



***Bologna Secretariat Completed National Reports and National Strategies for the Social Dimension should be sent to the Bologna Secretariat by email ([secr@bologna2009benelux.org](mailto:secr@bologna2009benelux.org)) no later than***

***1 November 2008.***

***April 2008***

## **PART I**

### **BOLOGNA PROCESS TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2007-2009**

#### **Notes:**

BFUG members are strongly 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. Where appropriate, please include precise web references to legislation or other documentation. Please add comments as appropriate under each question to describe the current situation. Please try to keep text brief, while aiming to answer all questions comprehensively.

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 April 2009.

#### **Details**

Country	Liechtenstein
Date	30.10.2008
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Contributors to the report	

## **1. Main developments since London 2007**

Please describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms and changes in institutional structures, since the London meeting in 2007.

At the national level, Liechtenstein's government carried out an initiative in 2007 and 2008 with the objective to strengthen Liechtenstein as a location for science and research. Against this background, a project group named "Science Location Liechtenstein" was initiated, which developed a reform concept for the Liechtenstein higher education system - with a special focus on research.

The development of an NQF-HE.fl was initiated at the end of 2007 to follow Liechtenstein's commitment to complete a National Qualification Framework for Higher Education by 2010.

The consultation procedure for a draft revision of the Higher Education Act of 25 November 2004 was opened in summer 2008. The revised Act is supposed to be passed in early 2009. In this context legal provision favouring the recognition of joint degrees, double or multiple degrees will likely be proved.

## 2. Partnership

Please describe the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country.

The national education authority, in particular its department of higher education, is in charge of implementing the Bologna Process. The chairman is a member of the Bologna Group and therefore well informed of all current developments.

He also plays a crucial role in the preparation of the laws governing higher education institutions and is a member of the supervisory boards and other decision making bodies of all higher education institutions of Liechtenstein. The close collaboration and exchange between the national education authority and the management of higher education institutions guarantees that the key aspects of the Bologna Process are implemented in the strategic orientation of the individual higher education institutions.

The two national Bologna experts (from the academic staff of the Hochschule Liechtenstein) are in close collaboration with the Liechtenstein member of the Bologna follow-up group and are jointly establishing concepts to strengthen the Bologna Process within Liechtenstein's higher education area. They offer information and consultation services to other institutions and stakeholders of the Bologna Process in Liechtenstein.

To support the implementation of the Bologna Process and the national structures, both the education authority and individual higher education institutions also rely on the expertise and experience of experts from other European countries, particularly the Germanspeaking parts.

a) Does your country have a national working group for Bologna follow-up <sup>1</sup>

Yes  No

b) Does your national Bologna follow-up group include representatives of

Ministry Yes  No

Rectors' conference Yes  No

Academic staff Yes  No

Students Yes  No

Staff trade unions Yes  No

National Quality Assurance Agency Yes  No

Employers Yes  No

Other (please specify) Office of Education, Head of Higher Education Department

c) Does your country have a Bologna promoters' group<sup>2</sup>

Yes  No

d) Does your national Bologna promoters' group include representatives of

Ministry Yes  No

Rectors' conference Yes  No

Academic staff Yes  No

Students Yes  No

<sup>1</sup> A group that develops policy proposals for implementing the Bologna Process

<sup>2</sup> A group that supports/advises HEIs on implementation of the Bologna Process

Staff trade unions	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
National Quality Assurance Agency	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Employers	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) <u>Administrative staff</u>		

*Please add any additional comments if necessary:*

Since the Liechtenstein higher education area is very small and ways of information and communication are short, two Bologna experts were nominated, who have been working in international affairs at the Hochschule Liechtenstein for years. The student council was invited several times in the past to suggest a representative for Liechtenstein's Bologna expert team.

## DEGREE SYSTEM

### 3. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle

a) Please describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycles.

