

BOLOGNA PROCESS TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2005-2007

Final: 9 May 2006

Notes:

The deadline for submitting National Reports is **Friday 15 December 2006**.

BFUG members are encouraged to consult other stakeholders about the contents of their National Report.

Please complete your National Report in English using this template and return it to the Secretariat by email. Your report should not exceed **20 pages in length**, using Times New Roman font size 12. Where appropriate, please include precise web references to legislation or other documentation. For any topic where there has been no change since 2005, please refer to your National Report for the Bergen conference.

Please attach your country's action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications.

National Reports will be posted on the Bologna website in their original form.

Information from National Reports will form the basis of the Stocktaking Report to be presented to Ministers when they meet in London in May 2007.

This template has three sections:

- A. Background information on your Higher Education system
- B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements
- C. Current issues in Higher Education.

Elements that will inform the scorecard element of stocktaking are clearly indicated in the template.

Information for the stocktaking, including the scorecard element, will also be drawn from the Eurydice survey "Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe". These elements are also indicated in the template. Please use your National Report to supplement, but not repeat, your country's input to the Eurydice survey.

A. Background information on your Higher Education system

Details

Country	CZECH REPUBLIC
Date	15 December 2006
BFUG member (one name only) Position	Vera Stastna
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	<p>the Background report prepared under the leadership of Helena Sebkova for the project Thematic Review of Tertiary Education can be used, Josef Benes, Vaclav Vins, Karolina Gondkova, Leona Steigrova, Stepanka Skuhrova</p>
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Main achievements since Bergen

1. Describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms, since Bergen.

The new Long term Plan of the Ministry for 2006-10 was introduced. It is important for funding higher education institutions (“HEIs”), namely the contractual principle-contract funding (see section 2.). In this case, the funding depends on compatibility between the Long-term Plans of individual institutions and the Long-term Plan of the Ministry. The mechanism is based on the Development Programmes published by the Ministry annually, and HEIs are invited to submit projects (annually) that fit in with the programme priorities, which are derived from the state strategy as expressed in the Long-term plan of the Ministry. The financial support of successful projects allocated on the basis of specific contracts enables state priorities to be implemented through funding. The assessment of any particular project’s eligibility is based on the priorities of the Long-term Plans of the Ministry and that of the particular HEI; it is examined by expert teams consisting of members of the Czech Rectors’ Conference and the Council of HEIs and representatives of the Ministry

The amendment to the Higher Education Act was approved by the Parliament in December 2005 as the *Act no: 552/2005 Coll.* The changes represent another step towards more autonomy of institutions, mainly financial, introducing next to the state subsidy a weighted grant from the state budget for teaching, scholarly, scientific, research, development, artistic and other creative activities which can be transferred over the fiscal year without regulations, mandatory social scholarships for the most needed student population, change in the duration of rector’s term from 3 to 4 years (one possible re-election stays), change in maximum duration for accreditation of degree programmes from twice the standard length to 10 years, etc.

Czech Republic was involved since 2004 in the *OECD project on Thematic Review of Tertiary Education*. At the break of November and December 2006 the Country Notes (recommendations of the experts) were published. It is extremely useful material bringing the country food for discussion and further changes / reforms towards more competitive and progressive tertiary system fulfilling among others also Bologna goals. This discussion has been just starting.

National organisation

2. Describe any changes since Bergen in the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their roles.

Please include:

- whether higher education institutions (HEIs) report to /are overseen by different ministries
- how funds are allocated to HEIs
- areas for which HEIs are autonomous and self governing.

There are no changes in the governing structure. HEIs report/are overseen by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Funding mechanisms were described in details in the Eurydice report. Only some brief facts:

The following table demonstrates the structure of 2005 budget of HEIs

Activity	Billions CZK	% of TOTAL
Education	15,1	46,60
Social affairs	1,6	4,94
R & D	4,9	15,12
Programme funding – Capital investments	3,6	11,11
Other public funding	1,3	4,01
Total public funding	26,5	81,79
Incomes of HEIs from non-public sources */	5,9	18,21
TOTAL incomes	32,4	100

*/ without funding gained in the EU Framework Programmes

Some remarks

Funds for education is allocated (the percentage is from the funds allocated for education activities – the 1st line in the table above)

- on the basis of formula (84,5%); total money = number of students x cost of study a programme and since 2005 similar principle is used for bonuses for successful graduates (the cost of study programme is only a certain % from the real cost)
- non-normative parts of budget (8,1%) - social support of students, special fond of Minister, budget for accidents, special support for internationalisation etc.
- on the basis of long term strategy plans – contract funding (7,4%) based on the Programmes of Development.

The financial support for R & D from the public budget has two forms: institutional and targeted.

- Institutional support is provided to HEIs by the Ministry according to the recommendations of the Research and Development Council, and has two parts: 1) Support for specific research, i.e. research linked with the provision of Master's and doctoral programmes. The total amount is allocated to HEIs

according to a formula that includes quality indicators such as the financial support received from various research projects in open competition for public money in the previous two years, the number of professors and associate professors, and the number of students in Master's and doctoral programmes. 2) Support based on research plans, which should be comprehensive, relatively detailed documents, planning the research of the HEI for a period of 5–7 years, including needed staff and budget. Research plans are evaluated by special committees composed of Czech and foreign experts and are approved by the Ministry.

- Targeted support can be obtained on the basis of competition within the framework of different programmes administered by the Ministry, other ministries, the Czech Science Foundation and the Academy of Sciences

Social affairs– include social scholarships, subsidies for meals, grants for logging, doctoral students scholarships, mobility grants etc.

The Programme funding – capital investments provide financial tools which also comprise the possibility of influencing major capital investment programmes, thus making possible both the renovation and the expansion of public HEIs.

The areas of autonomy and self governance were described in the Eurydice report as well. Generally the HEIs are autonomous in all main aspects – internal organization; determination of the number of applicants admitted to study, the conditions of admission to study and decision-making during entrance proceedings; the design and implementation of degree programmes; the organization of studies; decision-making with regard to students' rights and duties; objectives of scholarly, scientific, research, development, artistic and other creative activities and their organization; conditions of employment and determination of the numbers of academic staff and other personnel; carrying out the procedures for conferring “*venium docendi*” (habilitation) and for the appointment of professors; cooperation with other HEIs and legal entities as well as international relations; the establishment of autonomous academic bodies at the HEI, unless stipulated otherwise by this Act; financial management of the HEI and management of assets in compliance with special regulations; the fixing of study-related fees.

3. Describe any changes since Bergen to the institutional structure.

Please include:

- the number of public/private HEIs
- are there different types of institutions delivering higher education (i.e. academic/professional, university/non-university etc.)
- the number/percentage of students admitted in academic session 2006-2007 to each type of institution
- the extent to which different types institutions are covered by the same regulations.

In 2006/07 there are:

- * 26 public HEIs, 24 university-type, 2 non-university type
- * 2 state HEIs, both university-type
- * 41 private HEIs, 1 university type, 40 non-university type.

The White Paper (2001) extended the higher education sector into tertiary sector involving tertiary professional schools. This type of vocationally oriented studies is finished with a degree Diploma Specialist. This degree is academically lower than a Bachelor's degree, however, sometimes professionally recognised at the same level (e.g. nurses). These institutions are also not part of the Act No. 111/1998 Coll. (Amended and consolidated) on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments and Supplements to Some Other Acts ("the Act")

According to the Act *"Higher education institutions are of either a university or a non-university type..... Higher education institutions of the university type may provide all types of degree programmes as well as related scholarly, scientific, research, development, artistic and other creative activities. Higher education institutions of the non-university type provides Bachelor's programmes and may carry out Master's programmes as well as related research, development, artistic and other creative activities.... The type of each higher education institution is stated in its Statute; this must comply with the standpoint expressed by the Accreditation Commission."* The main difference is that the non-university type HEIs cannot provide doctoral degree programmes.

