



# **NATIONAL REPORT - HELLAS**

**2005- 2007**

## A. Background information on your Higher Education system

### Details

Country	Hellas
Date	8/01/2007
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### Main achievements since Bergen

<p><b>1. Describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms, since Bergen.</b></p>
<p>The most important legislative reforms and developments relating to the Bologna Process since Bergen are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Law 3328/2005 issued on 1/04/2005 (<i>OJ</i> 80, A') for the establishment of a new Agency for Degree Recognition (DOATAP).</li><li>• The Law 3374/2005 issued on 2/8/2005 (<i>OJ</i> 61, A') regulates Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the establishment of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System and the Diploma Supplement.</li><li>• The Law 3369/2005 (<i>OJ</i> 171, A') issued on 6/07/2005 for Life Long Learning.</li><li>• The Law 3404/2005 (<i>OJ</i> 260, A') issued on 17/10/2005 for the improvement of TEIs.</li><li>• The Law 3404/2005 (as above), Article 23 for Joint Postgraduate Study Programmes and Joint PhDs, which allows the use of a language other than Hellenic in study programmes.</li><li>• The Law 3391/2005 (<i>OJ</i> 240, A') issued on 4/10/2005 regulates the establishment of the Hellenic International University and aims at enhancing student mobility.</li><li>• The Law 3432/2006 (<i>OJ</i> 14 A') issued on 3/02/2006, which upgrades the status of the Higher Ecclesiastical Schools supervised by the Ministry of Education, whose degrees become equivalent with those of the Higher Education Institutions.</li><li>• The Law 3413/2005 (<i>OJ</i> 278 A') issued on 9/11/2005 which allows Higher Military Schools (supervised by the Ministry of Defense) to participate in consortia with universities for the establishment of Post-graduate study programmes and research programmes (degrees are awarded by universities).</li><li>• The Law 3450/2006 (<i>OJ</i> 64 A') issued on 30/03/2006, which upgrades the status of the Merchant Maritime Academies (supervised by the Ministry of Mercantile Marine) that are currently able to participate in consortia with universities for the establishment of Post-graduate study programmes and research programmes (degrees are awarded by universities).</li><li>• The Law 3443/2006 (<i>OJ</i> 41, A') issued on 27/02/2006, which enacts Local Youths' Councils and their participation in the local governance.</li><li>• The Law 3475/2006 (<i>OJ</i> 146 A') issued on 13/07/2006, which among others regulates the access of the Secondary Vocational Education students to the Higher Education.</li></ul>

- The Law 3304/2005, (*OJ 16 A'*) issued on 27/01/2005, for the implementation of the principle of equal treatment regardless of racial or national origin, of religious or other beliefs, of disability, age or sex orientation in the field of employment (co-signed by the Minister of Education)
- The Law 3488/2006, (*OJ 191/A'*) issued on 11/9/2006 which concerns the implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women with regards to employment, vocational training, and professional development, as far as labour is concerned (co-signed by the Minister of Education)
- Another step taken towards enhancing quality in HE is the legislative reform concerning the entry requirements for all HEIs. According to Law 3404/2005, Article 13 (*OJ 260 A'*) which was added to Law 2525/1997 (article 2a) from the academic year 2006-2007 the minimum score necessary for entrance to HEIs has to be at least 50% of the highest possible passing grade.

## 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.

Higher Education Institutions are fully self-administered legal entities under public law, and are funded and supervised by the Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs in accordance with Provision 16 of the Constitution.

There are Higher Ecclesiastical Schools, supervised by the Ministry of Education and, there are also other higher education institutions mainly supervised by other Ministries (for example the Merchant Marine Academies that are under the supervision of the Ministry of Mercantile Marine, the Higher Military Education Schools that are under the supervision of the Ministry of Defence, the Higher Police Academies are under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Order). Almost all of them fall under the competence of the Ministry of Education only for particular issues.