The bachelor / master system is fully implemented. 100 % of students are part of the two-tier system. According to the Higher Education Act, academic courses of study are only available within the scope of the Bologna structure.

b) Please give the percentage of the total number of all<sup>3</sup> students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09.

Total number of all students below doctoral level	Number enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09 <sup>4</sup>	% of all students enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09
730	730	100 %

c) Please add comments which accurately describe the current situation regarding implementation of the two cycle system in your country:

The implementation of the bachelor / master system at Liechtenstein's higher education institutions started in the winter semester 1999/2000 and was completed in 2003.

### 4. Stage of implementation of the third cycle

Please describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of doctoral candidates following structured doctoral programmes including both taught courses and independent research
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- other elements<sup>5</sup> apart from independent research that are included in doctoral study programmes
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies
- information on whether doctoral studies are included in your country's qualifications framework and linked to learning outcomes
- information on whether interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills are integrated in doctoral studies
- information on whether credit points are used in measuring workload in doctoral studies.
- Information on the status of the doctoral students (students, early stage researchers, both)

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<sup>3</sup> "All" = all students who could be involved in 2-cycle system i.e. NOT those in doctoral programmes and NOT those in short HE programmes. *NB Students of ALL study fields are taken into account*

<sup>4</sup> If countries have more recent data available after November 1, they can provide an update but no later than January 15, 2009

<sup>5</sup> E.g. taught courses in the chosen discipline, other taught courses, teaching activities (if these are required as part of doctoral studies), etc.

Doctoral students at the two private higher education institutions pursue structured doctoral programmes. Doctoral courses of study have a minimum duration of two years (with the requirement of 120 ECTS) and will be integrated into the national qualification framework.

In addition to writing the thesis under the mentorship of a lecturer of the faculty with at least a post-doctoral research qualification, the study contents include various courses in the form of block seminars (lectures, structured discussions, regular seminars for doctoral students). The doctoral programs expressly take into consideration the idea of interdisciplinarity and the development of transferable skills (within the scope of courses and research assignments).

The doctoral courses of study are subject to the same supervisory and assessment procedures as other courses of study. They include external evaluations such as peer reviews and accreditation as well as the proof of being capable to conduct independent scientific research, the evaluation of the thesis by at least two expert opinions (one of them external) and the publication of the thesis. An additional quality assurance element consists of a public colloquium lasting at least 60 minutes.

Starting with the academic year 2009/10, the Hochschule Liechtenstein will offer doctoral programmes. The doctoral courses are oriented at the Bologna model's requirements; they pursue an interdisciplinary approach, are an integral part of the doctoral study programme and have a workload of 180 ECTS. The doctoral programmes belong to the homogenous study concept Bachelor-Master-PhD and are incorporated in Liechtenstein's national qualification framework. Describing learning outcomes is a crucial element of the study concept. Students at the Hochschule Liechtenstein have a dual status of both students as well as junior researchers; doctoral candidates are regular employees of the Hochschule Liechtenstein and are subject to social insurance contributions.

With the acquisition of the right to grant doctoral degrees at the Hochschule Liechtenstein, Liechtenstein's government decided in principle that the measures to implement the recommendations of the project group "Science Location Liechtenstein" (cf. chapter 5a) must include the establishment of an institutional structure for doctoral study courses in the form of graduate schools.

This decision has to be taken into account in the planned revision of the Higher Education Act.

## **5. Relationship between higher education and research**

a) Please describe the main trends in the role of higher education institutions in research in your country.