All HEIs are covered by the same Act.

The number /percentage of students admitted in 2006/07 to

- the university type HEIs: **66 153 / 89%**
- the non-university type HEIs: **8 056 / 11%**
- **total** **74 209 / 100%**

Partnership

4. Describe the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country.

Please include:

- the membership and role of any national Bologna group (for example policy committee, promoters' group)
- the membership and role of students, staff trade unions, business and social partners in any national Bologna Group.

The Bologna Process is and organic part of the policy of the Czech Ministry of Education as well as of particular HEIs. It is an organic part of the Long Term Plan of the Ministry and its annual updating as well as the Long Term Plans of particular HEIs and their updating. The Bologna tasks have been supported via the Programmes of Development. (See section 1, 2 and the Eurydice report on funding).

There is a national Bologna Promoters team consisting from 12 members nominated by the Czech Council of HEIs, Czech Rectors' Conference, and Accreditation Commission. There are vice-rectors, members of the Accreditation Commission, experienced academics and experts in HE and student representatives. The Bologna team has been coordinated by the Ministry and closely cooperated with the ENIC/NARIC Centre. Social partners, staff, trade unions were not involved in the Bologna Promoters team.

However, there is a duty given by the Act that all important decisions must be discussed with Academic representative bodies (Czech Rectors' Conference and Council of HEIs – see section 5). All decisions concerning budget have been discussed with Representative Commission, the advisory body to the vice-minister for science and higher education. The Representative Commission is composed of representatives of the Czech Rectors' Conference, the Council of HEIs, the HEI Registrars, student representatives and a representative of the labour union.

The strategic policy of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in higher education is given by the *Long-term Plan of the Ministry*, which is focused, above all, on

- internationalisation - aimed at such issues as e.g. preparation and implementation of joint programmes/degrees, work of prominent foreign academics at HEI and international mobility of students;
 - quality of academic activities - within this second priority among others also the cooperation between the HEI and regional institutions and potential employees is stressed - the Long Term Plan thus covers many types of partnership activities together with the incentives which will be used to support the particular activities.
 - cultivation of the academic environment and
- and therefore on enhancing the competitiveness of HEIs.

5. Describe the arrangements for involving students and staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

Please include:

- precise references (preferably with web links) to any legislation (or equivalent) in place to ensure students and staff are represented on HEI governing bodies
- the role of students in the governance of HEIs
- the role of staff trade union/representative bodies in the governance of HEIs.

The system of governance (at state as well as institutional level) was described in the Eurydice report. The responsibilities of the Ministry in the higher education sector are strictly fixed in the Act (§ 87), which provides for a decentralization of the management of higher education. As already mentioned, there is an important and powerful (though not all-powerful) “buffer body” between the Ministry and the HEIs that is composed of representatives of the academic community. It comprises two parts. The first, the Czech Rectors' Conference, exists in a more or less similar form in most European countries, while the second, the Council of HEIs, has similar counterparts especially in recently transformed or transforming countries; it serves as an expression of democratic principles at the national level as well as a means of protecting them. It is worthwhile to note here the importance of the Students' Chamber of the Council of HEIs, which enables the students to have an influence on strategy issues at the national level. After long-term experience, the required consultations on important measures undertaken by the state administration with the representatives of the academic community have come to be viewed (after long-term experience) as a useful necessity rather than a legal obligation.

For the implementation of strategic goals stemming from its overall responsibility for the development of HE (system steering), the Ministry has two important tools:

1. the distribution of financial support from the state budget to particular HEIs. The national goals and priorities can be promoted by targeted funding allocation, which is applied mainly in the field of
 - Development Programmes;
 - research and development;
 - Programme Funding - capital investments. (for details see the Eurydice report and previous paragraphs) and
2. the assurance of quality through the awarding or withholding of accreditation following the expert opinion of the Accreditation Commission. The Ministry also plays an important role in the establishment of private HEIs, conditioned by granting the state permission, which is also based on the expert opinion of the Accreditation Commission.

Another important base for the system steering is the significant role of the Ministry in preparing conceptual and strategy documents – e.g. the *Long Term Plan*.

The governing bodies at public and state HEIs – their nature, composition, methods of operation, rights and duties – are defined by the Act (§ 5-16). Detailed descriptions and the working methods of these bodies are set out in the institutions' internal regulations, which must be registered at the Ministry (which has the expertise to decide whether or not they are at variance with the law and legal regulations). The self-governing academic bodies of public and state HEIs are the Rector, Academic Senate, Scientific Board and Disciplinary Committee. At a public HEI the Academic Senate nominates an individual for the Rector's position and on the basis of this proposal he or she is appointed by the President of the Republic. The Rector is formally in charge of the whole institution and acts and decides in its name; however, the Act grants a number of fundamental decision-making powers to the Academic Senate. The Academic Senate approves the institutional budget, Long Term Plan, annual report on activities, annual report on financial management, internal regulations and the establishment (or abolition, merging or division) of parts of the HEI, and selects a nominee for the position of Rector (it can also propose his or her removal from office). The members of the Academic Senate are elected from the institution's academic community. According to the Act, students form at least one-third and at most one-half of all the Academic Senate membership, thus playing an important role in running HEIs. Moreover, at many HEIs a student chamber exists within the Academic Senate, which gives student representatives an opportunity to protect student rights and interests (In certain issues, such as student accommodation and provisions for meals, the student chamber is granted the right of veto, depending on the internal regulations of the institution).

The competences of the Scientific Board lie especially in the procedures for habilitation and the appointment of professors and in the preparation of proposals for study programmes and research plans. The person responsible for financial matters is the Registrar; appointed by Rector, he is in charge of the institutional management and internal administration of the HEI.

Another body at public HEIs is the Board of Trustees, introduced for the first time in 1999 by the Act. The minister appoints the members of the Board of Trustees after discussion with the Rector. The members must come from outside the institution, with balanced representation from, in particular, the public sphere, the municipality, and state administration (the Act, §14). The primary reason for the inclusion of this new body in the institutional management was the transfer of state property to the ownership of the

individual HEIs. The Board of Trustees is expected to ensure the proper use and maintenance of the newly obtained assets: it approves legal acts concerning real estate and movable assets whose value exceeds a legally stipulated amount. Another reason for its creation was to contribute to the broader openness of HEIs to the public and vice versa – to foster the involvement of external ideas in the relatively closed system of higher education. The Board expresses its standpoint on the institutional Long-term Plan, the institutional budget, the annual report on activities and the annual report on financial management, and may publicly present its suggestions and standpoints on the activities of the HEI (the Act, § 15). Last but not least the Board of Trustees is expected to ensure that the HEI continues to meet the purpose for which it was established, to see that the public interest is reflected in the institution's activities and to see to the proper management of its assets.

1. Describe the measures in place to ensure the co-operation of business and social partners within the Bologna Process.

Cooperation with business and social partners is the integral part of the development of HE in the Czech Republic. It is supported, as already mentioned via the Programmes of Development:

In Programmes of Development in 2007 there are mainly

-The Programme for development of the structure and modularisation of degree programmes - - The Programme supporting common structures between HEIs and employers/regions

The HEIs submit mainly projects targeted towards:

- supporting practical placements (preparation, organisation, providing practical placements),
- cooperation of HEIs with the region (mainly in contributing to human resource development),
- cooperation of HEIs with industry (mainly involvement of experts from businesses into teaching).

Within Programmes of Development there were 34 projects supported at 12 HEIs in total sum of 23 177 thousand CZK in 2006.

Under European Social Fund there is a possibility to submit projects concerning tertiary education, research and development – Operational programme on Human Resource Development – Cooperation of HEIs with businesses in the field of innovation of degree programmes:

Examples of projects

-**Czech University of Technology** „*Innovation of Master's degree programme „Engineering Informatics in transportation in the context of needs of car industry“*“

„*Innovation and implementation of study branch Transport and manipulation technology for strategic requirements of industry“*“

-**Brno University of Technology** „*Innovation of higher education branches in mechanical engineering in conditions of information society“*“

-**Technical University in Liberec** „*Increasing effectiveness of teaching in the context of entrepreneurial university* “; „*Innovation of the degree programme Mechanical*

There is not any separate strategic document concerning specifically partnership.