The structure of public authorities responsible for higher education is almost the same since Bergen. The changes that have taken place concern the full enactment of the National Council for Education, the reorganisation of the National Agency for the Recognition of Foreign Degrees (DOATAP) and the establishment of the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency.

The main source of funding is the state budget and the European funds. The

Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and universities and TEIs are involved in the process of allocating funds. At first there is a general agreement between the Ministries and the Conference of the Rectors' and the Presidents' of TEIs on the amount of funds, the type of expenses (infrastructure, equipment etc), the standards and guidelines on the basis of the four year planning of HEIs. Then, each individual HEI cooperates with the Ministry of Education in order to define the annual amount based on an algorithm, which takes into consideration the number of students and the academic staff, the number and the location of the departments, etc.

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.

The Hellenic higher education system comprises two sectors (Law 2916/2001): The university sector, which consists of 23 universities (including the Open University) and the technological sector, which consists of 16 Technological Education Institutions (including the School of Pedagogical and Technological Education). What has changed since Bergen is the establishment of the 23rd university which is the Hellenic International University, located in Thessaloniki. Moreover during the period 2004-2006 13 new Departments have been established in various universities and 4 new Departments have been established in 4 TEIs whereas three more Departments will operate in 2007-2008.

Higher education is also provided by Higher Ecclesiastical Schools (Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs), Merchant Marine Academies (Ministry of Mercantile Marine), the Higher Military Education Schools (Ministry of Defense), the Higher Police Academies (Ministry of Public Order). However, all the above institutions cannot offer Post-graduate study programmes but only in cases of cooperation with the universities which award the post-graduate degrees.

There are still no non-state, non-profit HEIs as these can not be legally established according to the Hellenic Constitution (Provision 16) but there have been discussions about amending this provision allowing for the establishment of non-state, non-profit HEIs and the final decision will be taken by the Hellenic Parliament in the near future.

The total number of new students for the academic year 2006-2007 is:

Type of HEI	Universities	TEIs	Other	Total
Number of	35.974	25.696	2722	64392

new students				
Percentage	55,86%	39,90%	4,24	100

Different types of institutions are not covered by the same regulations but there are different regulations concerning their operation.

## 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 implementation of the Bologna Process in Hellas is overseen by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and namely by the Secretariat for Higher Education. Other sectors of the Ministry's involved in some parts of the implementation of the Bologna Process are: the Sector of Higher Technological Education, the Sector of European Union and Community Support Framework Issues, the Directorate of European Union. Other bodies involved are the State Scholarships Foundation and the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency. Bologna issues are also discussed within the National Council for Education where academic stakeholders, political party representatives, students and social partners participate, and within the Rector's Conference and the Presidents' of TEIs Conference.

In September 2006, after a Ministerial Decision, a Working Group for the elaboration of the planning of the National Qualification Framework was established consisting of all relevant stakeholders. Under the supervision of the Directorate of European Union of the Ministry and the cooperation of the State Scholarships Foundation a National Bologna Group of Promoters has been established and various activities are organised with the aim to disseminate information and promote the Bologna targets. The Group of Bologna Promoters consists of members of the academic staff of the universities and TEIs and also members of the administrative staff of HEIs and in particular of the departments of International Relations and the national coordinator for ECTS/DS.

### **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.

University law 1268/1982 and TEIs law 1404/1983 and 2916/2001 provides for one of the strongest participatory roles of the students as compared to other countries, allowing students to have an active participatory role in HE institutions, concerning decision-making, governance, strategic planning and quality assessment as they participate in all governing bodies (Senate, General Assembly, Internal Evaluation Group, etc). For instance for the Rectors' election the participation rate of the students in the electorate body rises up to 80% of the members of the academic staff. Another example is the participation of students in the General Assembly which is the Department's governing body. The percentage of the representatives of under graduate students rises to 50% and of post-graduate students to 15% of the total number of the academic staff. The role of students is vital for the governance of Hellenic HEIs.