At the national level, Liechtenstein's government carried out an initiative in 2007 and 2008 with the objective to strengthen Liechtenstein as a location for science and research. Against this background, a project group named "Science Location Liechtenstein" was initiated, which developed a reform concept for the Liechtenstein higher education system - with a special focus on research. This concept was presented to the government in May 2008. At the national level, the required changes are currently introduced and results are implemented. In addition to concentrating research efforts at the higher education institutions on

only a few research focuses, it is planned to establish graduate schools at the individual higher education institutions which will offer doctoral programs.

b) Please outline any measures to improve co-operation between higher education institutions and other private and public institutions that undertake research. Please include:

- percentage of GDP spent on research
  - from public funds
  - from private funds
- total annual national research expenditure (expressed in national currency)
  - from public funds
  - from private funds
- percentage of research carried out in higher education institutions (in terms of funding)
- details of the funding mechanisms for doctoral students in your country

So far, data regarding public and private spending on research and development have not been gathered on a regular basis. A 2006 report projected that investments in research and development in 2005 are CHF 294.3 million or 7.1 % of the GDP. 99 % of the investment originated from private enterprises. The report for Liechtenstein was based on a number of official and non-official data sources.

Concerning the research carried out in higher education institutions, we can say that in the case of the Hochschule Liechtenstein, in 2008/09 about 67% of the overall Research and Development (R&D) budget is received from private fundings.

As for the financial mechanism for doctoral programs starting 2009/10 at the Hochschule Liechtenstein all expenses are covered by governmental support as well from the basic R&D budget of the university. It is expected that about 90% of all doctoral students will receive study funding or a salary from the basic R&D budget of the university or from funding outside (EU RP7, national research funds, sponsors etc.)

In general, we have observed a growing awareness for the significance of research and development for the economy as a whole. This is also reflected in the project "Science Location Liechtenstein", as mentioned in chapter 4 and 5a. In the framework of this project it is intended to raise the research budget. Higher education institutions will receive these funds in the form of higher basic funding for research and/or program funding.

c) Is there any tracking system to follow the further career of doctoral graduates?

Yes

No

If Yes, please specify:

Right now, there is no career support system for former doctoral candidates after their successful dissertation. Some higher education institutions are currently developing systems to open up new career opportunities for post-docs, assistant professors and university lecturers.

## 6. Access<sup>6</sup> and admission to the next cycle

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

### 6.1 Access and admission between the first and second cycles

Please indicate:

a) the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the second cycle

100%; only approx. 30 % of the students actually enrol for a master's degree (exception: architecture)

b) any first cycle qualifications that do not give access to the second cycle (please specify)

c) any special requirements for access to a second cycle programme in the same field of studies: *please tick whether graduates must:*

sit entrance exam	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
complete additional courses	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
have work experience	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If the answer to the last point is yes, please specify what type of work experience is required:

Since the master study programmes at the individual higher education institutions in Liechtenstein are quite specific, graduates of the bachelor programmes whose qualifications do not suffice in some areas are obliged to attend additional advanced training courses. References for sufficient practical experience are especially important for the master study programme in architecture offered at the Hochschule Liechtenstein.

d) any further special requirements for access to a second cycle programme in the same field of studies

e) to which students the above special requirements apply (*please tick*):

all students	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
holders of particular first cycle qualifications	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
students of the same field coming from other HEIs	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

f) which of the requirements apply to students coming from other fields of studies (*please tick*):

entrance exam	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases <input type="checkbox"/>
additional courses	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
work experience	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In some cases <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<sup>6</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."



## 6.2 Access and admission between the second and third cycles

Please indicate:

- a) the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle

100 %, however, only a few actually enrol in the third cycle

- b) any second cycle qualifications that do not give access to the third cycle (please specify)

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- c) any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles

Generally no obstacles

## 7. Employability of graduates/ cooperation with employers

- a) What measures are being taken to enhance the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications? Please include the most recent statistical data on the employment status of graduates of all cycles.

If your higher education institutions also provide professional bachelor programmes, please provide employability data for both types of bachelors separately

The curricula of the bachelor courses of study offered at Liechtenstein's higher education institutions are focused heavily on practical applications, ensuring a very close relationship between higher education institutions and companies. This relationship is evidenced in mandatory internships required for graduating, the importance attached to the applicability of conveyed knowledge, the commitment of lecturers and experts from the practice and the focus of seminar and bachelor theses on practical topics. In addition, Liechtenstein's higher education institutions offer a range of part-time courses of study, allowing many students to be exposed to the professional world while studying. Moreover, Liechtenstein's higher education institutions support their young graduates to a limited degree in their search for internships both locally and abroad to facilitate the transition to regular employment. Based on feedback and experience, the ratio of bachelor graduates finding work immediately after graduating is estimated to be more than 80 %.

