

«The College/Polytechnic sector in the post-Bologna era»

Dr. Guy Haug
Principal Advisor
CRE-Association of European Universities, Geneva/Paris

The Bologna Declaration is a pledge by 29 countries to reform the structures of their higher education systems in a convergent way

- ✓ It is a commitment freely taken by each signatory country to reform its own higher education system or systems in order to create overall convergence at European level.
- ✓ It respects the fundamental principles of autonomy and diversity.
- ✓ It represents a search for a common European answer to common European problems.

29 BOLOGNA COUNTRIES

- ✓ 15 European Union
- ✓ 2 European Economic Area
- ✓ 10 CentralEastern European accession countries

Bulgaria
Czech Republic
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania
Slovak Republic
Slovenia

- ✓ Switzerland
- ✓ Malta

The Bologna Declaration is not just a political statement, but a binding commitment to an action programme

- ✓ a clearly defined common goal: to create a European space for higher education
- ✓ a deadline: it should be completed in 2010
- ✓ a set of specified objectives:
 - common framework of readable and comparable degrees
 - undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all countries
 - ECTS-compatible credit systems
 - a European dimension in quality assurance
 - the elimination of remaining obstacles to mobility

From Declaration to implementation: an organised follow-up structure and process

- ✓ intergovernmental cooperation, in collaboration with higher education institutions and associations
- ✓ Ministers will meet again in Prague in May 2001
- ✓ a follow-up structure: consultative and follow-up groups
- ✓ follow-up work:
 - surveys and studies
 - convergent reforms
 - individual universities action

The Bologna Declaration and global competitiveness of European higher education

- ✓ the Declaration wants to increase the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education
- ✓ it stresses the need for European higher education as a system to become more attractive to students from other continents

The Bologna Declaration invites the higher education community to contribute to the success of the process of reform and convergence

- ✓ The higher education community has a crucial role in the success of the Bologna process
- ✓ The Declaration recognises the fundamental values and the diversity of European higher education
- ✓ Universities and other institutions of higher education can choose to be actors of this essential process of change
- ✓ The CRE and the Confederation will hold a convention of European universities and other higher education institutions

BOLOGNA: why?

Internal (intra-European) reasons

- ✓ Lessons learnt from a 15-year phase of large scale mobility:
 - recognising the limits of mere mobility/exchange within unchanged structures: endlessly running into the same problems
 - entering a new phase based on structural change
 - building on experience acquired (networks, tools)
- ✓ Tension between national systems of higher education and internationalisation of activities and careers:
 - access (no longer limited to national system)
 - degrees (awarded/recognised nationally, used anywhere in an open labour market)
 - quality assurance and accreditation
- ✓ Emergence of an effective European labour market:
 - Bologna is about « qualifications », not « degrees »
 - Comparing access conditions to labour market: efficiency of own national system?
 - is higher education lagging behind in European integration?

BOLOGNA: why?

External (extra-European) reasons

- ✓ European competitiveness in world higher education:
 - a less conspicuous, yet essential dimension of the convergence process
 - an area of growing concern (WTO/GATS, GATE, etc.)

- ✓ diminishing attractiveness in world markets?
 - need for a readable system of degrees
 - need for international compatibility

- ✓ inroads from overseas providers:
 - growth of transnational education: importing and exporting countries
 - a multi-faceted challenge: need for a coherent answer at European level

A COHERENT QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK

FOR EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION:

Goals/objectives

- ✓ compatibility:
 - internal
 - external
- ✓ flexibility:
 - credits
 - student choice
 - links between sub-systems
- ✓ employability:
 - diverse profiles
 - increased preparation
 - earlier access to labour market
- ✓ efficiency:
 - reduced duration
 - reduced drop-outs
- ✓ mobility:
 - structural improvements
 - new forms of mobility
- ✓ competitiveness:
 - readability + image
 - attractiveness
 - external recognition

A COHERENT QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK FOR EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A common, but flexible framework

- ✓ Structure, not content
- ✓ Focus on main articulation
- ✓ For reference, not for uniformisation
- ✓ For qualifications, not for curriculum layout
- ✓ Credits, not duration
- ✓ Not for « European », but for national degrees
- ✓ Need for a coherent nomenclature
- ✓ Diploma supplement still useful

A COHERENT QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK FOR EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION:

Basic structure

Sub-degree level

60 - 120 ECTS

Certificate
Diploma

First degree level

180 ECTS
or 240 ECTS

Bachelor
Advanced Bachelor

Postgraduate level

less than 60 ECTS

Postgraduate
Certificate/diploma

60 - 120 ECTS

Masters

(not credit-rated)

Doctorate/Ph.D.

NO DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN SUB-SECTORS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE BOLOGNA DECLARATION

- ✓ A common, but flexible framework for qualifications:
 - for all qualifications
 - «qualifications», not «degrees»
 - «qualifications», not «institutions»
 - for reference, not for uniformisation
- ✓ A plea for transparency
- ✓ An inclination towards employment dimension
- ✓ Two-tier system encourages vertical mobility
- ✓ Role of higher education institutions in follow-up process

THE COLLEGE/POLYTECHNIC SECTOR IN THE POST BOLOGNA ERA:

The context

- ✓ Bologna implementation:
 - convergence of system structures?
 - Higher Education Convention (Spain, March 2001)
- ✓ Increased competition:
 - internationally
 - nationally
- ✓ Transnational education
- ✓ Growing role of employment aspects
- ✓ Push for accreditation

THE COLLEGE/POLYTECHNIC SECTOR

IN THE POST BOLOGNA ERA:

Getting organised

- ✓ Role of merger process
- ✓ Need for a NAME for the sector:
 - one sector?
 - or two sectors?
- ✓ Structure at European level
- ✓ Curricula compatible with European framework
- ✓ Quality control and accreditation

THE COLLEGE/POLYTECHNIC SECTOR

IN THE POST BOLOGNA ERA:

Getting recognised

- ✓ Visibility as a group
- ✓ Right to compete without a handicap:
 - use of word « university » in name
 - but only where justified
- ✓ Credit transfer:
 - elimination of structural obstacles
 - but need to respect rights of receiving institution
- ✓ Vertical mobility:
 - within college/polytechnic sector
 - with universities (two-way flow?)
 - « triangulation » process with foreign universities
- ✓ Securing professional recognition
- ✓ Preparing for meta-accreditation?