B. Main stocktaking questions, including scorecard elements

Degree system

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle

7. Describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of the total number of students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2006/07.

According the Act almost each traditional long Master's (magister) degree programme (the length from 4 to 6 study years) was divided into Bachelor's (the standard length from 3 to 4 study years) and Master's programmes (the standard length from 1 to 3 study years). There is only small number of "traditional" Master's degree programmes, which are not structured, for example degree programmes in human and veterinary medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, teacher training for primary school and law. In case of law strong discussion has been held and the restructuring of studies into two cycles is expected. In other study branches long Master's degree programmes will naturally end in the near future because new applicants have been admitted only into structured study programmes.

The number / percentage of the total number of students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2006/07:

- Bachelor's degree programmes: 186 987 / 61%
- Master's degree programmes: 36 749 / 12%
- **Total enrolled in the two cycle degree system: 223 736 / 73%**

- **Traditional Long Master's degree programmes: 82 709 / 27%**
- **TOTAL number of students below doctoral level: 306 445 / 100%**

(Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of the third cycle

8. Describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of 3rd cycle students following structured doctoral programmes
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- the elements that are included in doctoral study programmes, e.g. do they include taught courses or independent research only
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies
- are doctoral studies included in your country's qualifications framework and are they linked to learning outcomes
- are interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills integrated in doctoral studies
- are credit points used in measuring workload in doctoral studies?

By 31 October 2005

All 23 299 students in doctoral degree programmes follow the structured programmes. (the percentage of doctoral students from all students at Czech HEIs: 8 %)

The standard length of doctoral degree programmes is 3 – 4 years (see the Act § 47). The programmes involve both – taught courses as well as independent research. According to the §47, of the Act *“Doctoral programmes are aimed at scientific research and independent creative activities in the area of research or development, or independent theoretical and creative activities in the area of the fine arts. ... Studies within the framework of doctoral degree programmes shall be subject to individual curricula under the guidance of a tutor. Doctoral studies are completed with a doctoral state examination and the defence of a doctoral thesis. These are intended to show the ability of the candidate to carry out independent activities in the area of research or development, or independent theoretical and creative artistic activities. The thesis must contain original and published results or results accepted for publication”*. All study programmes must be accredited by the Accreditation Commission. According to the Act studies within the framework of doctoral degree programmes are monitored and evaluated by a Specialist Board appointed in compliance with internal regulations of the HEI or its part that has the corresponding degree programme accredited. The degree programmes in the same field of study may be evaluated by a common Specialist Board, if such an agreement is made among several HEIs or their part. Members of a Specialist Board are from universities and research institutions (mostly professors) in respective field of the doctoral degree programme. The Specialist Board is responsible for approval of each individual study plans of doctoral students, of the subjects of the doctoral thesis of students and it is responsible for quality of the doctoral degree programme. The proposal of nomination of specialists of the Specialist Board is included in content of application for accreditation of a doctoral degree programme.

The doctoral degree programmes are included in the Act – see above. They will be included in the National Qualification Framework; however, for the time being this framework does not exist.

The “transferable skills” are often included or the HEIs develop them under the Programmes of Development.

The ECTS credit points are not used in a more spread way. However they are HEIs which have been introducing the system of ETS credits in doctoral degree programmes – e.g. Masaryk University or VSB-Technical University of Ostrava.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Access¹ to the next cycle

9. Describe the arrangements for access between the first and second cycles and second and third cycles.

Please include:

- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the second cycle
- if appropriate, the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to both the second and third cycles
- the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle
- specify any first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle
- specify any second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle.
- specify any examples where bridging courses are necessary to transfer between cycles in the same subject area
- any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles.

According to the Act all Bachelor qualifications give access to the second cycle and all Master qualifications give access to the third cycle in the sense of Lisbon Recognition Convention. However, the admission requirements and procedure itself is fully in competence of the respective HEI or faculty. (§ 49 of the Act: *“Higher education institutions and faculties are free to specify additional conditions for admission to studies that relate to specific knowledge, abilities, talent or results achieved at secondary schools, tertiary professional schools or higher education institutions. Admission to a Master’s programme following a Bachelor’s programme may also be conditional upon the similarity of both programmes or the number of credits acquired in certain types of courses during studies. Credits are understood as a quantitative expression of the study load of a certain part of studies. In addition, higher education institutions and faculties may set a limit to the number of applicants who have met the requirements that will be admitted; where more applicants have met these requirements, then admission will be on the basis of their ranking order.... The deadline for submitting applications for admission, how they are to be submitted in written or electronic form, the conditions for admissionas well as the method for determining whether the conditions have been met and the date by which this will be made known, must be made public by higher education institutions or faculties well in advance, but in any case no less than four months before the deadline.”*

Some HEIs enable different study paths in the respective Bachelor’s degree programme. Some paths give less sufficient preparation for further studies, however, the students are informed ahead. On the contrary these “paths” give a possibility to gain a Bachelor qualification also to those who would finish without any degree and they do not close access to further studies. The students know that they have to supply the missing knowledge to meet admission requirements to the higher cycle.

¹ Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention. Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education.

Implementation of national qualifications framework

10. Describe the stage of implementation of the national qualifications framework to align with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA².

Please include:

- the stage of development of your national qualifications framework (for example: has your national QF been included in legislation or agreed between all relevant stakeholders; has a working group been established; have national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications been prepared; has a timetable for implementation been agreed?)
- the extent to which your national qualifications framework is in line with the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA
- the role of stakeholders in the development of your national qualifications framework.

National qualifications framework (NQF) is closely linked with the *Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes* (nonformal education and informal learning). The act was adopted by the Parliament of the Czech Republic in May 2006. This act creates a legislative framework for the development of NQF because it solves the conditions and processes for recognition of further education outcomes. In this act the development of NQF is explicitly mentioned.

In April 2005 the Ministry of Education launched the project „*The development of the National qualifications framework supporting links between initial and further education*“ (NQF) in cooperation with the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education. This system project is co-financed by the state budget of the Czech Republic and the European Social Fund. Solving the project tasks, the National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education will cooperate with Trexima, s. r. o., a company selected following a call for tender, and with other experts, social partners, employers and schools till the end of the project which is planned for November 2007.

Special working teams (which consist of representatives from the educational and employers' sphere) for development of qualifications standards have been set up. The work of these teams is supervised by a special group of project representatives from the above mentioned Institute. The representative of the Czech Republic for the preparation of EQF descriptors was also from this project group.

The project for development of NQF is planned for the period of 2005-2007. For the time being the NQF is completed up to the level of ISCED 3. What we see as highly important at present is the consultation with representatives of higher education and preparation of another stage (continuation) of the project so as the NQF could be completed. The role of stakeholders will be one of the most important aspects of the project – as it is for the current stage. The first concrete step has already been taken and there was a study prepared by the centre for Higher Education Studies on the possible architecture of the national qualification framework at the higher education level.

² A Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA: <http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/>

11. What measures are being taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications?

Please include where possible:

- the percentage of first cycle graduates who found employment after graduating in 2005/06
- the percentage of first cycle graduates who continued into the second or third cycles in 2005/06
- the extent to which this is expected to change in 2006/2007.