All staff trade union/representative bodies participate in the governance of Universities and TEIs in various degrees according to the relevant law depending on the type of Higher Education Institution. Generally speaking the Hellenic HEIs are governed by their staff and students representatives. For example the Rector and the Vice-Rectors, the Deans, the Presidents of the Departments, under-graduate and post-graduate students' and representatives, representatives of the academic, administrative and technical staff participate in the Senate.

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

The Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs has included the social partners within the national dialogue and the consultation process for the reform of the legal framework for Higher Education. Therefore, the Minister sent the Economic and Social Council of Hellas (<http://www.oke.gr/>) the draft law in June 2006 and the Council issued its Opinion in November 2006 (<http://www.oke.gr/index-en.htm>). Representatives of the social partners are also included in other bodies such as the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, the National Committee for the Qualification Framework and the National Council for Education .

In every HEI there is a Liaison office responsible for building up strong relationships between students and various companies and businesses. Moreover, various lectures and seminars are organized by companies and are addressed to undergraduate and postgraduate students, facilitating thus in job finding.

In the field of Higher Technological Education, provisions have been made also for the participation of employers' representatives from all sectors in the bodies of the Schools and Departments of each TEI. In the location of each TEI there is a Regional Technological Education Council which consists of the Prefect, the TEI Board, a representative of the local union of municipalities and communities, representatives of professional, labour, agrarian and trade union organisations, representatives of the students and of the TEI faculty. This Council makes recommendations to the TEI on matters related in particular to the establishment of Departments, determining the needs for particular

specialisations or skills, further education, and the employment of TEI graduates.

## **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.

The Hellenic higher education system has been organised in two-tier levels, undergraduate and post-graduate since 1982, so the implementation of the Bologna degree structure was never the problem. Most of the programmes of the first cycle in the universities are structured in 8 semesters (4 years - 240 ECTS credits) and they are fully compatible with the European Qualification Framework as this was adopted in the Bergen Ministerial Conference. **All** first cycle universities graduates can apply for second cycle programmes.

TEIs run only four-year under-graduate programmes (8 semesters-240 ECTS credits). They can participate in consortia with Hellenic and foreign universities and organise post-graduate programmes but the degrees are awarded by the universities. This will be no longer the case after the evaluation of TEIs by the newly established Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency. After their evaluation TEIs that have all the prerequisites will have the opportunity to run post-graduate programmes. However **all** TEI graduates can apply for any relevant postgraduate study programme within the universities.

The exception of this rule applies to the studies for the so called regulated professions, like Medicine where the first cycle lasts six academic years (12 semesters), and Engineering, Architecture, Agriculture, the Arts etc where the first cycle lasts five academic years (10 semesters-300 ECTS credits). All the above courses are offered by universities. The degrees awarded after the completion of these long term programmes are not considered post-graduate degrees. The percentage of these students for the academic year 2005-2006\* is approximately 12% of the total number of undergraduate students. However, various discussions are taking place about these programmes and the possibility of adjusting them to the two-cycle system. For the time being, the degrees of these faculties or departments give access to post-graduate courses or, under certain prerequisites set by the universities, directly to doctoral programmes.

The second cycle includes postgraduate studies delivered through Master

programmes that last one or two years (2-4 semesters) and lead to MA or Msc degrees.

(\*No data available for the academic year 2006-2007 yet.)

( 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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?

First of all it is important to point out that there is a new draft law under preparation concerning postgraduate and doctoral study programmes and it will be soon presented in front of the Hellenic Parliament.

Doctoral studies at the third Bologna cycle have been fully implemented in the Hellenic HE system. The normal length of full-time doctoral studies is minimum three years and some doctorate programmes are structured whereas others are based only on research. There has been an increase in the number of structured PhD programmes due to the interdisciplinary nature of the subject under research. The structured programmes include taught courses and research. The doctorate programmes may include some other activities like tutorials, workshop presentations, publications, seminar participation, etc.