- b) To what extent there is a dialogue in your country between higher education institutions and employers on:

- curriculum design, work placements and international experience  
Significant     Some     A little     None
- accreditation/quality assurance  
Significant     Some     A little     None
- university governance  
Significant     Some     A little     None

c) Are first cycle graduates able to pursue careers in the public service on an equal footing with other graduates?

Yes  No  In some cases

d) Have you aligned recruitment procedures and career structures in the public service to take account of the Bologna changes?

Yes  No  In some cases

If no, or in some cases only, please explain the current situation:

We do not observe that bachelor students face disadvantages in the labour market compared to candidates with diploma degrees. However, it is evident that employment ads only rarely define their specific qualification requirements as a bachelor's degree, but they usually demand more generally a higher education degree.

In business and economy, a bachelor's degree is often a sufficient qualification for the labour market. However, this is different for e.g. architecture. One of the reasons for this is that the professional approval of architects is strictly regulated by EU directives, which require a master's degree in architecture.

In general, there are only few regulations for being employed in Liechtenstein's civil service (An exception are, however, lawyers who usually have a master's degree).

## 8. Implementation of national qualifications framework

Please answer the questions below. Please add comments which accurately describe the current situation in your country.

a) Has the national qualifications framework been prepared<sup>7</sup>?

Yes  No

The development of an NQF-HE.fl was initiated at the end of 2007 to follow Liechtenstein's commitment to complete a National Qualification Framework for Higher Education by 2010.

This first phase of the NQF-HE project comprised the following objectives:

- Understand the steps involved in developing an NQF-HE
- Survey NQF-related resources and existing examples of NQFs
- Identify best practice models
- Compose a national NQF-HE project team
- Define the Higher Education national context and its specifications
- Identify points of critical consideration within the national context
- Set milestones towards the completion of the NQF-HE

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<sup>7</sup> A national framework of qualifications compatible with the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA

### **Achievement of objectives**

The following activities were carried out to achieve the above objectives:

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Activities</b>
- Understand the steps involved in developing an NQF-HE	Collect information from Bologna-specific resources concerning recommendations for developing an NQF-HE
- Survey NQF-related resources and existing examples of NQFs	Research, analyse, and summarise Bologna-specific information regarding the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- steps required for the development of an NQF-HE</li> <li>- critical considerations involved in working out an NQF-HE</li> <li>- recommendations for distinct elements within NQFs</li> </ul>
- Identify best practice models	Liechtenstein follows the recommendations of the BWG and regards the Scottish and Irish NQF-HE as best practice models. Due to Liechtenstein's specific higher education context, the national frameworks of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland are considered as additional frameworks of reference.

- Define the national HE context and its specifications	As Liechtenstein's Higher Education institutions have already implemented major Bologna objectives, state and range of implementation were analysed and implications for the NQF-HE identified.
- Identify points of critical consideration within the national context	This was achieved by analysing publications of other national working groups and transferring critical considerations to the national context. In a further step, these issues were discussed with the project team and actions were deduced for the specific national context.
- Set milestones towards completion	The NQF-HE.fl team agreed on a time line for working out the national qualifications framework and defined major milestones towards project completion.

Phase 1 of the national NQF-HE project was completed in June 2008. It is planned to start phase 2 the NQF-HE.fl project in autumn 2008 and to complete the project in summer 2009.

b) Does the framework or proposed framework include generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences?

Yes  No

**Comment**

c) Does it include ECTS credit ranges for the first and second cycle?

Yes  No

**Comment**

d) Has the NQF been nationally discussed with all stakeholders?