Some stakeholders in the tertiary education sector, including employers, still tend to regard a long-cycle Master's programme ending with the relevant diploma as the most – if not only – acceptable (traditional) type of higher education degree. Moreover, qualification requirements for many important professions (e.g. teachers, judges, lawyers, doctors) are legally specified to be on the Master's level. In addition, tertiary professional studies (the level below Bachelor), which can now boast more than a ten-year tradition, are still regarded as some kind of substitute for the “real thing”, **despite the eminent employability of the graduates in these programmes**. However, this situation has been changing, slowly but surely. This can be documented by a number of findings showing that collaboration between HEIs and municipalities, industry and employers is being developed successfully. Data to state the percentage of 2005/06 Bachelor's degree graduates who found employment is not available. One of the last studies dealing with employability of HE graduates states that unemployment rate in the Czech Republic is generally between 7%-9%, the unemployability of HE graduates is between 2%-3%. The unemployability of HE graduates under 30 years of age is 5%. There is also comparison among particular HEIs (even faculties) and the unemployment rate 2005 and 2006 is between 2%-10%, The private HEIs have a little bit better results in employability of graduates (approximately 1 percent point), however, they have provided mainly Bachelor studies, thus the data are distorted by the fact that still high number of Bachelor's degree holders continue in the Master's degree programmes. The public HEIs have the calculation made from both – Bachelors and Masters.

Only data for 2005/06 are available (by 31 October 2005). The data for the academic year 2006/07 will be available in January 2007.

Graduates with a Bachelor's degree: **18 200**

Graduates with a Bachelor's degree who continue in the Master's degree programme: **12 500, i.e. 69%** of Bachelor's degree graduates

Quality assurance

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA³

12. To what extent is your national system of QA already in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA?

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of the national quality assurance system in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA
- any action that has been taken to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA
- any deadlines set for taking action to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA
- any action planned to ensure that the national quality assurance system is in line with the standards and guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

In the Czech Republic the implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA is one of the main tasks of the Czech university and non-university HEIs, of the Accreditation Commission (hereinafter referred to as “AC”) and of the Ministry.

Majority of these standards and guidelines are fulfilled. There are three specific areas which are target of our present efforts:

- effective internal evaluation systems in the HEIs and the contact between internal and external evaluation of the HEIs,
- internal evaluation systems of the AC and
- external evaluation systems of the AC.

There are two main „actions“ focused on implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in HE in the Czech Republic developed under the Project (grant from the Ministry):

1) The first one which is focused on evaluation of HEIs - internal evaluation systems at HEIs, their interface between annual reports on activities of the HEIs, long-term plans in the area of educational, scholarly, research, developmental, artistic or other creative activity of HEIs and their innovations and external evaluation of HEIs.

2) The second part of this project is focused on evaluation of the AC – in co-operation with AC of the Slovak Republic internal evaluation system in the Czech AC and in the Slovak AC is designed and developed with the same standards, procedures and content in both AC, as the first step. This internal evaluation system is being developed as the pilot project and after application it will be open to other AC for example to other CEEN (Central and Eastern European Network for QA) agencies who can join the initiative. As the second step both ACs developed proposal of an external evaluation system. It will be verified in both AC after realisation of the first step and it will be open to other AC, too.

³ <http://www.enqa.net/files/BergenReport210205.pdf>

Deadline of the first step (verification of the internal evaluation system in AC of the Czech Republic and in the AC of the Slovak Republic) is next year, i.e. 2007.

Deadline of the second step (verification of the external evaluation system of both AC) is the year 2008.

We suppose that requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for QA will be met in 2008 year at the AC level and in the same year will be met at a satisfactory level at HEIs as well.

The Ministry will support activities of HEIs concerning implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA (*Long Term Plan*, research activities, projects, grants etc.).

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of development of external quality assurance system

13. Describe the quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system
- the scope of your external quality assurance system: does it operate at a national level; does it cover all higher education⁴
- which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:
 - internal assessment
 - external review
 - publication of results
- whether procedures have been established for the peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA.

To assess and ensure the quality of HEIs the mechanisms of internal evaluation, external evaluation and accreditation are used. For external evaluation of activities of HEIs AC usually chooses one institution or several institutions performing similar accredited study programmes and AC establishes special work groups. These work groups usually operate at national level but in some fields which are only at one or a few HEIs (for example veterinary medicine, pharmacy) at international level. The evaluation follows following basic steps:

1. preparation of questionnaire for evaluation by the special work group,
2. filling in the questionnaire by an evaluated institution (internal assessment: self-evaluation report),
3. review of filled in questionnaire for evaluation and eventual other required information by the special work group, including a visit of at least three members of the special work group in the evaluated institution (external review),
4. elaboration of a report of the special work group and sending it to the rector, dean or director of the institution concerned to enable them to elaborate their standpoint,

⁴ higher education: all types of courses of study or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to a country's higher education system.

5. discussion concerning the evaluation report of the special work group at AC meeting in presence of the Rector, dean or director of the institution, and adoption of conclusions and recommendations of AC related to the evaluated institution,

6. publication of conclusions and recommendations of AC concerning the evaluated institution, publication of evaluation report and of eventual standpoint of the rector, dean or director of institution to the evaluation report.

AC requires data on general characteristics of the institution (faculty, institute), academic staff and organisation structures, study programs, research and development activities, technical equipment, information system including libraries, computers and funding. The evaluation concentrates on three basic aspects that become decisive indicators for the final judgement of AC: quality of the teaching staff (professors, PhD.), quality of the study program offered, and standards of academic and research activities (quality of publications in scientific journals, research grants, etc.).

The above described system covers all HEIs in the Czech Republic. In the Czech Republic the tertiary education system comprises HEIs and tertiary professional schools. Tertiary professional schools were considered part of the tertiary education system in the White Paper (2001). According the law they will have similar system of quality assessment and assurance as HEI with a special accreditation commission built according to similar principles that apply to HEI.

Procedures and methodology for the peer review of AC see the previous bullet.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Level of student participation

14. Describe the level of student participation in your national quality assurance system.

Please include:

- whether students are included in the following aspects of quality assurance:
 - the governance of national agencies for QA
 - as full members or observers in external review teams
 - as part of the decision making process for external reviews
 - in the consultation process during external reviews (eg arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students)
 - in internal evaluations.

In the Czech higher education, students are treated as important stakeholders and partners with a quite important role in the quality assessment system. They have a decisive role in internal quality enhancement systems. According the Act student chambers exist in academic senates and in the Council of HEIs with one third of all members of academic senates at least, in public HEI. Students play important role in internal evaluation systems almost at each HEI in the Czech Republic.

HEI has usually established a system of feedback enabling student to express their opinion on teaching staff, quality of lectures and other problems they find in their daily

life in the relevant HEI.

Until now students have not been represented directly in AC or its working groups. However they are understood as very important stakeholders in all evaluations. Special work groups are obliged to discuss with students and student representatives and with graduates where possible, during their visits in evaluated HEI, and students' views are given enough space in final reports on the quality evaluation. Recently AC, in connection with changing membership criteria of ENQA, has initiated a discussion concerning a more intensive direct involvement of students in the evaluation and accreditation processes (membership of student representatives in special working groups or standing working groups is at stake).

Czech and Slovak students will take part as members of the special group for external evaluation of AC of the Czech Republic and of AC of Slovak Republic.

There are also projects dealing with quality enhancement and the role of students in them coordinated directly with students – e.g. the projects of the Academic Centre of Student Activities (ACSA)

1) *Systemization of Processes of Students' Quality Assessment (2005-2007)*– the project targeted to creating methodology of student quality assessment at a HEI. The working group involves students, teachers, leadership of a HEI and experts. They work on publication reflecting most often found mistakes in student quality assessment, works on procedures leading to more efficient system including better use of the results. The publication will be widely disseminated.

2) *National survey "Národní šetření studentů - NA6"* – is a part of a developmental project of ACSA (2006). It is the survey covering the whole country, all HEIs (public, state and selected private) dealing with student quality assessment. The aim is get comparable data in basic areas influencing study conditions at Czech HEIs and to start repeating process of monitoring the development and changes in these areas.

