

**Bologna Seminar on “Student Mobility in the European Higher Education Area 2010”
Bad Honnef, 17/18 March 2005**

Executive summary of Bad Honnef observations and recommendations¹

Within the framework of a SOCRATES/TEMPUS project, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) organised a Bologna seminar on “Student Mobility in the European Higher Education Area 2010”, co-funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Approximately 200 representatives of the European Commission, ministries, national SOCRATES and TEMPUS agencies, higher education institutions and student organisations from 34 Bologna (potential) signatory countries gathered on 17/18 March 2005 in Bad Honnef/Germany to discuss the future development of European student mobility under the conditions of the Bologna Process.

The conference participants hold the following observations and recommendations to be key for increasing the number of mobile students and improving the process:

1. Student mobility remains one of the most important factors in the Bologna Process. In addition to being a value in and of itself, it also serves as a comprehensive quality assurance measure for new and newly restructured study programmes.
2. Student mobility must be understood as also encompassing programmes above and beyond the ERASMUS network.
3. Related to this, we must accept that mobility numbers should include other schemes and free-mover programmes in order to fully determine trends in mobility.
4. Conference participants agreed that there are four main obstacles to increasing mobility:
 - Lack of transparency and compatibility between higher education systems
 - Financial and technical problems (lack of scholarships and grants, insufficient accommodation, inadequate infrastructure)
 - Language problem. For better or worse, English will continue to play an important role as lingua franca in international programmes.
 - Lack of national and institutional mobility strategies. The “culture of mobility” has not yet been fully established in some countries and institutions.
5. The importance of employability and its relationship to mobility was repeatedly emphasised. In some countries this new approach must be established.
6. Participants noted that two models prevail in terms of two-tiered study systems:
 - Country-wide model (3+2 or 4+1 or other)
 - Institution model (institution chooses model, not country).
- 7. In the opinion of many participants, 3-year Bachelor and 1-year Master programmes pose a threat to increasing student mobility.** The shorter study period and the emphasis on continuous assessment appear to discourage longer and free-mover mobility units.

¹ The executive summary is based on the Bad Honnef report „10 Observations and Recommendations“ by Jochen Hellmann and Courtney Peltzer-Hönicke, University of Hamburg

8. To counteract this problem, several possible solutions were presented:

- Improvement of academic recognition
- Development of more Joint Degree programmes
- Development of international degree programmes with mobility components (compulsory in some subject areas) when a Joint Degree is not possible
- Introduction of shorter study abroad periods (summer schools, integrated internships, etc.)
- Bachelor programmes should be viewed as 180-credit programmes rather than as 3-year programmes in order to better accommodate individual mobility periods and plans.

9. The opportunity to implement mobility components is NOW as a dynamic curricular reform such as Bologna will not come again for some time.

10. Finally, emphasis must be placed on flexibility and individuality in achieving the shared Bologna goals.

Conclusions for the Bergen Communiqué

The conference participants recommend to the European ministers responsible for higher education to stress the importance of transnational student mobility in the Bergen Communiqué and to urge higher education institutions to consider study abroad periods when developing Bachelor and Master programmes.