Changes in Higher Education in Europe – The Bologna Process

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1997: Lisbon Convention (European Council + UNESCO):
    Agreement to harmonize study degrees

1998: Sorbonne Declaration (France, Germany, Italy, UK):
    Agreement to harmonize the operation of HEI

1999: Bologna Declaration (signed by 29 European ministers of education)
    Agreement about more details than before

2010: Jubilee Conference in Vienna/Budapest (now 47 nations take part)

And today? There is still a lot to do, the process goes on…
objectives:
- mobility
- employability
- increase of the international competitiveness and attractiveness of the HE System

measures:
- harmonization and acceptance of study degrees
- consecutive degree scheme + concept for PhD
- implementation of a credit point system (ECTS)
- cooperation regarding Quality Assurance
- concept for lifelong learning
- students‘ participation in decisions on all levels
- European dimension in HE
Organization of the process

**European Level:**
- ministers and experts meet every 2 years to assess progress achieved and to agree upon new steps to be taken:

**National Level:**
- Bologna groups work on concepts and report to the European Bologna group
- Members of the German group: Politicians, German Academic Exchange Service, Rectors‘ Conference, students, employers‘ federation, trade union for education and science, accreditation council

**Level of HEI:**
- interpret the requirements, find individual solutions, transfer into practice
- some HEI supported by Bologna Coordinators
organization of courses in modules
- module = coherent unit of courses
- requires new structure of study content
- defined by learning targets and contents and workload
- exams are connected to the module as a whole, not to particular courses

credit point system
- European Creditpoint Transfer System (ECTS): homogeneous standard for calculating study achievements
- change from calculating only course attendance time towards calculating real workload (including preparation and post-processing)

accreditation system for programmes
- based on regulations for the composition of study programmes and their assessment by accreditation agencies
- study programmes are tested, whether they can be finished without bigger problems within the given time
1999: „Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to development comparable criteria and methodologies“

2003: ministers gave the mandate to develop a system of QA standards, procedures and guidelines

2005: „Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European HEA“ published:

→ standards for internal and external QA and QA agencies
→ QA agencies should be accredited every 5 years
→ the accreditation should be organized on national level
→ establishment of European register of QA agencies

**Principles:**

- concentration on what has to be done, not how
- autonomy, but also more responsibility
Part 1: standards and guidelines for internal QA
- policy and procedures
- approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes
- assessments of students

Part 2: standards and guidelines for external QA
- development of external QA processes
- follow-up procedures

Part 3: standards and guidelines for external QA agencies
- QA procedures
- status of agencies

Résumé: Standards are met, but no real cooperation up to now, QM-systems are not comparable
2009: national student strike:
- study fees, study programmes becoming like school schedules, increasing workload
- no criticism towards Bologna, but the German way of practice
- round table: move from reform of structures to qualitative study contents

Further points of criticism:

• too focused on job market, less options to chose from the curriculum hinders the individual development of students
• financing shortfall in whole HE-system → capacity problems
• contents of former programmes have been pressed into new study structures (same content, less time)
• mutual approval of qualifications does not work properly
• handling of diversity, establishment of equal opportunities for all students and lifelong learning have not been adressed yet

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European Level:
- chance to shape an own European future for HEA and common identification
- harmonized profile of curricula
- a lot of movement, differences between early starters and newcomer countries

Germany:
- nearly 85% of study programmes are Ba/Ma degrees
- increase of mobility in the consecutive study programmes
- alternative to programme accreditation: accreditation of QM-system

Future prospects:
- improvement of teaching via orientation on students‘ needs, requirements and study outcomes: „student centred learning“, „learning outcome orientation“
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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