After the request of the candidate PhD student the General Assembly of the Department decides if the candidate meets the prerequisites and then defines the supervisor and the other two members of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee in cooperation with the candidate submits an annual progress report and after at least a three year period assesses the originality of the candidate's scientific work and requests from the General Assembly to define the date for the viva (oral defence). In the case of Joint Doctoral Programmes there are two supervisors one from each participating university.

All doctorate programmes include a written thesis that is publicly supported in front of an Assessment Committee that consists of seven academics. Some



of these academics may come from another Department of the same university or from another university Hellenic or foreign after the decision of the General Assembly of the university. The approval of the PhD thesis requires the consent of at least 5 from the 7 members of the Assessment Committee. The student is proclaimed Doctor by the General Assembly of the Department.

Doctoral studies are included in Hellenic qualifications framework and they are linked to learning outcomes. Credits points are not obligatory in measuring workload in doctoral studies.

The number of third cycle students following doctoral programmes during the academic year 2005-2006 is 32.627 in a total of 68.597 post-graduate students, that is 47,56%\*. However many of them have exceeded the three year (normal) duration.

(\*No data available for the academic year 2006-2007 yet.)

(Scorecard and Eurydice )

### **Access<sup>1</sup> 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.

All first cycle qualifications from universities and TEIs give access to the second cycle.

All first cycle qualifications from universities and TEIs can give access to the third cycle, after the decision of the General Assembly of the university Department in the case that there is no relevant Master Programme within the

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

university.

All first cycle qualifications give access to both the second and third cycles.

All the second cycle qualifications give access to the third cycle.

There are occasions when bridging courses are necessary in order to move between cycles in the same or other subject area but this mainly depends on the specific prerequisites defined by each university in order to accept students to a postgraduate study programme. This is a rare case but it may happen for degrees from another Department of the same university or from another Higher Education Institution.

In general there are no formidable obstacles between cycles.

(Scorecard and Eurydice )

### **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 EHEA<sup>2</sup>.**

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.

According to a Ministerial Decision a Working Group has been established for the planning of the National Qualification Framework that will be fully compatible with EHEA Framework of Qualification adopted by the Ministers in Bergen. This Group is chaired by the Secretary for Higher Education and consists of the Secretary for the Technological Education Sector and the representatives of the Ministry of Education from the competent administrative departments, the representatives from the HEIs, the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency, the Recognition Agency, the social partners, and a student. After the completion of the relevant report a period of discussions with HEIs will follow.

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

Please include where possible:

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

- 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.

According to the most recent report published by the National Statistical Service of Hellas in September 2006 the percentage of the first cycle graduates which are unemployed is the lowest compared to unemployment in all other levels of education and reaches 6.0% whereas unemployment rates for second or third cycle graduates are 6.3%. ([http://www.statistics.gr/Main\\_eng.asp](http://www.statistics.gr/Main_eng.asp) )

Measures taken to increase the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications are the establishment of Liaison Offices, contacts with various companies and organizations, stage programmes and the modernization of HEIs' study programmes so that these can meet the needs of the labour market.

There are no available data about the percentage of first cycle graduates who continued into the second or third cycles in 2005/06. However, the demand for post-graduate studies is very high, therefore new study programmes are constantly created, nonetheless a large number of students attend post graduate programmes at universities abroad.

## Quality assurance

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

### **National implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA<sup>3</sup>**

#### **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.

A new Quality Assurance System has been established by state law for the entire Higher Education (Law 3374/2005 issued on 2/8/2005, OJ 61, A'). This law follows the European Standards and Guidelines suggested by European Association of

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

Quality Assurance (ENQA) and its partners (EUA, EURASHE, ESIB) which were adopted by the Ministers of Education in Bergen and fully respects the autonomy of the institutions. Hellenic Quality Assurance system includes:

- internal assessment
- external review
- publication of results
- participation of students
- peer review

The Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency has organised seminars for the Rectors and the Presidents of TEIs in which the President of ENQA has been invited to speak and has been contacting HEIs and has been providing information so that Quality Assurance process can begin within 2007.

