bologna in Germany project, which was launched in 2005 and is funded by the EU and the BMBF.

In addition, the University Rectors' Conference (HRK) provides information and advice to institutions of higher education with its Bologna Service Point. The services include:

- Provision of advice to institutions of higher education (also locally) on the central instruments of the Bologna Process: ECTS, DS and modularization
- Establishment of a network of Bologna coordinators
- Organization of specific workshops involving national and international experts
- Organization of workshops on changes in the administrations of the institutions of higher education
- Establishment of a comprehensive website on topics around the Bologna Process
- Preparation of target group-specific information material for representatives of

institutions of higher education, students and employers

With BMBF support, the HRK has furthermore supported 22 selected institutions of higher education since 2005 in their implementation of the objectives of the Bologna Process within the framework of the funding programme "Bologna advisers for German institutions of higher education".

Peter Greisler, Germany
Birger Hendriks, Germany

HOLY SEE

Besides some technical and structural questions, two major concerns marked the Holy See's work for the Bologna Process during the biennium 2005-2007. The first is concerned with the European identity and the general principles and values underlying the Bologna Process. The second one has to do with "international" collaboration of the Holy See with the educational systems within the different countries where its institutions are located.

1. *Promoting discussion and further development of the themes of "The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University"*

Within the framework set out by the Communiqués of the biennial summits of Ministers and specified by the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) to broaden specific themes, the Holy See, through the Congregation for Catholic Education, hosted a conference on The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) 30 march – 1 April 2006. Requests by representatives of different countries and international organizations encouraged this endeavour to explore the main approaches that could enhance the attractiveness of the European university. Because of its own educational and cultural heritage, the Holy See took this initiative also to reaffirm its commitment and support of the Bologna Process.

2. *"International" collaboration of the Holy See with educational systems in other countries*

Most of the Ecclesiastical HEIs in Europe are located outside the territory of Vatican City State. Therefore, in most of the countries the Holy See acts as a transnational provider of higher education. In some of them, Ecclesiastical HEIs are integrated into the local national systems or are part of public or private HEIs. The necessary collaboration between the two 'national' higher education systems is, in many cases, regulated by contracts of international law (Concordats). The experience of recent years shows that it is not always easy to deal with two ways of applying the common principles of the Bologna Process; therefore, this situation can be seen as a test case for the functioning of the Process in practice. It can help in avoiding illusions about an 'ideal Bologna Process', and offer worthwhile experience on how to settle problems arising at the grass-root

level.

Father Bechina, Holy See

POLAND

During the last two years Poland has made a significant progress in the field of the Bologna Process:

- Developing the legislative basis for the implementation of Bologna reforms. New Act – Law on Higher Education and the corresponding by-laws. All these regulations meet the requirements for the three-cycle study system, ECTS credit accumulation and transfer system, Diploma Supplement, joint and double degrees.
- Further development of Quality Assurance System with new standards assuring the flexibility of studies and access to the next cycles. All the stakeholders are involved in the National QA System.
- The process of elaboration of the NQF has started and it is in the dynamic progress.
- The increase of the inward and outward mobility of students and staff has been achieved.

A lot has been done and achieved in the promotion of the Bologna Reforms among the university staff and students. The information is well spread out and there is significant progress in the overall understanding of the Bologna Reforms in the academic world. Staff responsible for the implementation of the new three - cycle programs according to the Bologna Model is prepared to develop programs which are based on the learning outcomes and ECTS credit accumulation system.

The future dynamic development is assured by the involvement and conviction of all the partners and stakeholders of the Bologna Process. Especially Poland would like to increase the cooperation between HEIs and social and business partners and better adapt higher education to the needs of changing labour market by development of the entrepreneurship, skills and competencies necessary in the labour market.

It is important for us as well as enhancing the role of HEIs in the development of links between education, research and innovation by an active participation in the creation of the European Institute of Technology.

Maria Boltruszko, Poland

ROMANIA

Development of the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education
In Romania, the specialised body for qualifications in higher education

(ACPART) has started the elaboration of NQFHE by developing the competences grids for qualifications for 22 domains of studies which will be completed by the end of 2007.

This objective is supported by different projects such as the Leonardo da Vinci project "Developing Key Methodological Units for the Implementation of EQF by Means of NQFs – EQF by NQFs". The aim of this project is to develop and test modular grids of competences and key methodological units comprising principles, mechanisms and guidance tools for the elaboration of EQF and specific NQFs, based on the good practice exchange between partners. In order to elaborate a viable NQFHE, the development of the National Qualifications Register for Higher Education is considered essential. At the moment, ACPART, with the support of all universities in Romania, is already elaborating the Register of qualifications for all the three Bologna cycles. In this process, a special attention was paid to the harmonization of the higher education qualifications with the correspondent VET qualifications (for 20 study programmes from 10 different domains of studies in Higher Education).

Vasile Isan, Romania

SERBIA

The Law on Higher Education (LHE), which fully implements the Bologna Declaration, came into effect in September 2005.