Yes  No

**Comment** Until now and during the ongoing process

**Comment** The consultation procedure with the stakeholders is scheduled to start in November 2008. The stakeholders were given written notice on the development of a national qualification framework in September.

**If the answer to d) is No, please answer question e):**

e) has a timetable been agreed for consultations with all stakeholders?

Yes  No

**Comment** Liechtenstein's government took notice of the development status of the Liechtenstein National Qualification Framework in June 2008. The framework for the next measures was formulated and a timetable was adopted, which plans the completion of the qualification framework for presentation and approval by the government in summer 2009.

**If the answer to d) is Yes, please answer the following questions:**

f) Are all formal arrangements/decisions for implementing the framework in place and have the necessary formal decisions for establishing the framework been taken?

Yes  No

**Comment**

g) How far has the implementation of the national qualifications framework progressed (**please tick one**)

- The framework is fully implemented. All qualifications have been added to the NQF through a QA procedure (e.g. accreditation)
- There is significant progress on implementing the framework
- The work of describing all qualifications in terms of learning outcomes and competencies has been completed
- There is a timetable for implementation and the work has started
- Work on implementing the framework has not yet started but a timetable for implementation has been agreed
- Work on implementing the framework has not yet started and there is no timetable for implementation

**Comment**

h) What is the stage of progress on the self-certification of compatibility with the EHEA framework ?

Completed

Started, but not yet completed

Not yet started

**Comment**

i) Has the self-certification report been published?

Yes

No

**Comment**

*Please add any additional comments if necessary:*

**Comment**

## NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EHEA (ESG)<sup>8</sup>

### 9. Reviewing the QA system against the ESG<sup>9</sup> and national support for implementation

a) Has your national QA system been reviewed against the ESG?

Yes  No   Not yet, but such a review is planned  
(Please specify time) \_\_\_\_\_

b) If a review has been undertaken or is planned, please give further details of the review process.

As stipulated in article 38 of the Higher Education Act, the quality of higher education institutions must be evaluated at least every six years. The costs have to be covered by the higher education institutions. The following peer reviews were carried out over the last few years or are planned:

- Hochschule Liechtenstein: the last peer review was carried out in 2003. The study course of architecture was accredited in 2007; economic study courses were FIBAA (German accreditation agency) certified in 2008. An accreditation by the OAQ (Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of the Swiss Universities) for the doctoral programmes is planned for 2008.

- Private University in the Principality of Liechtenstein: The last peer review was carried out in 2003; the next peer review will take place in 2009.

- International Academy of Philosophy: the last peer review was carried out in 2006; the next peer review will presumably be held in 2012.

All these peer reviews have been carried out on the basis of the ESG.

c) If a review process has been undertaken, did it result in any of the following:

Stakeholder consultation on changes required to the national QA system?

Yes  No

The introduction of specific financial or other incentives aimed at improving the internal quality assurance processes in institutions?

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please give details of these incentives:

- Other measures

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please outline these measures

Internal quality assurance and accountability are mandatory by law. The measures for internal quality assurance are oriented at ESG.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.enqa.net/files/BergenReport210205.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> ESG - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

d) If incentives and/or other measures have been introduced with the aim of improving the internal quality assurance processes in institutions, has any evidence of the impact of these changes been gathered?

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please give details of how evidence of the impact of the changes was gathered, and of the main outcomes that it demonstrates

The measures influence human resources management, the choice, the curricula, and the subject matter of the study courses.

### 9.1. Internal quality assurance in higher education institutions

Describe the internal QA systems in place in your HEIs.

As stipulated in article 39 of the Higher Education Act, higher education institutions are obliged to report on an annual basis. These reports shall contain particular information on the following:

- number of students per course of study and semester
- activities in teaching and research, the transfer of knowledge and technology as well as services in terms of public relations
- cooperation with other higher education institutions at home and abroad
- quality management measures which have to follow an ESG approach

The report has to be made available to the public.

Please comment in particular on the following aspects, giving references to relevant websites:

a) How many HEIs have published a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality?

