



Implementation of the Bologna Process in Europe A case of success?

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Bologna Process

OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

- The Bologna Process
- Achievements and implementation
- Challenges
- Conclusions

Bologna Process

The ***Erasmus Programme*** (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) was born in 1987 and is considered a success programme. In 2014-2020 will be part of the Erasmus Plus programme.

It showed the power of large scale mobility for driving changes and put on the table the difficulties and obstacles to mobility:

Incompatibility of HE systems, the lack of clear rules for the recognition of periods of study abroad...



Bologna Process

Overarching Aim of the Bologna Process

To create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international cooperation and academic exchange that is attractive to European students and staff as well as to students and staff from other parts of the world.

Bologna Process

- The Bologna Process
- The EU Lisbon strategy (Modernisation Agenda)

Bologna Process

The Bologna process and the EU modernisation agenda are the result of two driving forces: the need of adapting universities to the **knowledge society** and the need of adapting to the **global world** (starting by the “European world”).

Bologna Process

In 1999

- **Different systems and particularly difficult to compare**
 - **Lack of transparency**
 - **Difficulty in understanding the HE systems**
- ***But diversity is a richness to preserve!***

Bologna Process

Higher education systems difficult to compare

Bachelor
Licenciado
Diplomado
Ingeniero
Ingeniero Técnico
Licence
Laurea
Dottore di Laurea
Ph. D
Dr. Art.
Doktorsexamen

Doktor nauk
Dottore di Laurea
Kandidat nauk
Dottore di Laurea
Doctorandus

Bologna Process

Higher education systems difficult to compare

Ireland:

- The Higher Certificate at level 6.
- The Ordinary Bachelor Degree at level 7.
- The Honours Bachelor Degree at level 8.
- The Higher Diploma at level 8.
- The Masters Degree at level 9.
- The Post-Graduate Diploma at level 9.
- The Doctoral Degree at level 10.
- The Higher Doctorate at level 10.

Bologna Process

“We reaffirm our commitment to increasing the compatibility and comparability of our higher education systems, whilst at the same time respecting their diversity”

London Communiqué, 2007

How to balance the two aims?

Bologna Process

BOLOGNA DECLARATION (1999)

Aim:

- *A European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2010*

Goals:

- *Competitiveness*
- *Employability*
- *Mobility*

Objectives:

- *Readable and comparable degrees*
- *A common structure of based in two main cycles (now 3: B-M-D)*
- *A common system of credits (ECTS)*
- *Developing mobility programs*
- *Cooperation in quality assurance*
- *Promotion of the European dimension of higher education*

Bologna Process

- On the basis of voluntary cooperation, with no legal obligations.
- Intergovernmental agreements. Voluntary process. Bologna Process, steered by Ministers responsible for HE, is a collective effort of public authorities, HEI, teachers and students, together with stakeholders associations, employers, international organisations and institutions.
- The process is closely connected with EU policies and programmes.
- The countries in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) have to implement policies in very different contexts. Strong efforts are required at national and institutional level to implement the Bologna reforms.

How does the Bologna Process work?

- Every two years there are Ministerial Conferences organised in order to assess the progress made within the EHEA and to decide the new steps to be taken.
- The Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) is the main follow-up structure, oversees the BP between the ministerial meetings, set up working groups to deal with specific topics and receive input from Bologna seminars.
- The BFUG is composed of the representatives of all members of the BP and the European Commission, with the Council of Europe, the EUA, EURASHE, ESU, UNESCO-CEPES, EI, ENQA and BUSINESSEUROPE, as consultative members. The BFUG is co-chaired by the country holding EU Presidency and a non EU country, which rotate every six months.