For more information see: <http://www.acsa.vutbr.cz/main/index.php?horiz=3&lng=2&>

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Level of international participation

15. Describe the level of international participation in your national quality assurance system.

Please include:

- whether there is international participation in the following aspects of quality assurance
 - the governance of national agencies for quality assurance
 - the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies
 - teams for external review, either as members or observers
 - membership of ENQA
 - membership of any other international network.

AC has foreign members (usually Czech and Slovak speaking) to guarantee an outside view on the Czech national higher education system. At present three German academics are members of the Czech AC. In some evaluations foreign peers are involved in special working groups (as was mentioned above). Due to language problems co-operation with

foreign peers of Czech or Slovak origin or able to communicate in Czech or Slovak is preferred.

It was mentioned, that in special work groups teams for external evaluation of HEIs include in some cases foreign members.

There have been foreign members from Great Britain, Austria, Slovakia, Canada and France in AC.

AC of the Czech Republic is member of ENQA, CEEN and INQAAHE, and participates actively in dissemination of good practice and exchange of experiences. Staff and members of AC participate actively in workshops organised by ENQA, CEEN, German Rectors Conference, ECA, OECD and UNESCO and apply the newly gained knowledge and experience in its quality evaluation practices and procedures. An intensive co-operation develops especially with the Accreditation Commission of the Slovak Republic.

Recognition of degrees and study periods

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement

16. Describe the stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement in your country.

Please include:

- the percentage of students graduating in 2007 who will receive a Diploma Supplement
- which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:
 - issued in a widely spoken European language
 - free of charge
 - automatically
 - correspond to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format.

According to the Act all graduates in the Czech Republic receive the Diploma Supplement (DS) free of charge and automatically. The DS became a part of the national legislation by the amendment approved by the Parliament in December 2005 and valid since 1 January 2006. According to the survey realised in 2005 already in 2005 all public HEIs provided their graduates with a DS free of charge, more then 70% automatically and the rest upon request.

Although the language in which the DS is published is to be determined by the HEI, (the foreign language may also be another one than English) in practice, all public HEIs issue the DS in both Czech and English (bilingual document).

See also the **NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR RECOGNITION – Czech Republic** attached

(Scorecard)

National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents⁵ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Please include:

- whether your country has ratified the convention (including depositing ratification instrument at either CoE or UNESCO)
- whether all appropriate legislation complies with the legal framework of the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents
- which of the following principles are applied in practice
 - applicants' right to fair assessment
 - recognition if no substantial differences can be proven
 - demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted
 - provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions
- whether you have a fully operational ENIC
- any action being taken to ratify or fully implement the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents.

See the **NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR RECOGNITION – Czech Republic** attached.

Generally: The preconditions for the fulfilment of the goals exist; legislative obstacles have been removed. Despite this, the permeability of the system is still one of its most serious issues, even in the higher education sector. Generally speaking, the basic principles of recognition which “is sought, unless substantial differences can be shown between the study or period of study completed in another institution“ (Lisbon Recognition Convention, 1997) have not been put into common practice. Contrary to this, the recognition has been still mostly acknowledged on the basis of equivalence at Czech HEIs. The difficulty with the recognition of (periods of) study in general is complicated by the fact that recognition at many HEIs/faculties is left up to individual teachers, who quite naturally tend to seek complete similarity with their own lectures. The ENIC centre is fully operational.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Stage of implementation of ECTS

18. Describe the credit and accumulation system operating in your country.

Please include:

⁵ Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001); Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004); Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001)

- the stage of implementation of ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- the percentage of first and second cycle programmes using ECTS in academic year 2006/2007
- how any other credit or accumulation system in use relates to ECTS: is it compatible with ECTS; what is the ratio between national and ECTS credits.

ECTS is not stipulated in the legislation, although the award of credits and their definition are mentioned in the 2001 Amendment of the Act. Regardless, all public HEIs have introduced ECTS systems in Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. ECTS is also used for some doctoral programmes (see above section 7). A quick survey performed among HEIs in 2005 showed that public HEIs do not fully use the ECTS potential and only some private HEIs have introduced it. This led the Ministry to introduce a Development Programme under which the institutions can submit projects for implementation of ECTS system leading to "ECTS label". (Next to other possibilities under EU programmes). 66% of public HEIs submitted such projects, some of them already for 2006, majority for 2007. The Ministry of Education expects improvement in the quality of use of the ECTS credit system.

The international transfer of credits in the form of ECTS is relatively widely accepted. (in the above mentioned survey 50% of HEIs used both functions, 36% only transfer) The national transfer of credits occurs between HEIs, faculties and higher education study programmes of similar type. However, problems arise if there is a transfer of credits between different types of institutions, faculties and study programmes.

The accumulative function of ECTS has been used by many HEIs (in the above mentioned survey 16% only accumulation). The number of university-type HEIs using the accumulative function to enable their students to follow more flexible paths within a respective study programme has been growing. Especially technical universities try to increase the attractiveness of their studies in this way.

See also the **NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR RECOGNITION – Czech Republic** attached

7. Has your country produced a national plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications⁶? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.

The **NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR RECOGNITION – Czech Republic** is attached.

Lifelong Learning

Recognition of prior learning

(Scorecard)

20. Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning, including non-

⁶ ENIC/NARIC has produced guidelines for National Action Plans for Recognition.

formal and informal learning.

Please include:

- the stage of development of any procedures or national guidelines to recognise prior learning
- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for assessing prior learning as a basis for access to HE
- a description of any procedures or national guidelines for allocating credits as a basis of exemption from some programme requirements.

The detailed conditions for lifelong learning are stipulated in internal regulations of HEIs. HEIs issue certificates to all those who graduate from lifelong learning programmes. Those who receive lifelong learning provision are not students under the Act, which means that they cannot be awarded any academic degree and obtain no social benefit. However, the 2001 Amendment to the Act (No. 147/2001 Coll.) enables lifelong learning to be provided within the framework of accredited programmes. If graduates from lifelong learning programmes of this kind are admitted as students under the Act, the HEI may recognise the credits thus obtained for up to 60% of all credits required for graduation in the accredited programme. This provision, as well as the explicit support for wider access, permeability and lifelong learning expressed in the *Long-term Plan of the Ministry for 2006-2010*, is an important step towards an open and permeable tertiary education system. In contrast to the positive developments just mentioned, the possibility of gaining **recognition of courses obtained outside the initial education system seems to be still very far in the future, and much effort will have to be paid to this issue.**

There are even major difficulties concerning the recognition of (periods of) tertiary professional study in a higher education study programme. The Act did not introduce any major barrier preventing recognition of (periods of) study received at a tertiary professional school in a Bachelor's programme provided by an HEI. However, in the opinion of the Accreditation Commission, this kind of recognition was not to be recommended. It would seem that the main reasons for this view were the Commission's rather conservative approach to the new developments in tertiary studies and resistance towards acceptance of studies in accordance with the *Lisbon Recognition Convention*; instead of this, the Commission required high degree of equivalence. Another reason for limited recognition derived from the highly practice-oriented study at tertiary professional schools. Though from one point of view this is a very positive factor, unfortunately neither HEIs nor the Accreditation Commission considered the tertiary professional studies academic enough. The Education Act (dealing with primary, secondary and tertiary professional education) and subsequent Amendment to the Act (§ 49) improved the situation by stipulating that the HEI or faculty can determine different entrance requirements for students who are graduates or students of tertiary professional schools. However, there is only limited experience with the application of this Amendment as yet and it is necessary to count on some time for a change of thinking on the part of all the main stakeholders.

A positive linkage can be seen in the active cooperation that has already started between some tertiary professional schools and HEIs in the provision of joint Bachelor's programmes, which is possible according to § 81 of the Act. In this way, the HEI is able to recognise (parts of) tertiary professional study in accordance with the curricular content of a Bachelor's programme with no obstacles. Given this contradicting experience, the recognition of (periods of) tertiary professional study by HEIs in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Process still presents a policy challenge for the Czech tertiary education sector.

