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The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education

- About EURASHE
- Features of Professional Higher Education
- EURASHE's involvement in the Bologna and Lisbon Processes
- EURASHE's current working agenda in the BP (from Bergen – 2005 to London - 2007)
- Stresses for the London Communiqué (May 2007 Ministerial meeting)

About EURASHE

- Founded in 1990 as a European not-for profit association
- More than 700 members in over 30 countries in the EHEA and associate members in partner countries
- Members of EURASHE are National Associations of University Colleges, Individual HEIs, professional associations & stakeholder organisations
- Professional Higher Education in the Bologna Process

The position of Professional Higher Education in the HE system

- Diverse professional HE profiles in Europe (SCHE, Ba, Ma, PhD in cooperation. with univ, depending on the country)
 - * binary system: professional HE outside universities (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, GR, IRL, NL, ...)
 - * unitary system: professional tracks in universities (FR, ES, IT ...); often with two subsystems recognized as such by the labour market;

No homogeneous system of HE :

- * blurring of systems through professional drifts in universities and academic drifts in other HEIs
- * bridges' between the universities & 'other' HEIs, both in binary and unitary HE systems.

Features of Professional Higher Education

- A strong link with the world of employment & with enterprises.
- Close involvement of all stakeholders (incl. students)
- Regional embedding of education & research
- Practice-oriented & competence-based
- Accessible and labour-market oriented
- Flexible schemes and study programmes for new groups of learners, following new requirements of the labour market

EURASHE's role in the Bologna Process

- together with the EUA, the Europe wide representative of HEIs in Europe (for professional HE)
- Consultative Member of the Bologna Follow-up Group (together with the EUA, ESIB, Business Europe, E.I., Council of Europe, ENQA, UNESCO, ...)
- partner in the 'E4' group for QA (with other stakeholders : ENQA, EUA, ESIB)

EURASHE's working agenda in the current phase of the BP, 2005-2007

- Quality Ass.: QA Forum & Register (mandate from Ministers: standards & guidelines for QA, practicalities)
- Link the Bologna Process with the Lisbon strategy (through LLL, cf. Short-Cycle HE seminars in Amsterdam, Blois & Stuttgart)
- Consultation with members at our Conferences in Vilnius (2005), Dubrovnik (2006) & Copenhagen (2007)
- 'External dimension' of the BP : Regional conference on 'Quality Assurance in transnational education', Kazakhstan (October 2007), partnership agreements with other regions in the world (information & cooperation)
- Active participant in Bologna seminars & working groups (employability, mobility, Qualifications Frameworks, ...)

EURASHE stresses for the BP

- Core objectives cited in the London Communiqué: facilitate mobility, increase employability, strengthen Europe's attractiveness and competitiveness
- Diversity of HE (typology, missions, targeted students) an asset and not contrasting with the compatibility and comparability of HE systems.
- Education is about personal development of students, but also in response to society's needs, and in order to prepare them to play an active role in civil society underpinned by values.

Progress in the implementation of the BP

- A student-centred reform, in that it wants to create more opportunities for a greater mass of students:
- Remove structural barriers between the cycles, obstacles to fairer access to HE (including intermediate qualifications)
- Qualifications that are better suited for the labour market and make further study possible
- Qualifications frameworks are also instruments to improve recognition of qualifications, as well as prior learning, which includes non-formal and informal learning.

Progress in Implementation of the BP

- NQF aligned to the overarching QF, that is itself to become compatible with the European QF that encompasses LLL.
- The social role of lifelong learning: also a responsibility of HE, as shows the link between recognition of prior and experiential learning and increased access to HE.
- Quality Assurance: the proposal of E4 for the Register of QA agencies accepted (voluntary inclusion, self-financing, independent and transparent)
- EURASHE had also insisted on the full independence of QA agencies entering the Register and their substantial compliance with the ESG; national reviews of HEIs as a standard concept.
- EURASHE: At all stages in QA process: involvement of students and other stakeholders.

Further progress needed

- Link with the Lisbon Agenda: Europe's challenge is to adapt its workforce to the use of new technologies through education and retraining of its citizens. Link with the 'Tuning' project: Learning outcomes should reflect a broader interpretation of innovation and knowledge.
- Research and innovation a must on all levels of HE
- Applied Research in a regional setting, with technology as a partner on all levels.

Further progress needed

- Social dimension to be recognized as inherent to the BP: the student body should reflect the diversity in society (also reaching underprivileged groups).
- EURASHE: social dimension not to be confined to an individual's participation in HE. HEIs, given their status as regional or national centres of knowledge and competencies have a broader responsibility towards society.

The Bologna Process after 2010

- EURASHE: joint efforts of consultative members and countries to search for and interpret data on issues like mobility, employability, access to HE on the basis of the recommendations from the stocktaking exercise.
- Employability of graduates after each cycle, in partnership with all stakeholders, i.c. students and employers.
- EURASHE to conduct a Europe wide study on the employability of Bachelor degrees, as part of the stocktaking exercise.
- EURASHE: need for a strategy to integrate the lifelong learning concept in HE.

The global dimension of the BP

- External Dimension: the European (social) model as a continuous exercise in balancing competitiveness with inclusiveness
- Guarantees a sustainable development, in cooperation with other regions in the world.