Bologna Process

47 countries into the Bologna Process

Participating countries

 Albania	 Germany	 Poland
 Andorra	 Greece	 Portugal
 Armenia	 Holy See	 Romania
 Austria	 Hungary	 Russian Federation
 Azerbaijan	 Iceland	 Serbia
 Belgium	 Ireland	 Slovak Republic
 Bosnia-Herzegovina	 Italy	 Slovenia
 Bulgaria	 Latvia	 Spain
 Croatia	 Liechtenstein	 Sweden
 Cyprus	 Lithuania	 Switzerland
 Czech Republic	 Luxembourg	 "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
 Denmark	 Malta	 Turkey
 Estonia	 Moldova	 Ukraine
 Finland	 Montenegro	 United Kingdom
 France	 Netherlands	 Kazakhstan
 Georgia	 Norway	

Additional member



[European Commission](#)

Consultative members



[Council of Europe](#)



[UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education](#)



[European University Association](#)



[European Association of Institutions in Higher Education](#)



[European Students' Union](#)



[European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education](#)



[Education International Pan-European Structure](#)



[BUSINESSEUROPE](#)



Bologna Process

The Communiqués

Bologna Declaration (1999) and later (Praga-2001, Berlin-2003, Bergen-2005, London 2007, Leuven/Louvain la Neuve-2009, Budapest-Vienna-2010, Bucharest 2012):

- Transparency & Mutual Trust: mobility.
- Three cycles: Comparability & Recognition. QF
- Internationalization.
- Student centred Learning (ECTS).
- Employability
- Life Long Learning (LLL).
- Social Dimension and Equal Opportunities.
- Quality Assurance and Evaluation.

Achievements and implementation

Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference (2010)

It was an Anniversary Conference

Ten years of Bologna Process

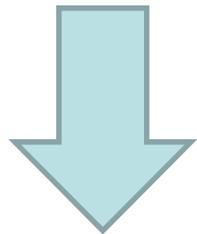
Official launching of European Higher Education Area



Achievements and implementation

Bologna Policy Forum Statement, Vienna, March 2010

Today, the European Higher Education Area has been launched. In this context, we note that the Bologna Process of creating and further developing this European Education Area has helped to redefine higher education in Europe. Countries **outside the area** will now be able to more effectively foster increased **cooperation** with Bologna countries.



**Bologna Ministerial Meeting Bucharest,
April 2012**



Achievements and implementation

“The Bologna Process is a European **success story** of which we should be proud”

“The Bologna Process **has transformed the face of European higher** education”

“**All countries have made significant changes** that have enabled EHEA to merge...HE structures have been modified, quality assurance systems developed, mechanism to facilitate mobility established...”

Bologna Process implementation Report
2012

Achievements and implementation

“The Bologna Process has been key to European **universities’ success**”

Peter Scott. The Guardia, Monday 30 April 2012

“But beneath the suffocating weight of E-acronyms, transparency instruments, action lines and the usual Euro-babble, a quiet revolution has been under way in European higher education – stimulated by the spirit of Bologna.

Others have noticed. I remember being at a meeting when the state commissioner for education in Wisconsin asked, only half-jokingly, how Wisconsin could join the Bologna process. Across Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia there is a belief that something is stirring in Europe”