(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 education<sup>4</sup>
- 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.

At present, an Independent Administrative Agency, the “Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency”, has been established and it is located in Athens. HQAA consists of 15 members and its President is approved by the Parliament and has been appointed by the minister. HQAA has representatives from the academic staff of the Universities and the Technological Institutions, the students, the researchers and the representatives of the Central Union of Chambers.

HQAA plans, coordinates and supports the Higher Education Institutions’ evaluation procedures, collects information and maintains a database with the data from the evaluation reports of all the Hellenic Higher Education Institutions.

In addition, HQAA keeps and revises the Register of independent Hellenic and international experts and it represents Hellas in International Quality Assurance

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

Networks. Moreover, HQAA keeps the competent bodies of the State and the institutions informed about the current situation in Hellas and the international tendencies and developments within the field of quality assurance and improvement in Higher Education.

The Law establishes two evaluation processes:

1. Internal evaluation, which can take the form of institutional evaluation or program evaluation. In the internal evaluation process members of the teaching/research, scientific and administrative staff and the students can participate. The internal evaluation lasts 2 semesters and results in an internal evaluation report.
2. External evaluation, for which HQAA and the Higher Education Institution evaluated co-operate. External evaluation is conducted by the External Evaluation Committee which consists of five members within which a foreign expert can be included. The main tool of the evaluation is the internal evaluation report of the institution, whose data the External Evaluation Committee studies thoroughly. Then follows a site-visit to the academic unit under evaluation and interviews with both members of the staff and students and finally the External Evaluation Committee submit a report to both HQAA and the evaluated institution.
3. After the evaluation processes have been completed HQAA makes the External Evaluation Report public. The External Evaluation Report includes the independent experts' analyses, findings, and recommendations for the measures that need to be taken in order to improve the quality of the task of the institution.

The external evaluation process is repeated every four years at the latest.

(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.

The Law establishes and ensures student participation in the HQAA. Firstly, the Hellenic Quality Assurance Agency consists of 15 members, two of which are student representatives, one from the Universities' students and one from the Technological Education Institutes' students, appointed by resolution of the National Students' Association and the National TEI Students' Association respectively.

In addition, one student representative of the postgraduate students (appointed by the relevant bodies) participates in the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) established in order to coordinate and support the institution evaluation procedures. Moreover, one student representative takes part in the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) responsible for carrying out the self-evaluation procedure at the relevant academic unit. In addition, in cases of separately evaluated institutions, Special Evaluation Groups (SEG) are formed which also require the participation of a student representative.

Moreover, general student participation in the assessment procedure is ensured during internal evaluation. Students are asked to fill in questionnaires on a voluntary basis, anonymously and without prior notice as part of the internal evaluation process monitored by the Internal Evaluation Group.

(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.

The Law defines that it is desirable to have the participation of at least one foreign expert who is a top-rank professor or a distinguished researcher at a corresponding/relevant foreign Higher Educational or Research Institution preferably with experience in issues associated with the evaluation of Higher Education Institutions in the External Evaluation Committee. If a foreign expert participates in the External Evaluation Committee then the evaluation can be carried out in English, French or German.

The HQAA intends to apply for a membership in ENQA

### **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.

Law 3374 issued on 2/8/2005 among other issues regulated the establishment of the Diploma Supplement. Therefore, from the academic year 2006-2007 all students who will graduate successfully from Hellenic Higher Education Institutions will be provided with a Diploma Supplement issued both in Hellenic and English, automatically and free of charge. A Ministerial Decree has ensured that DS issued by HEIs is fully corresponding to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement Format.