In accordance with the Law, the National Council for Higher Education, the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, the Conference of Universities of Serbia and the Conference of Headmasters of Colleges were established (the latter would, in accordance with the LHE, be replaced by the Conference of the Academies of Professional Studies, once it is established).

The Minister of Education and Sport, as well as the abovementioned bodies, have enacted, within the due legal term, the accreditation standards and appropriate bylaws, thus securing all conditions for the beginning of accreditation process.

In the academic year 2006/2007, 90% of faculties have introduced the three-cycle system of studies and ECTS as a tool for measuring students' workload.

The National Council for Higher Education, upon the proposal by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, has enacted the Standards for Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programs, as well as the Standards for Self-assessment. The points of departure were the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance adopted in Bergen, at the proposal by ENQA.

The accreditation of colleges, bound by the Law to enter first the accreditation process, started on 15 December 2006, while the faculties are given the deadline of June 2009 to submit the accreditation application.

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The issuance of the Diploma Supplement was foreseen beginning with the academic year 2006/07.

The Minister of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia set up a commission mandated to create a National Qualifications Framework by the end of 2007, which involves representatives from all the levels of education (elementary, secondary and high), representatives of the Employment Agency, Trade Unions, the Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

The Law on Higher Education regulates lifelong learning by obliging higher education institutions to define by their statutes if and under what conditions they would recognize previously achieved qualifications as a basis for enrolment or continuance of education.

Ana Jakovljevic, Serbia

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

In 2006, the Government of the Slovak Republic- developed the programmes “National Scholarship Programme for Mobility Support of Students, Doctorates, University Teachers and Research Workers“. For academic year 2006/2007 the scholarships were granted not only to Slovak students of the second and third cycle of higher education study but also to foreign students, doctorates, university teachers and research workers from 23 countries of the world.

For promoting attractiveness of European higher education space in the Slovak Republic a new regulation was adopted and several activities of international significance were carried out. Based on the new legislation the Slovak Republic recognizes automatically (without reciprocity) the education of the third cycle (PhD.) of citizens from countries of European Economic Area and Switzerland, received at higher education institutions recognized by the State. The aim of the new regulation of 2005 is to increase the trust in European University Area at evaluation of results of higher education and at the same time to enable the increase and acceleration of mobility of young scientific workers in European area.

In December 2005, an agreement was signed between the Slovak Rectors' Conference and the Ministry of Education of the SR and European University Association on international institutional evaluation of the Slovak higher education institutions based on the procedures and criteria - Institutional Evaluation Guidelines. Within the framework of the project the higher education institutions will prepare a self-evaluation report; the international evaluation teams of EUA will carry out visits to higher education institutions, while the EUA will prepare the self-evaluation report for each participating higher education institution. In December 2007, the EUA will present a summary report on external evaluation of Slovak higher education institutions. The results of international evaluation of the Slovak higher education institutions will be presented as information to the public.

The evaluation of quality control of universities and higher education institutions in the form of CAF 2002 and 2006 is being considered.

Peter Plavčan, Slovak Republic

SPAIN

In the next few months the efforts of the Spanish national education authorities will be directed to the completion of the legal framework that will allow to finally define the Spanish university system. This legal framework consists of the Bill modifying the 2001 Organic Law on Universities (LOU) and of several complementary rules on more concrete issues. This legislation package will be in force by the end of the first half of 2007 and will make possible for individual institutions to implement degree programmes fully adapted to the principles established in the Bologna process.

The above mentioned Bill modifying LOU regulates different questions and aspects included in the three main lines of action of the Bologna Process: a three cycle degree structure, a system of quality assurance and issues on recognition of degrees and studies though is of particular significance for the first of these lines.

In relation to this question, these rules would complete the new degree structure that was initially established at the beginning of 2005 and whose implementation has started on a limited basis in this academic year 2006-07. Besides, the new degree programmes, many of them already formulated in ECTS, will allow access to Master programmes. Many of the principles related to the EHEA had been already implemented.

More than 1000 new Master programmes have been introduced in Spain this academic year 2006-07 (based in ECTS and in full conformity with the principles relating to the EHEA). In 2007-08 another approximately 1000 Master programmes will be added. The approval of the above referred legislation package will imply that the new degree programmes will be implemented on a general basis from 2008.

It is important to underline that in our tradition and present reality of our the university system, national legislation plays a significant role in the definition and organisation of the degree structure and programmes that, nonetheless, will be considerably reduced once the new framework is a reality with institutions playing a bigger role in this area and of course linked to a very rigorous system of accountability on the part of institutions.

In the new legal framework important aspects related to the other action lines are also included: a new redefinition with a stronger role for the National Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency (ANECA), a Register of universities, centres and programmes, degree recognition measures, rules on teaching and research staff, creation of a General Conference on University Policy and a Council of Universities and rules on the establishment of new

centres and universities.

Spain has also started the process of definition of a Higher Education Qualifications Framework to be concluded during 2007, for subsequent Government approval.