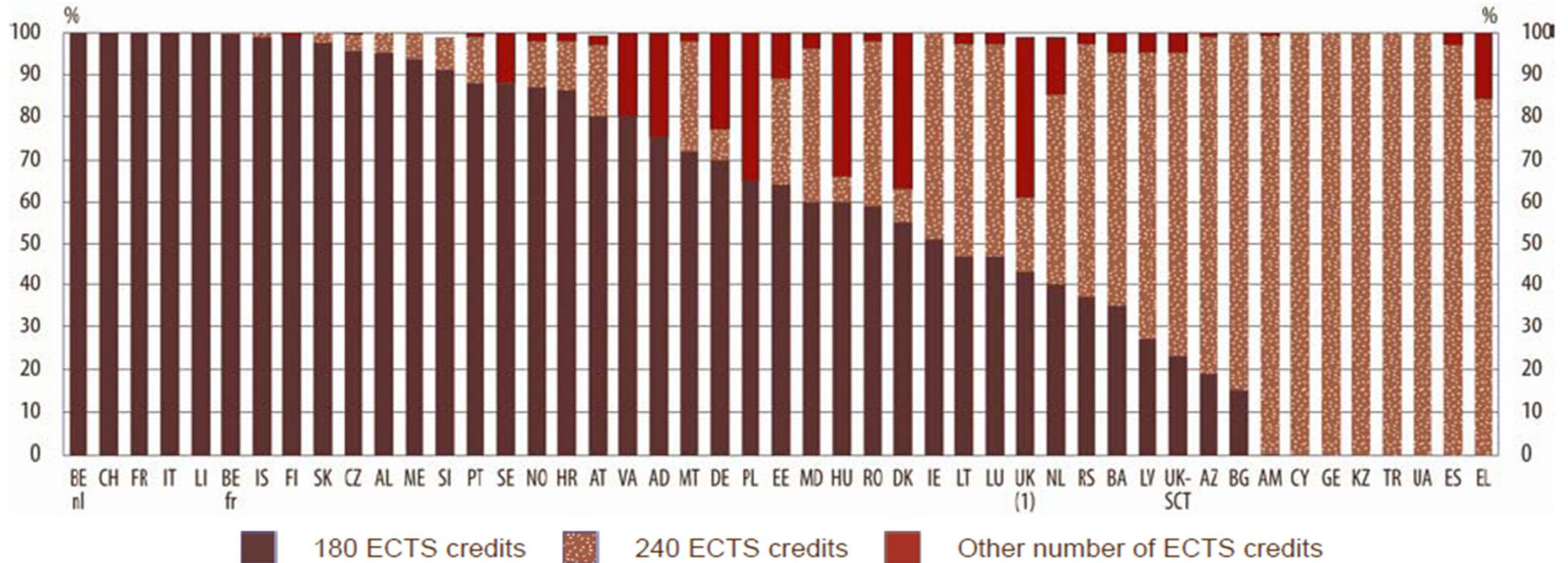


Achievements and implementation: Bologna structures

- The majority of countries set in place the 3-level degree structure.
- Programmes outside Bologna structures still remain, mainly in regulated professions but not only.
- In some countries first cycle is not relevant for the labour market.
- In the majority of countries first cycle programmes theoretically gives access to the second cycle, but in many cases, access to the next cycle may require sitting additional examinations or additional courses. It is necessary to clarify whether this additional measures should be seen as instruments to widen access or a obstacles to admission.
- Structured doctoral studies are becoming more common.

Achievements and implementation: Bologna structures

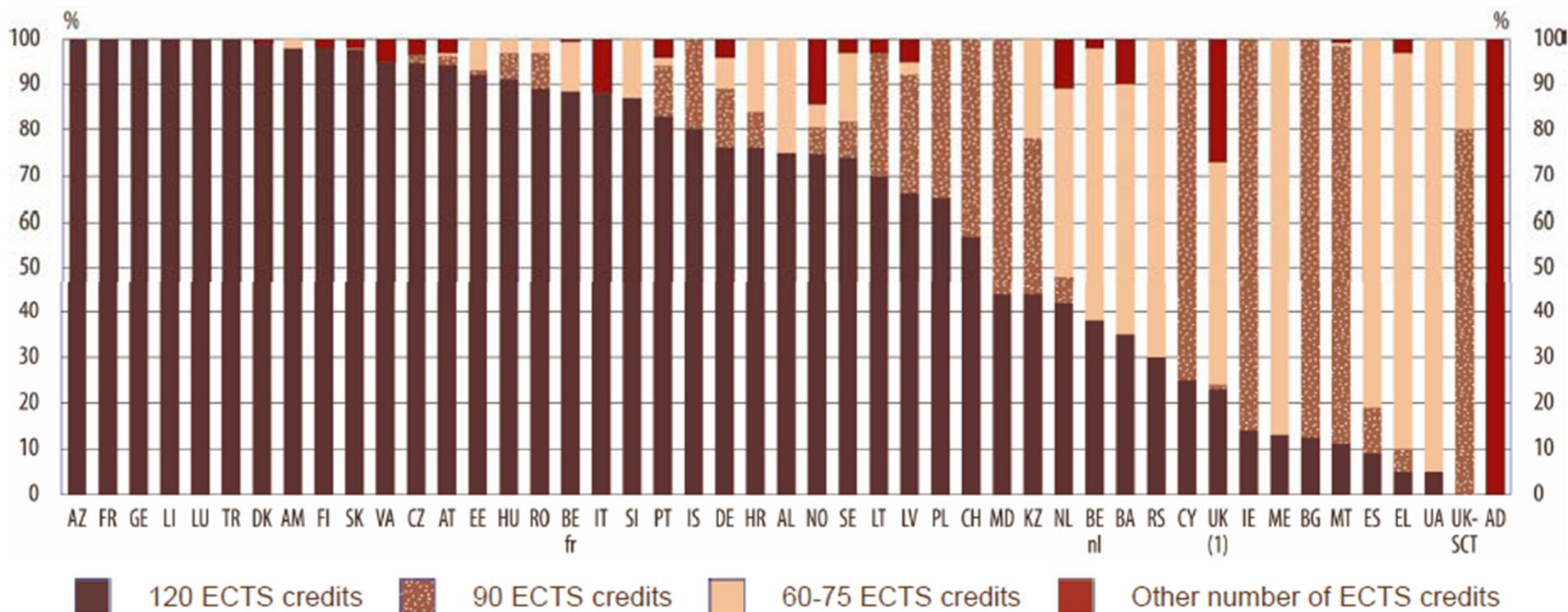
Share of the first cycle-programmes having workload 180 ECTS, 240 ECTS or other number of credits