(Scorecard)

### **National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention**

#### **17. Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents<sup>5</sup> 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.

Hellas has not signed and ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention. However most of its principles are implemented through the Law 3328/2005 issued on 1/04/2005 (*OJ* 80, A') which established a new Agency for Degree Recognition (DOATAP), a fully operational ENIC /NARIC.

<sup>5</sup> 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)

Principles applied in the regulations concerning equivalence include the fair recognition of learner's qualifications, improvement of the quality of the recognition process, equity in equivalence, information provided to the public about study programs and HEIS.

The principle criteria for granting academic recognition are: the accreditation or/and recognition of the foreign institution, the accreditation of the program/degree obtained, the conditions of access to the program, the length of the program, the number of credits, the academic quality of the program.

(Scorecard and Eurydice)

### **Stage of implementation of ECTS**

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

Please include:

- 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.

The establishment of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System was regulated by Law 3374 issued on 2/8/2005 and all Higher Education Institutions have to implement it compulsorily into all first and second cycle programmes from the academic year 2006-2007. There is no other accumulation system relating to ECTS but there is another credit system structured not according to workload but according to teaching hours that take place. TEIs have fully implemented ECTS since 2004.

#### **19. Has your country produced a national plan to improve the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications<sup>6</sup>? If so, give a brief description of the plan and attach a copy.**

Several steps have been made in Hellas with regards to improving the quality of the process associated with the recognition of foreign qualifications and there have been regulations concerning equivalence (i.e. fair recognition of learner's qualifications, improvement of the quality of the recognition process, equity in equivalence, information provided to the public about study programs and higher educational institutions, the existence of an ENIC-N.A.R.I.C. centre).

More details on the national legislation relevant to recognition, its criteria and procedures, can be found in the attached report "National Action Plans for Recognition".

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



## Lifelong Learning

(Scorecard)

### **Recognition of prior learning**

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

Recognising prior learning at the moment is limited within the framework of the formal educational system, and is focused on the knowledge acquired during a given period of study in recognised Higher Education Institutions. Measures in order to recognise non-formal and informal learning are being currently examined, based on the experience gained by relevant pilot projects, financed within the framework of the LEONARDO DA VINCI Programme. Also one of the basic concepts of this recognition system is to make possible the “translation” of experimental knowledge, acquired in informal learning, into academic credits, according to the Credit Transfer and Accumulation System that has been already established, as mentioned above.

Within this framework, the formal educational system, including higher education, has already been classified according to the 8 levels of the European Qualifications Framework, at least with regard to knowledge (one of the EQFs parameters), and the EQFs translating mechanism will allow for the recognition of each level of knowledge as regards the corresponding levels of skills and competences, thus making possible the recognition of all forms of prior learning.

#### **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.

The Hellenic Open University (EAP), established by law 3027/2002, constitutes an independent and fully-administered University in the form of a legal entity under public law. Based in Patras, it may establish branches throughout the country or abroad, and organises both undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes leading to degrees, or to certifications of training, professional development degrees and PhDs. The Hellenic Open University addresses a great number of candidates, covering a very large spectrum of ages, wishing to follow undergraduate or postgraduate studies. Specifically, the H.O.U. pursues to offer a second opportunity to adults for undergraduate studies. Moreover, it

seeks to provide postgraduate curricula to graduates who wish to extend or upgrade their studies to subjects related to their work position.

Furthermore, according to the provisions of Law 3369/2005, each Higher Education Institution (University or TEI) may establish a Lifelong Learning Institute. The Higher Education Institutes have the legal competence of deciding the exact structure and operational procedures of the Lifelong Learning Institutes. So far, all TEIs and 5 Universities have decided to go ahead with such an initiative and most of them have already produced the relevant business plans in order to render these Institutes operational. The main objective of these Institutes is to design and implement educational programmes addressed to either Higher Education or Secondary Education graduates, of over 25 years of age, aiming at providing knowledge to broaden their educational and professional skills and prospects. The terms of entry for these Institutes will be established by Ministerial Decision, after taking into account the opinion of the Higher Education Institutions, but the overall aim is to have a flexible and effective system of entry.