Finally, and concerning the Lisbon Convention, all internal procedures at the Education sector for signing and ratifying the Convention have been concluded and the matter is now expected to be approved shortly by our Council of Ministers. However it should be mentioned that a number steps have already been taken, through bilateral agreements with some countries, to facilitate recognition issues and also in national legislation. In particular the already approved Organic Law on Education, now in force, recognises access to Spanish universities to all European students fulfilling the requirements for access to universities in their countries of origin.

Felix Haering-Pérez, Spain

SWITZERLAND

The implementation of the Bologna process has made considerable progress in the last years. In autumn 2006, all new students (except for medicine) started their studies with a bachelor or master programme. The traditional single-tier study courses will be gradually discontinued in the next years. In medicine, the two-cycle system has already started in some universities; the remaining universities will follow in 2007. As far as the implementation of the national qualifications framework is concerned, the steering group is currently having discussions with all stakeholders on a preliminary draft in order to ensure general acceptance. Finally, the Centre of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities (OAQ) has been granted full membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

Silvia Studinger, Switzerland

TURKEY

In the period between 2005-2007 after the last Ministerial Conference in Bergen in 2005, the following developments on the main action lines of the Bologna Process have taken place:

1. Diploma Supplement and ECTS have become mandatory for all higher education institutions (HEIs) since the end of 2005-2006 academic year.
2. A national-level student council has been established in December 2005 in accordance with the “Regulation on Student Councils of HEIs and the National Student Council of HEIs” dated September 20, 2005.
3. An independent “Commission on Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education” has been established in line with the

“Regulations on Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at HEIs” issued by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) on September 20, 2005. The Regulation, that is fully compatible with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in EHEA, sets the rules and principles for evaluating and improving the quality of academic activities and administrative services at HEIs, as well as approval and recognition of their level of quality through an independent external assessment. According to the Regulation, internal assessment is compulsory and should be carried out annually. The first internal assessment reports of all universities have reached the Commission which is expected to finalize the evaluation of these reports at national level before the London Ministerial Conference in 2007. For the time being, external assessment is highly recommended but not compulsory. However, it will become compulsory when all the preparatory work is completed.

4. CoHE formed a core committee on national qualifications framework for higher education on May 26, 2006. The calendar has been prepared and the deadline to realize the national qualifications on all programmes was set as the end of 2008.

5. Turkey has deposited its instrument of ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention to the Council of Europe and the Council announced that it will enter into effect on March 1 2007.

6. Although there was no legal obstacle against the establishment of international joint and dual higher education programmes before, the “Regulation on Establishment of Joint and Dual Degree Programmes with Foreign Higher Education Institutions” issued by CoHE on December 28, 2006 encourages the establishment and provision of such programmes.

The “Draft Report on Higher Education Strategy for Turkey” has been finalized and it will be made public by the end of 2007.

Aybar Ertepinar, Turkey

SIGN OFF FROM THE UK SECRETARIAT

This has been an interesting, challenging, enjoyable and varied two years. We have worked with colleagues from across the EHEA, gaining an insight into a range of cultures as well as higher education systems. Working with BFUG Chairs and Working Groups from some nine countries has enabled us to increase our knowledge and understanding of the culture of these countries, and develop a greater appreciation of the diversity within the EHEA.

At the same time, we have overseen a number of concrete achievements within the Bologna Process. As well as the delivery of the Work Programme – a not insignificant achievement in itself – we have seen the spirit of partnership and collaboration within the BFUG increase, as we move from policy development to capacity building within the EHEA. Areas where there has been particular progress include:

- the influence of the E4 Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance

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as a driver for increasing the quality of higher education in the EHEA

- the increase in student involvement in quality assurance processes
- the continuing development of the spirit of partnership and mutual support, demonstrated in particular by the interest in taking part in the workshops organised by the Qualifications Framework Working Group
- the growing awareness of the interdependency of key elements within the Action Lines: quality assurance, recognition tools and national qualifications framework based on learning outcomes
- the constructive discussions about how the EHEA cooperates with other parts of the world
- the development of the stocktaking process, and the increasing synergy between the outcomes of stocktaking, Trends and Bologna With Student Eyes
- the appreciation that we need to look ahead and consider what we might need to do to support the continuing development of the EHEA
- the awareness of the significant process we have made, while at the same time recognising that we still have much to do.

But it has not all been work. There has been lots of fun too. Amongst the many interesting places we have had the pleasure of visiting, we have been privileged to have dinner in the Vatican Museum, visited the Acropolis, been up the TV tower in Berlin, seen the frozen sea in Helsinki, and danced at a Viennese Ball. By travelling to different parts of the EHEA, we have had the opportunity to experience, at least in part, the rich cultural heritage, diversity and vibrancy that underpins the attractiveness of the EHEA.

We are confident that our Benelux colleagues will support the Bologna Process through the next stage of development and wish them well with that task.

Ann McVie
Louis Ripley
Yvonne Clarke

Bologna Secretariat