(The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process implementation report)

Achievements and implementation: Bologna structures

Share of the master programmes having workload 60-75 ECTS, 90 ECTS, 120 ECTS or other number of credits



(The European Higher Education Area in 2012: Bologna Process implementation report)

Achievements and implementation: Quality assurance

European standards and guidelines (ESG)

- Drafted by ENQA in consultation with EUA, EURASHE and ESU
- Approved by the Bologna ministerial conference in Bergen in 2005
- Introduced **internationally accepted standards** for quality assurance in higher education
- Introduced a **peer review system** for quality assurance agencies:
Cyclical reviews of agencies, based on ESG, every five years for (reconfirmation of) full ENQA membership and/or for being (re)listed in EQAR

Achievements and implementation: Quality assurance

Importance of QA at international level

*Development of common standards, guidelines and principles
(such as the ESG)*



Comparability and compatibility of QA processes

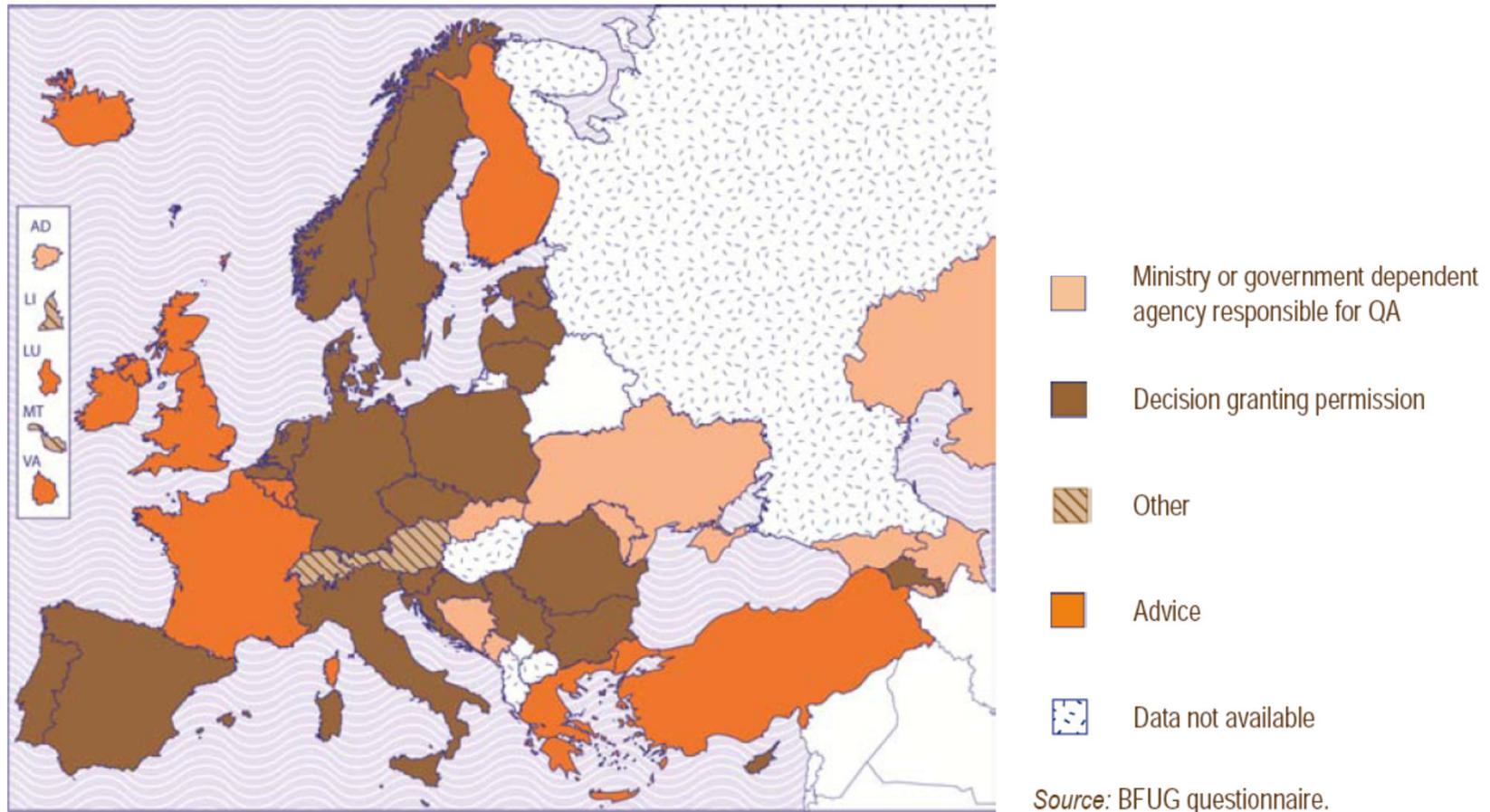
- Facilitate comparison and understanding between national QA systems
- Facilitate comparison and recognition of degrees and results of external QA activities
- Build and promote mutual trust
- Improve mobility
- Increase transparency for students, employers and the society as a whole

Achievements and implementation: Quality assurance

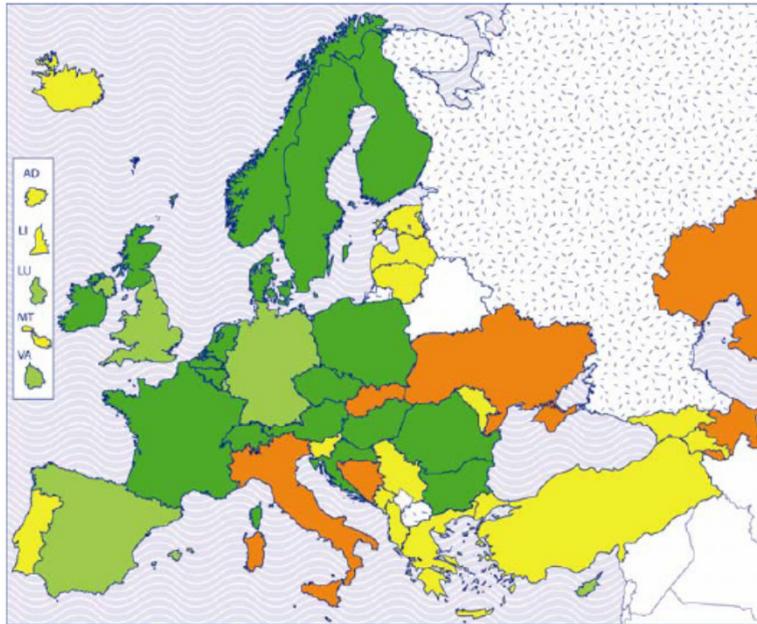
The road to recognition in the EHEA:

- External reviews of QAA against the ESG set up the basis to favor Mutual Recognition
- Combined along with other transparency tools: QFs
- *What do we need to put into practice the Lisbon Recognition Convention*

Main outcome of external evaluation by QA agency, 2011/2011



Stage of development of external QA system 2010/2011



	2012 Report*	2009 Report**
■	18	16
■	6	17
■	17	14
■	6	1
■	0	0

 Data not available

* Source: BFUG questionnaire, 2011.