As mentioned in Section 10 the *Act on Verification and Recognition of Further Education Outcomes* (nonformal education and informal learning) was adopted by the Parliament of the Czech Republic in May 2006. This Act creates a legislative framework for the development of NQF because it solves the conditions and processes for recognition of further education outcomes. the experience is very limited and the implementation at the beginning.

21. Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education.

Please include:

- any flexibility in entry requirements
- any flexible delivery methods
- any modular structures of programmes.

See the previous section.

As far as the offer of degree programmes in combined and/or distant form of studies the Act stipulates these forms equal to the full-day form. The HEIs get the same normative regardless the form of studies and the conditions for students are the same regardless the form of studies (e.g. tuition fee). In the academic year 2005/06 there was following number of study branches in combined and/or distant form of studies. The first number states the number of study branches accredited in combined and/or distant form of studies, the second number the total number of accredited study branches.

Bachelor's degree programme	Master's degree programme	Master's degree programme traditional */	doctoral degree programme
505/1263	255/1298	385/1225	841/841

*/ Most of these programmes are about coming naturally to the end in the near future because new applicants have been admitted only into structured study programmes. See also the Section 7.

The innovation of degree programmes supported by the Development Programmes often involves extension of a degree programme provided in full-day form into combined/ distant form of studies.

Modularisation of degree programmes is also provided by the Development Programme devoted to innovation of study programmes under which institutions submit integrated developmental projects.

Joint degrees

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

Establishment and recognition of joint degrees

22. Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.

Please include:

- the stage of implementation of any legislation to establish joint

programmes

- whether joint⁷ degrees are allowed and encouraged in legislation
- whether joint degrees are allowed and encouraged in all three cycles
- an indication of the percentage of HEIs that have established joint programmes and are awarding nationally recognised degrees jointly with HEIs of other countries
- any action being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes.

Legislation on higher education enables implementation of joint degrees. The last amendment to the Act (in force since 1 January 2006) has an explicit section on Joint degrees making their implementation and recognition easier - § 47 a.

“1) Studies in Bachelor’s, Master’s and doctoral programmes may also be carried out in cooperation with foreign HEIs that offer degree programmes with related contents.

2) The conditions for cooperation are specified in an agreement between the higher education institutions involved, pursuant to subsection 47a (1) and pursuant to the provisions of the Act.

3) Graduates of studies in degree programmes offered in cooperation with foreign higher education institutions are awarded academic titles pursuant to subsections 45 (4), 46 (4) and 47 (5) and in addition, according to the circumstances, academic titles of the foreign higher education institutions pursuant to current legislation in the relevant country. The diploma includes the name of the foreign higher education institution with which the cooperation was carried out and may include the information that the foreign academic title is a joint title also awarded simultaneously at the foreign higher education institution. “

The Ministry of Education provides via its Development Programmes the financial support for integrated development projects of HEIs leading to joint degree.

C. Current issues in Higher Education

Higher education and research

1. Describe the relationship between higher education and research in your country - what percentage of research is carried out in HEIs; are any steps being taken to improve the synergy between HE and other research sectors.

The R&D was given back to HEIs already in 1990.

All HEIs can apply for targeted support (grants) from different agencies or programmes. Among programmes administered by the Ministry that on Research Centres is the most important. The programme is cross-cutting program in programme “Integrated Research” of National Research Programme.

The share of young Centre workers, within the age category up to 35 years, must at least 40% at the time of the envisaged commencement of the Centre activities.

Public HEIs also compete successfully for the support of grant projects at other ministries (the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Industry and Trade and the Environment). The grant programmes of these ministries support both basic and applied research in accordance with the thematic programmes of the National Research Programme I.

⁷ a joint degree is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, and where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.

A considerable portion of the targeted support flows to public HEIs from international cooperation in R & D. In the case of the 5th Framework Programme of the EU, public HEI teams were the most common participants in successful projects – 170 teams compared with 82 teams from the Academy of Sciences (Report, 2005). As for the 6th FP, the European Commission has only published data pertaining to the first third of the budget. These show 348 Czech participations out of which 110 are in the category of HEIs (32%). Whereas all Czech participants have asked for EC support amounting to 32.5 million EUR, HEIs represent only 9.3 million EUR of this (29%).

The ratio of the support for R & D to the support for teaching activities can be taken as a measure of research capacity or performance. This ratio differs considerably at individual HEIs and is the highest at the Institute of Chemical Technology in Prague (1.28). At large HEIs with several faculties a more exact picture can be obtained if this ratio is calculated for individual faculties. Taking account of these data, it is possible to distinguish between “research” and “teaching” faculties. It should be stressed that this labelling has been emerging (more or less) spontaneously, without any official designation of some institutions/faculties as being *a priori* research or teaching-oriented. The average ratio of research/teaching financial support for the whole system is 0.32. On average 25% of income is from R & D, 60% from teaching activities and 15% from other sources. This is in accordance with the declared research capacity of public HEIs as expressed by the FTE number of researchers (approximately 4,300) out of the total number of academic staff (approximately 14,600).

2. What percentage of doctoral candidates take up research careers; are any measures being taken to increase the number of doctoral candidates taking up research careers?

Data of student matrix

Number of students in degree programmes (Bachelor’s, Traditional Long Master’s, Master’s, doctoral degree program) who **successfully finished the respective degree programme in the respective year**
(31 October Headcount]

total % Ph.D

Year	Bachelor’s	Traditional Long Master’s	Master’s	doctoral		
2006	25 014	19 506	7 076	2 010	53 606	3,75
2005	18 123	19106	5 219	1 891	44 339	4,26
2004	11 850	20 026	4 660	1 650	38 186	4,32
2003				1 479		

Data of Czech Statistical Office :

Number of R& D Personnel in sectors of performance by qualification –
31 December (Headcount)

Business Enterprise sector	Year 2004	Year 2005	Total change 2004-2005
Holders of university degrees at Ph.D. level	2 392	2 112	-280
Government sector			

Holders of university degrees at Ph.D. level	3 783	3 903	+120
Higher Education sector			
Holders of university degrees at Ph.D. level	8 613	10 950	+2 347
Private Non-Profit sector			
Holders of university degrees at Ph.D. level	48	32	-16
Total, Czech Republic (all sectors)			
Holders of university degrees at Ph.D. level	14 837	16 997	+2 160

Estimation of real percentage of doctoral candidates which takes up in research career is very difficult.

Measures to increase the number of doctoral candidates taking up research careers

- take part in R&D of National Research Programme – cross- cutting Programme Integrated Research and its partial **program “Research Centres 1M”**- students of Master’s and doctoral degree programmes must participate in the Centre activities
- increase of scholarship (individual HEIs – e.g. Czech Technical University)
- grants provided by internal Agencies of HEIs for presentation of results of doctors’ work .

The social dimension

25. Describe any measures being taken in your country to widen access to quality higher education.

Please include:

- any financial or other measures to widen access in higher education amongst socially disadvantaged groups
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to widen access to higher education, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the widening access measures already in place.

In the recent years, equity received more attention in the Czech tertiary education policy. Recent policy documents proposed several measures to tackle the social-background inequalities in tertiary enrolment as well as to improve the situation of older tertiary education students. However, the problem of equity and access is not given substantial attention and according to research, people from lower socioeconomic background have much lower chance to achieve tertiary education than in other developed countries. The problem is mainly in their motivation and aspiration for further studies (as proved by the last PISA survey). Systemic solution, which would harmonize state policy towards the

secondary and tertiary education (probably even primary and lower secondary education), is still needed. Until now graduates from secondary education institutions type “gymnasia” have much better chance to enter higher education and study successfully than graduates from other types of institutions. The selection according to the social background starts in the Czech Republic much earlier than on the entry to higher (tertiary) education.