Optional Programmes of Studies (PSE) in Universities constitute a flexible framework enabling students to combine various programmes of studies.

All the relevant initiatives mentioned above, aiming to make Higher Education more active in the field of Life Long Learning, are largely co-financed by the European Social Fund, through the Operational Programme “Education and Initial Vocational Training”.

## 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 joint<sup>7</sup> 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.

Since 2004 Hellenic legislation has allowed for joint degrees between Hellenic and foreign Higher Education Institutions. Quite recently, the previous legislation has been completed with the institutionalization of joint doctorates. The new Law (L.3404, Art.

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<sup>7</sup> 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.

23, issued on 17/10/2005) allows the issuing of double and multiple degrees for postgraduate study programmes. As a result, we are progressing towards the organization of joint post-graduate and doctorate study programmes and facilitating the participation of Hellenic Higher Education Institutions in the Erasmus Mundus Programme. The new law has facilitated the creation of joint programmes and this is the reason why the number of joint post-graduate programmes has been constantly increasing. At the moment 4 Hellenic Universities take part in the Erasmus Mundus programme, seven other Universities participate in the bilateral programme of French-Hellenic cooperation, while 9 more joint French Hellenic programmes are candidate for approval in 2006-2007, and another two are running. At the same time 22 joint master programmes are running between TEIs and foreign institutions.

## C. Current issues in Higher Education

### Higher education and research

**23. 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.**

Research in Hellas is mainly carried out by Higher Education Institutions and Research Centres and Research Institutes and it falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Development. With the aim of developing a National Strategy for Research and Technology an inter-ministerial committee has planned a new legal framework which after consultation with all the relevant stakeholders was publicised on 16 November 2006 and remains under public consultation until the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2007 (diavouldeet@gsrt.gr)

The draft law contains many provisions which aim at enhancing the synergy between Higher Education and other research sectors. (<http://www.gsrt.gr/>)

**24. 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?**

Post-graduates students can be hired by HEIs on an hourly basis in terms of salary which comes from the budget of the institutions. Moreover, doctoral candidates can take up research through research projects mainly funded by the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training (O.P. "Education"), the General Secretariat for Research and Technology and other enterprises. However, new opportunities for research careers for the doctoral candidates will derive after the approval of the new legal framework for research by the Hellenic Parliament.

### 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.

It is important to point out that there are no fees for the first cycle of studies with the exception of the Open University and the Hellenic International University and this on its own widens access in higher education amongst socially disadvantaged groups. In addition, all students enjoy a number of benefits for the proper duration of their studies **plus two years**, such as free textbooks, discount in means of public transport, health care, and depending on the family income some students may be entitled to a housing grant of 1,000 euro per year or free accommodation and board, scholarships to students who won a first place or excelled in Universities and Technological Education Institutions

Certain postgraduate courses, however, require fee whereas there are no fees required for the doctoral cycle. Funding can be provided by: the Ministry of Education and other Ministries (Foreign Affairs, Economics etc), the State Scholarships Foundation, the General Secretariat for Research and Technology and the Operational Programme for Education and Initial Vocational Training (“O.P. Education” – Community Support Framework). Funding is also provided by private endowments which fund postgraduate students according to their place of origin or grade of Bachelor degree or family income or a combination of the above. Moreover, some banks, companies, industries or private entities provide funding for doctoral candidates in general and in particular for their employees as part of their human resource development. Funding is also provided by Research Institutes and University Research Centres. Moreover, postgraduate students can be granted a loan with pre-emptive interest rate. This means that they only have to pay 50% of the interest amount - the other 50% is covered by the Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs.

**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.

All the financial measures described above improve retention and help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background.