** Source: Rauhvargers, Deane & Pauwels, 2009.

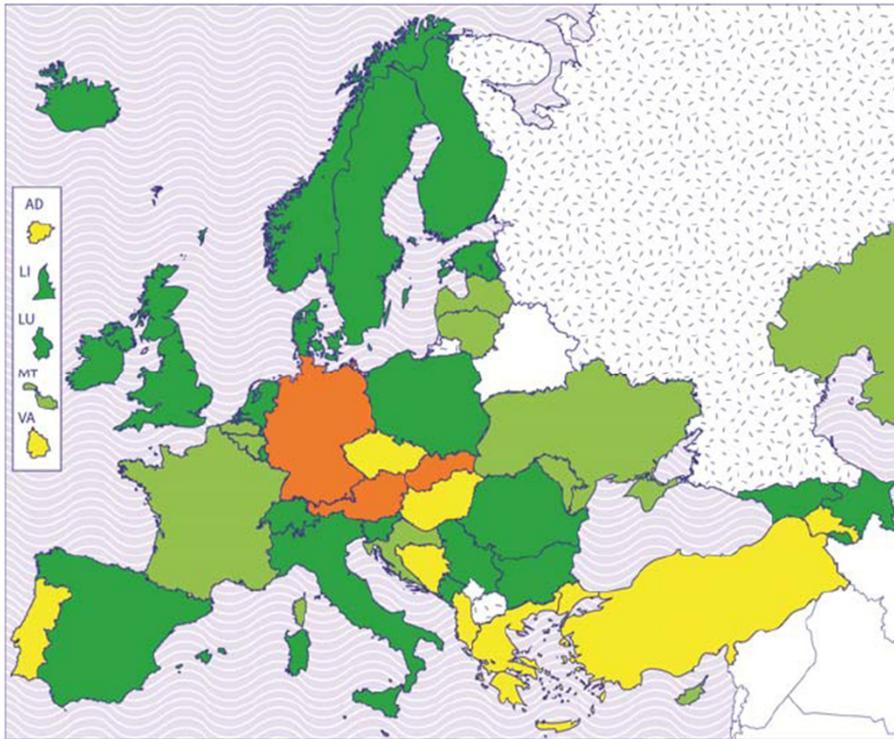
Scorecard categories

- A fully functioning quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA agency/ies has/have been successfully evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers the following main issues:
 - o teaching
 - o student support services
 - o internal quality assurance/management system
- A fully functioning quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA agency/ies has/have been successfully evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers a subset of the main issues.
- A quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA system has not been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers teaching, student support services and internal quality assurance/management.
OR
A quality assurance system is in operation at the national level. The QA system has been successfully evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to some institutions and/or programmes and covers subset of the main issues.
- A quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA system has not been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to all institutions and/or programmes and covers a subset of the main issues.
- A quality assurance system is in operation nationwide. The QA system has not been evaluated against the European Standards and Guidelines in the EHEA. The QA system applies to some institutions and/or programmes and covers a subset of the main issues.

Achievements and implementation: Quality assurance

- Relevant progress in stablishing QA systems.
- Practically all countries have established some form of external QA system.
- 32 agencies (October 2013) in 14 countries were listed in the EQAR (established in 2008)
- Challenges:
 - Stakeholder participation: improvement of students, employers...
 - International cooperation: participation of foreing agencies in evaluatinh HEIs
 - Student services beyond the scope of QA

Stage of implementation of ECTS



	2012 Report*	2009 Report**
	23	21
	11	18
	10	7
	3	2
	0	0

 Data not available

* *Source:* BFUG questionnaire, 2011.