The differentiated structure of secondary education contributes significantly to the socio-economic selectivity of the Czech education system. All the available data and analyses testify to the existence of a strong correlation between schools choice and social status of students' parents. As a result, the three school types (grammar schools – *gymnasia*, professional secondary schools and schools for apprentices) differ notably in the socio-economic background from one another while schools of the same type tend to share the same social-status characteristics. Distribution of students according their socio-economic background across different types of schools has been descending from the highest levels observable at multi-year grammar schools to slightly lower levels at four-year schools of the same type, then to significantly lower levels at professional secondary schools and finally to the lowest levels at the vocational schools. This relationship between social status and school type contributes to – and is reinforced by – the between-school variance in education achievement and aspirations. Students from higher-status families as well as students at schools displaying higher social-status levels aspire much more frequently at tertiary education than lower-status students and students at lower-status schools, even if their actual performance levels are the same. This relationship was confirmed both by the PISA survey of fifteenth-year olds and by the survey of students in the final year at secondary school.

At higher education level

Support of the integration of students with disabilities has formed an integral part of higher education funding since 1990, and the support programme for Roma tertiary-education students, available since 2000.

Equity issues received attention in the policy documents adopted over the last two years. Most importantly, *the Long-term Plan of the Ministry for 2006-2010* acknowledges the existence of significant social-background inequalities and proposes some measures to address them. Similarly, the *Higher Education Reform Policy (2005)* discussed the situation of students older than 26 and considered some measures to improve their position. In December 2005, the Cabinet approved a new document as a step towards the implementation of the national human resources strategy; this document envisages further policy measures to “simplify access to tertiary professional and higher education for groups threatened by social exclusion” and to reduce the existing inequalities (Program realizace, 2005). This constitutes a marked development from the situation prevailing only five years ago: concern for equity was almost completely absent from the major tertiary education policy documents adopted around 2000. None of them identified equity as an issue of prime importance and all limited their concern for equality to the declaration of a formal principle of non-discrimination (*White Paper*, 2001; *Long-term Plan of the Ministry 2000-2005*; *Development Strategy 2000-2005*).

According to the 2004 survey of higher education students, the average overall costs come to a monthly amount of 3500 CZK in case of public-HEIs students and of 9800 CZK in case of private-HEIs students. In 2004, these sums constituted about 19% and

54% of an average income, respectively. Total annual expenditures of higher education students thus amount to approximately 11 billion CZK, i.e., to an equivalent of almost a half of public expenditures on higher education.

No national system of grants or loans exists that would help students (or their particular groups) to meet these costs. The first step was introduced only in 2006 based on the Amendment to the Act (approved in December 2005) which introduced mandatory social scholarships for students from the lowest family income groups.

Public subsidies for accommodation and meal of students have so far covered at maximum a half of the cost of meal provided by cafeterias at HEIs, which are used by about one fifth of students. Since 2005, students who live outside the district of their HEI are entitled to receive financial support to cover part of their accommodation expenses; before 2005, state subsidised accommodation in the facilities owned by HEIs.

According to a 2004 survey, 29.5% of students at public and 15.5% of students at private HEIs received social support benefits, in the average amount of 910 and 1690 CZK, respectively. In addition to national welfare system, HEIs may provide scholarships to its students; however, no data are available on the institutional scholarship policies. More over, until the end of 2005, any scholarship granted to students was added to the income of their families for the purposes of the means test; only since the beginning of 2006 the scholarship exempt from this rule (2005 Amendment to the Act).

In 2006 a special grant for economically handicapped students taking part in Socrates-Erasmus was launched, students under certain social conditions can get from 50 to 150 EUR per month additionally the awarded grant. (see also section 27)

26. Describe any measures to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background.

Please include:

- any guidance or counselling services and any other measures to improve retention
- any measures in place to monitor the impact of policies to improve retention, including results if possible
- any further measures planned, following evaluation of the retention measures already in place.

The drop out rate is problem, namely in some study branches in the Czech Republic (technology, sciences). 93% of graduates in 2005 were graduates at public HEIs. The following table states the numbers of drop-outs in comparison to the number of graduates according to study branches.

Branches of degree programmes	Drop-outs / Graduates				TOTAL
	Bachelor's degree programmes	Long Master's degree programmes	Master's degree programmes	doctorals degree programmes	
Natural sciences	2 742 / 1 225	305 / 1 173	189 / 404	316/ 437	3 552 / 3 293

Technical sciences	10 363 / 3 040	2 744 / 5 097	428 / 498	890 / 578	14 425/ 9 172
Agricultural and veterinary sciences	1 006 / 716	317/ 792	49/ 66	85/ 115	1 457/ 1 689
Medicine, health sciences, pharmacy	311/ 1 023	1 014/ 1 597	50/ 206	101/ 198	1 476/ 3 022
Social sciences, services	2 930/ 2 678	879/ 1 735	323/ 1 053	315/ 227	4 447/ 5 675
Economy	3 556/ 3 978	738/ 3 034	625/ 2 217	193/ 173	5 112/ 9 670
Law and public administration	116/ 252	613/ 1 196	1/ -	27/ 36	757/ 1 484
Pedagogy, teacher training, psychology and social care	752/ 1 883	2 329/ 3 719	298/ 420	85/ 82	3 464/ 6 099
Arts and culture sciences	298/ 458	59/ 380	32/ 236	23/ 38	412/ 1 111
Total	22 074/ 15 248	8 998/ 18 904	1 995/ 5 081	2 035/ 1 884	35 102/ 41 012

There are some measures taken by individual institutions, designed to face this problem (selection of teachers of first courses, teaching staff qualifications support, softening the criteria etc.) HEIs run also counseling services for students. The structured degree programmes (Bachelor's, Master's) should contribute, especially when HEIs design different study paths as described in section 9 "Access to the next cycle". The results can be visible only after certain number of years.

On the system level, the Ministry motivates HEIs by involving financial bonuses into formula funding for each graduate (since 2005) – see section 2. The effect of this policy is yet to be evaluated. No special measures have been taken to suppress dropout rates specifically in socially disadvantaged student groups.

Mobility

27. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to student mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward student mobility
- any measures to increase outward student mobility.

Ministry considers mobility (incoming as well outgoing) as one of the most important priorities and has declared its importance in its Long Term Plan for 2006-2010. The aim is to open participation in mobility programmes to all students interested in – "All students who will show interest and capacity will get an opportunity to spend at least one semester at a foreign higher education institution (it is expected that this will concern up to one half of all higher education students). The proportion of foreign students in Czech higher education institutions will go up to 10% of the overall number (this includes all students who undertake a part of their studies at least one semester long at Czech higher education institutions). The proportion of degree programmes delivered in foreign languages will increase: in doctoral programmes from approx. 30%

to 60%, and a half of Master's degree programmes will be taught in foreign languages."
Long Term Plan (2006-10)

Many HEIs have supposed in their long term plans that approx. 1/3 of all students in Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes and all students in doctoral study programmes will spend a period abroad.

For this purpose Ministry supports student mobility from the state budget – co-financing international mobility programmes (mainly programme Socrates-Erasmus in a massive way which represents annually 300 mil. CZK (more than 1 mil. EUR) added to EU budget and funding mobility which is not in the framework of international programmes, within the Development Programmes for HEIs. This huge funding enables an increasing number of students take part in mobility, annual increase in total number of students going abroad is about 20 %. De facto all students who can spend a semester/ year abroad can get grants.

The number of outgoing and incoming students is one of the criteria which the Ministry takes in the account when setting a limit for funding of the development projects of particular public HEIs (submitted under Development Programmes). This criterion counts 20% (10% incoming + 10% outgoing) of the limit.

In 2006 a special grant for economically handicapped students taking part in Socrates-Erasmus was launched, students under certain social conditions can get from 50 to 150 EUR per month additionally the awarded grant.

Enhancing of the Bologna Process in the Czech Republic contributes significantly to the progress in mobility. Implementation of proper use of ECTS and issuing of Diploma Supplement help to recognition of parts of studies realized abroad.

1. Are portable loans and grants available in your country? If not, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants and loans.