## Mobility

<p><b>27. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to student mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.</b></p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• any measures to increase inward student mobility</li><li>• any measures to increase outward student mobility.</li></ul>
<p>Mobility has been enhanced due to Erasmus Programme and the Bologna Process and especially due to the implementation of the ECTS, the establishment of Joint Study Programmes and the development of partnerships and consortia between Hellenic and Foreign Institutions. In addition, mobility is enhanced through various scholarships.</p>
<p><b>28. Are portable loans and grants available in your country? If not, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants and loans.</b></p>
<p>There are grants and scholarships offered by the Ministry of Education, other Ministries, the State Scholarship Foundation and other foundations for studying abroad.</p>
<p><b>29. Describe any measures being taken to remove obstacles to staff mobility and promote the full use of mobility programmes.</b></p> <p>Please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• any measures to increase inward staff mobility</li><li>• any measures to increase outward staff mobility.</li></ul>
<p>International mobility of staff is increased through the bilateral and multilateral international relations of HEIs and their participation in various European projects and programmes, OECD programmes and regional cooperation. In addition the academic staff is entitled to sabbaticals. Moreover, the Ministry of Education is promoting staff mobility within the framework of intergovernmental agreements. In particular, 124 members of the Academy of Athens and of HEIs took part in scientific visits to other foreign institutions within the framework of bilateral intergovernmental programmes so as to carry out research or exchange good practice. Moreover, 37 foreign scientists visited Hellas and there have been three Proclamations for Educational Exchanges. These proclamations concerned 37 exchange vacancies for 15 countries (2005), 42 vacancies for 15 countries (2006-2007) and 122 vacancies for 40 countries (2007).</p> <p>Last but not least, the Ministry keeps the academic staff up-to-date on international conferences and other academic or scientific activities and encourages their participation.</p>

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

<p><b>30. Describe any measures being taken in your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA.</b></p>

The attractiveness of the EHEA is promoted in Hellas through various initiatives, actions and national measures. The implementation and establishment of the recent developments and legislative reforms relating to the Bologna Process and the establishment of the Hellenic International University have marked important progress towards the enhancement of EHEA attractiveness.

Hellenic HEIs are involved in various European projects and programmes which link Europe with other continents such as Asia and Latin America and promote EHEA. Moreover, Hellas actively takes part in international organisations (OECD, CoE, UNESCO/CEPES) in regional cooperation and their educational projects and networks. Hellas is also the Country Coordinator of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) Working Group on Education for 2005-2007.

In addition, Hellas participates in the External Dimension Group and has successfully organized the Athens Bologna Seminar “*Putting European Higher Education Area on the map: developing strategies for attractiveness*” in June 2006, and was given the opportunity to make another step forward in defining the external dimension of the Bologna Process and drafting a strategy on the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area. The participants came mainly from the stakeholders of Higher Education of the countries of the Bologna Process, but there were also representatives of OECD non-European and Mediterranean countries, and representatives of the consultative members of the BFUG and the European Commission. There was also satisfactory student representation from ESIB and AEGEE. Hellas, through its Minister proposed to host an informative internet portal on the European Higher Education Area promoting its attractiveness.

## Future challenges

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

One of the main challenges is the attempt to reorganize and modernize the higher education system in order to meet contemporary challenges, the Lisbon goals and satisfy the need for quality, openness and attractiveness. In addition we could not omit the challenges brought about by:

- The complete revision of the Framework Law concerning Higher Education since 1982 providing HEIs with more autonomy and flexibility
- The revision of the Hellenic Constitution and the article concerning Higher Education (Article 16) which will lead to the regulation and the establishment of non-state, non-profit HEIs.
- The revision of the research policy concerning HEIs.
- The internationalisation of the Hellenic Higher Education System.
- The creation of new postgraduate study programmes in the field of new technologies, and the establishment of more interdisciplinary-cross scientific postgraduate courses and the enhancement of research.