** *Source:* Rauhvargers, Deane & Pauwels, 2009.

Scorecard categories

-  ECTS credits are allocated to all components of all HE programmes, enabling credit transfer and accumulation AND ECTS credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes
-  ECTS credits are allocated to all components of more than 75 % of HE programmes, enabling credit transfer and accumulation AND ECTS credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes
OR
Credits are allocated to all components of all HE programmes using a fully ECTS compatible credit system enabling credit transfer and accumulation AND credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes
-  ECTS credits are allocated in 50-75 % of all HE programmes AND ECTS credits are demonstrably linked with learning outcomes **OR**
ECTS credits are allocated to all components of more than 75 % of HE programmes enabling credit transfer and accumulation, but ECTS credits are not yet linked with learning outcomes
-  ECTS credits are allocated in at least 49 % of HE programmes **OR**
a national credit system is used which is not fully compatible with ECTS
-  ECTS credits are allocated in less than 49 % of HE programmes **OR**
ECTS is used in all programmes but only for credit transfer

Achievements and implementation: ECTS

- There are no countries where ECTS credits are allocated in less than 50% of programmes.
- No country allocates credits on the basis of contact hours only.
- In half of the countries HEI allocate credits to students on the basis of a combination of workload and learning outcomes.
- Implementation of ECTS as a credit transfer and accumulation system in the sense of quantifying students' work appears to be almost completed.
- CHALLENGES:
 - Understanding and usage of learning outcomes properly.
 - Implementation of ECTS is one of the action lines that requires further effort: A more learning outcomes oriented approach remains a relevant challenge.

Achievements and implementation: Diploma Supplement

- The use of DS is clearly growing.
- Diploma Supplements are in many cases not prepared properly and hence do not provide the expected information to the users.
- HEI do not always follow the guidance for filling out DS.
- In some countries the DS is not issued free of charge.
- There are attempts to provide the learning outcomes of the programme completed but in most of these cases were in reality aims rather than real learning outcomes.

Achievements and implementation: National Qualifications Frameworks

- **We have an overarching framework (adopted in Bergen 2005)**

- We will develop **national frameworks** compatible with the EHEA framework and prepared for self certification by 2012 (*Leuven changed deadline*)

- This is a steep challenge and we need continued coordination even if QFs are ultimately a national responsibility

- **Learning outcomes** must be developed, described, implemented and assessed

- LOs and QFs must describe reality – **not just a paper exercise**

Achievements and implementation: National Qualifications Frameworks

- Qualifications frameworks: a tool that gives more transparency to HE systems, describing clearly the qualifications in all cycles and levels of education in terms generic descriptors based on learning outcomes, competences and credits and the profile of the qualifications.
- The change towards learning outcomes and the self-assessment procedures made the 2010 unrealistic and shifted the deadline of implementation to 2012.
- CHALLENGES:
 - There is still amount of effort to met agreed commitments.
 - In the context of the EU Lisbon strategy, the adoption of a European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning makes more challenging this issue looking for compatibility with both overarching European frameworks.

Achievements and implementation: recognition of qualifications

- Recognition has been at the heart of the BP.
- Despite of signature and/or ratification of Lisbon Recognition Convention by most of the EHEA countries actual implementation needs to be improved.
- In some cases decision-taking for academic recognition of foreign qualifications is the responsibility of the ministry or central governmental authority without involving the HEI restricting their capacity to select and admit students.
- The recognition processes can be improved by covering of recognition procedures within HEIs by internal and external quality assurance systems.
- Ministers should set the 2015 Ministerial Conference as the deadline to complete this task.
- Developments on the recognition on the recognition of professional qualifications.

Achievements and implementation: social dimension

“ We, the Ministers, reaffirm that higher education is a public responsibility. We commit ourselves, notwithstanding these difficult economic times, to ensuring that higher education institutions have the necessary resources within a framework established and overseen by public authorities. We are convinced that higher education is a major driver for social and economic development and for innovation in an increasingly knowledge-driven world. We shall therefore increase our efforts on the social dimension in order to provide equal opportunities to quality education, paying particular attention to underrepresented groups”

Budapest-Vienna Declaration March 12, 2010

Achievements and implementation: social dimension

Providing quality higher education for all

“Widening access to higher education is a precondition for societal progress and economic development. We agree to adopt national measures for widening overall access to quality higher education. We will work to raise completion rates and ensure timely progression in higher education in all EHEA countries.