Generally the possibility of loans for students is very limited. Loans are provided by most of the banks, however, they are not very attractive because students can get a maximum loan of 150 000 CZK (slightly more than 5 000 EUR) and the interest is relatively high (about 12%).

The students studying abroad have the same status as the domestic students and have the same rights and advantages concerning social benefits (e.g. health insurance paid by the state, tax deductibility for their parents etc.). The scholarships are mainly awarded to students of public HEIs, namely when their stay is realised under an agreement of a HEI with foreign institution/s, academic exchange programme, bilateral agreement, etc. The students from low income groups who get the mandatory social scholarship (since 1.1.2006), see section 25, in case they are enrolled at a Czech HEI and realise a part of their studies abroad have this scholarship also during their study abroad.

There is no scheme for support of the whole study abroad (students are not enrolled at a Czech HEI). Except the social benefits described above or except getting a grant from a foundation a student has no possibility to get a grant for the whole period of studies.

About the financial support for student mobility see also section 27.

29. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to staff mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.

Please include:

- any measures to increase inward staff mobility
- any measures to increase outward staff mobility.

Likewise the student mobility staff mobility is considered as an integral part of academic staff career and personal growth and its increase is one of the aims of the *Long Term Plan of Ministry*. Ministry supports staff mobility from the state budget, mainly at public HEIs. They can submit developmental projects (under Development Programmes) supporting teacher outgoing and incoming, improvement of their language ability, preparation and providing joint degree programmes etc. All these aspects contribute to improvement of teacher mobility. HEIs also promote mobility and language competence improvement of their academic staff. To promote staff mobility many HEIs regard staff mobility as an essential part of academic career and salary growth and mobility is for them also one of the criteria for awarding academic degree “associated professor” or “professor”.

As in case of student mobility the staff mobility within Socrates Erasmus programme is also massively co-funded from the state budget – at all HEIs.

To promote staff and student mobility Ministry makes use of Long Term plan of the Ministry, long term plans of HEIs and other strategic documents, special seminars and website informing about possibilities of mobility. In this field it is necessary to mention the important role of NA Socrates and Bologna Promoters Team.

The attractiveness of the EHEA and cooperation with other parts of the world

30. Describe any measures being taken in your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA.

It is very clear that Bologna scheme must be spread and understood also outside Europe. The Ministry has been explaining the European development at any occasions. In recent time there are visitors from Asian countries (China and Korea several time) or countries of former Soviet Union which are not part of Bologna process – e.g. Kazakhstan.

The Czech Republic uses the scheme of Erasmus Mundus programme participating in EM Master Courses as well in EM action for improving attractiveness of EHEA.

Since 2004 the Ministry is looking for a more consistent policy on participation in non European events. The Ministry asked NA Socrates to participate at several education fairs in Asia and promote Czech as part of dynamically developing European higher education. The participation of representatives from some of Czech universities has been coordinated as well.

In 2004 NA participated

- in the 1st European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) in Bangkok. The event provided a platform for representatives of EU member states and HEIs to inform the fair visitors about HE opportunities in their respective countries. A seminars was held on relevant topics like study opportunities in Europe. Prior to the EHEF, a Asia-Link Forum was organized for HEIs from Asia and the EU.
- in India International Education Fair, “Education Worldwide India” in Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata and Bangalore.

In 2005 NA took part at two education fairs as well.

- First one was Europosgrados European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) which took place in Monterrey and in Mexico City. Apart from information booths, two conferences were held by the NA and some of Czech HEIs to give a short presentation about European and Czech education system in general and to promote some education programmes which they offer to foreign students, including Erasmus Mundus scheme.
- Then National Agency participated in „Education Worldwide India“ in different metro cities in India than in 2004: Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata. Information about the Czech Republic and European education system was published in local newspaper as well.

In 2006 NA participated already in seven education fairs, majority outside Europe.

- Europosgrados European Higher Education Fair (EHEF) which took place in Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey. Representatives of the NA took advantage of two conferences. Representatives of some of Czech HEIs had chance to promote their programmes for international students as well.
- India International Education Fair, “Education Worldwide India” in different metro cities in India: Mumbai and New Delhi.
- In relation to the increasing cooperation with Kazakhstan within Boloshak programme NA participated at education fair in Republic of Kazakhstan in Almaty in April. This one was successfully evaluated as well. VII Kazakhstan International Exhibition “Education & Career 2006” was organized by the Atakent-Expo.
- NA Socrates and representatives of some of Czech HEIs have had chance to

promote their programmes for international students in three Chinese cities – Beijing, Harbin and Shanghai in October at “China Education Expo 2006”. The possibility of conferences and seminars during Expo were used to promote EHEA and Czech system as a part of it. The discussion about Bologna was quite interesting.

Examples of good practice:

1) NA has accepted the role of National Coordinating Structures in relation to a series of seven European Higher Education Fairs in Asia (EHEFs) between 2006 and 2008. A consortium of four European agencies led by EduFrance and composed of DAAD, Nuffic and British Council has been awarded a European Union service contract to organise, promote and implement a series of these fairs. These events, financed by the European Commission’s Asia-Link Programme, aim to increase the attractiveness of Europe as a study and research centre for excellence, to strengthen Europe’s economic and cultural presence in Asia and vice-versa, to enhance mutual awareness and to contribute to the further development of EU-Asian cooperation in the field of higher education.

Each event is composed of two components:

- an Asia-Link Symposium and
- a European Higher Education Fair

The Symposia provide a platform for high-level dialogue on EU-Asian cooperation and for developing awareness of EU mechanisms and programmes. A matchmaking activity enable representatives from European higher education institutions to discuss possible cooperation projects with their Asian counterparts.

The Fairs will provide a platform for representatives of national structures and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) from all 25 EU member states to inform students, their parents, study advisors and sponsors about study opportunities in Europe.

The provisional calendar of the EHEFs is as follows:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| - 10 th – 12 th November 2006 | Bangkok, Thailand |
| - 24 th – 26 th November 2006 | New Delhi, India |
| - First semester 2007 | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia |
| - October 2007 | Beijing, China |
| - December 2007 | Hanoi, Vietnam |
| - February 2008 | Manila, The Philippines |
| - October – November 2008 | Jakarta, Indonesia |

National Agency participated in November at the education fairs in Bangkok and in New Delhi as well. National Agency took advantage of two conferences.

2) An example from Erasmus Mundus - **Action 4 – Enhancing Attractiveness**

The NA Socrates participates under coordination of Hungarian Scholarship Board and in cooperation with EduFrance Agency, DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), SAIA, n.o. (Slovak Academic Information Agency) in the project. “Building capacities of East Central-Europe national agencies to promote higher education outside the EU”.

This project focuses on two more established promotion agencies, EduFrance and DAAD, sharing good practice and experience in marketing higher education with ECE countries and on enhancing intercultural understanding.

Through 2 seminars, 3 field-training sessions and a final conference the partners aim to develop the capacities of staff to improve the attractiveness of the 4 ECE countries in

third-countries. Activities will be organised in Budapest, Prague, Paris and in Asia. The final conference will be open to other EU countries wishing to develop their promotion skills.

Future challenges

31. Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for your country.

The Czech Republic was part of the project of OECD – Thematic Review of Tertiary Education. It prepared very open and critical background report in 2005, the experts were here for peer review in spring 2006 and prepared Country Notes – a set of recommendations for the Czech Government. This document was published 29 November and became immediately an impetus for a national discussion. The recommendations are structured mainly along

- the system of tertiary education
- governance, leadership, management at state as well as institutional level
- funding mechanisms

The discussion will be organised, the updating of the Long Term Plan for 2008 will already deal with the recommendations and other consequences for the system and particular institutions can be expected. And of course implementation of Bologna goals is an organic part of this challenge.

Completed National Reports should be sent to the Bologna Secretariat by email no later than **Friday 15 December 2006**.

Please remember to attach a copy of your national action plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications.

Bologna Secretariat
May 2006