The student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe’s populations. We will step up our efforts towards underrepresented groups to develop the social dimension of higher education, reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services, counselling and guidance, flexible learning paths and alternative access routes, including recognition of prior learning. We encourage the use of peer learning on the social dimension and aim to monitor progress in this area”

Bucharest Communiqué, April 2012

Challenges

Harmonisation and convergence of QA processes, based on common principles (ESG):

- Easier comparison and understanding between national QA systems
- Easier recognition of degrees and results of external QA activities
- Build and promote mutual trust
- Improve transparency
- The E4 group (ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE) in cooperation with EI, BUSINESSEUROPE, EQAR are preparing a revision of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (MAP-ESG project)

Challenges

In the Bucharest Communiqué the Ministers agreed on the future priorities for action by the 2015 which are reflected in the the 2012-2015 BFUG Work Plan with four major working groups:

- Reporting on the implementation of the BP which will prepare the next implementation report for 2015
- Structural reforms (QF, recognition, QA, and transparency)
- Mobility and internationalisation
- Social dimension and lifelong learning

Challenges

- It is very important to ensure that these issues are developed linked to each other (e.g. the interrelation between QA, QF and recognition) not in isolation way.
- The BFUG Work Programme for 2012-2015 states a stronger focus on implementing agreed Action Lines and sharing good practice on areas such as widening access, student-centred learning, employability, recognition practices and developing QF, based on learning outcomes.

Challenges

- Implementing Bologna Process is the responsibility of countries and HEIs and requires deep changes:

Explaining the purposes of the reforms and convincing students and staff members of their benefits remains a major challenge and crucial to success.

The national implementation of Bologna Process costs were ignored in some countries, HEI had to finance the costs of change of their own budget and this is specially dramatic in the context of the economic crisis.

Conclusions

The BP has introduced unifying elements that are shared by institutions across 47 countries although the diverse cultural, national and institutional contexts and have led to considerably variety in implementation.

Very quick expansion of the BP in diverse cultural and institutional contexts:

- different pace of implementation
- *“A multi-speed Bologna Process. Calendars and depth of reforms have further complicated the interpretation of BP”*
(Guy Haug)

Conclusions

- Some changes represents very strong challenges, like the shift to student-centred learning and requires material and human resources to carry them out. Infrastructures, smaller student-staff ratio...
- **Responses to the economic crisis differ, in many countries a significant budget cuts have been, negatively affecting to the process for the further work required.**

Conclusions

- Diversity at system level, institutional level and at programme is important.
- Diversity can only be maintained if we make the diversity more transparent.
- The implementation of the BP has contributed to improve transparency: degree structure, QF, quality, ECTS, DS, LO.
- But the efficiency and effectiveness can be improved.
- There are still gaps.

Conclusions

The Bologna Process is a European **success story**...

But...four main goals for the present decade:

- Finalizing the structural reform and deepening implementation through a consistent understanding and use of the developed tools.
- Implementing quality HE, connected with research and LLL and promoting employability.
- Making the social dimension a reality...
- Ensuring that at least 20% of those graduating in the EHEA have had study or training period abroad

Conclusions

We are making a huge progress.

Bologna gives the opportunity of working together, reaching a remarkably consensus among 47 countries.

Conclusions

THE GLASS OF BOLOGNA' S IMPLEMENTATION
IS IT LESS THAN HALF FULL?
IS IT LESS THAN HALF EMPTY?

THERE IS THE NEED TO REFLECT ON HOW TO REWORK THE
PROCESS

I HOPE THAT THE NEW ERASMUS PLUS (ERASMUS+) WILL HELP TO
IMPROVE THE EHEA

To avoid:

"If things are to stay as they are, things will have to change"

Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa

Thanks! For your attention

¡Gracias por su atención!