All HEIs  Most HEIs  Some HEIs  No HEIs

b) How many HEIs have arrangements in place for the internal approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards?

All HEIs  Most HEIs  Some HEIs  No HEIs

Please describe what kind of arrangements are in place

Accreditation of the study programmes by accreditation agencies, internal evaluations with the participation of students, lecturers, etc.  
Such arrangements are stipulated by the Higher Education Act.

c) How many HEIs have described their programmes in terms of learning outcomes?

All HEIs  Most HEIs  Some HEIs  No HEIs

d) Are student assessments at HEIs designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes (based on published criteria) applied in a consistent way?

All HEIs  Most HEIs  Some HEIs  No HEIs

Please describe how the above is achieved.

e) How many HEIs publish up to date, impartial and objective information about the programmes and awards offered?

All HEIs

Most HEIs

Some HEIs

No HEIs

**Additional information if necessary**

### 10. Stage of development of external quality assurance system

Describe the external quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

a) the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system

The law on higher education stipulates an external evaluation in intervals of at least every six years. In the last three years peer reviews were carried out at all three institutions of higher education. All peers were Swiss university professors with extensive international experience in this area. Peer reviews include the internal and external evaluation and the summarised publication of the results.

Due to its small size, Liechtenstein won't have quality assurance agencies of its own and therefore relies on international collaboration in the future, too. The country does not have the necessary resources to carry out external evaluations, peer reviews or accreditation processes at the institutions of higher education on its own. Collaboration particularly with Switzerland and Austria, but also with Germany is therefore essential.

When selecting the quality assurance agencies, Liechtenstein will see to it that they comply with the established European standards. In this respect, EQAR will be of valuable help in the future.

b) does your external quality assurance system operate at a national level;

Yes  No

If **No**, please specify:

c) does your external quality assurance system cover all higher education<sup>10</sup>

Yes  No

If **No**, please specify which types of institutions or programmes are not covered by your external quality assurance system:

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<sup>10</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.



d) which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:

- |                          |   |                             |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| - self-assessment report | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - external review        | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - publication of results | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - follow-up procedures   | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

e) has a peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA already taken place

Yes  No

If **No** is there a date set for the review?  Yes (please specify date) No

explanation see question 10a: no national agencies

### 11. Level of student participation

From the following, please indicate all aspects of quality assurance in which students are involved:

- a) in governance of national agencies for QA.  
Yes  No  In some cases
- b) as full members in external review teams  
Yes  No  In some cases
- c) as observers in external review teams  
Yes  No  In some cases
- d) as part of the decision making process for external reviews  
Yes  No  In some cases
- e) in the consultation process during external reviews (eg arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students)  
Yes  No  In some cases
- f) in internal quality assurance (e.g. periodic review of programmes)  
Yes  No  In some cases
- g) in preparation of self-assessment reports.  
Yes  No  In some cases
- h) in follow-up procedures:  
Yes  No  In some cases

*Please add any additional comments, especially if students are **not** involved in any of the aspects:*

### 12. Level of international participation

In which of the following is there international participation in quality assurance

- a) the governance of national agencies for quality assurance  
Yes  No  In some cases
- b) the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies  
Yes  No  In some cases

c) teams for external review of institutions or programmes, either as members or observers

Yes  No  In some cases

d) membership of ENQA

Yes  No  In some cases

e) membership of any other international network

Yes  No  If **Yes**, please specify:

ENIC/NARIC, BFUG, CDESR (Council of Europe)

*Please add any additional comments, especially if there is no international involvement in any of the aspects:*

There are no national agencies.

## RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS

### 13. Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement

Describe the stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement in your country. Please include the percentage of all students graduating in 2009 who will receive a Diploma Supplement (if less than 100%, please explain)

100%

a) Is the Diploma Supplement issued to students graduating from:

- 1st cycle programmes Yes  No
- 2nd cycle programmes Yes  No
- 3rd cycle programmes Yes  No
- remaining "old type" programmes Yes  No  Not applicable
- short higher education programmes Yes  No  Not applicable

b) which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:

- issued in a widely spoken European language Yes  No 
  - please specify the language German/English
- issued free of charge  for a fee
- issued automatically  on request
- corresponds to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format
- a national Diploma Supplement is used that is different from the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format

### 13.1. Use of Diploma Supplement for recognition of qualifications

Please describe the way in which the Diploma Supplement is used for the recognition of foreign qualifications (or studies). Please comment in particular on the following aspects, giving references to any relevant websites and documents:

a) The Diploma Supplement is used as the reference document when admitting holders of foreign qualifications to the second and third cycles.

Yes  No

**Comment**

b) Holders of foreign qualifications who present a Diploma Supplement in a widely spoken language do not have to provide official translations of their qualifications.

Yes  No

**Comment** Holders of a Diploma Supplement written in another language than German or English have to provide official translations of their qualifications

c) Holders of foreign qualifications who present a Diploma Supplement in a widely spoken language do not need to prove through other documents the validity of the qualifications in the awarding country (for further studies or employment in the non-regulated part of the labour market).

Yes  No

**Comment**

d) Specific action has been taken at a National and Institutional level to enhance the use of the Diploma Supplement as a communication tool towards the labour market

Yes  No

**Comment**

#### 14. National implementation of the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention

Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents<sup>11</sup> of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

a) Does appropriate legislation comply with the Lisbon Convention?

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

Liechtenstein ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention on April 1st, 2000. The existing laws and regulations proved to be flexible enough to deal with the Lisbon Recognition requirements and its subsidiary texts. The universities have adapted their admission regulations in order to guarantee fair assessment. The Bologna Directives of the Higher Education institutions are in conformity with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

b) Does appropriate legislation comply with the later Supplementary Documents:

i) Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

All competent authorities have implemented the Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications and Periods of Study. The time required to process application for recognition is normally within one

<sup>11</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)

month depending on the responsible body, recognition is assured if no substantial differences can be proven, where recognition is not granted substantial differences are demonstrated, information about Liechtenstein's HE programmes and institutions are provided. Liechtenstein has a fully operational ENIC/NARIC agency.

ii) Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

iii) Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

c) which of the following principles are applied in practice

i) applicants' right to fair assessment

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level

At national level: legal regulations

At institutional level: study and examination regulations

ii) recognition if no substantial differences can be proven

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level

At national level: legal regulations

At institutional level: study and examination regulations

iii) demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level

iv) provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please describe how it is done in practice

General information on the national education system and on recognition procedure can be found on the websites [www.liechtenstein.li](http://www.liechtenstein.li) or [www.llv.li](http://www.llv.li). The relevant pages are linked to the ENIC-NARIC website. Each HEI is responsible for the provision of information on recognition criteria and procedures. The recognition authority and the higher education institutions provide information on recognition on their websites.

Information on each of the three higher education institutions, on regulations for admissions and the recognition procedures can be found on the following websites: [www.hochschule.li](http://www.hochschule.li), [www.ufl.li](http://www.ufl.li) and [www.iap.li](http://www.iap.li).

v) do you have a fully operational ENIC

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please describe the role of your ENIC in recognition and information provision a) nationally and b) internationally

Liechtenstein has an operational NARIC which is part of the Office of Education. It serves as the main information point on the recognition of higher education and higher education access qualifications at national level. It counsels the higher education institutions on questions concerning academic recognition.

The Liechtenstein NARIC collaborates with the competent recognition authorities on international level and provides information on education systems, on academic qualifications awarded abroad and their comparability to the qualifications in the home country, on officially recognized institutions and on admission requirements. It is part of the ENIC-NARIC Network and is responsible for the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Diploma Supplement.

d) As additional information, please describe any actions to implement fully the Convention and the later Supplementary Documents.

## 15. Stage of implementation of ECTS<sup>12</sup>

Describe the implementation of ECTS in your country.

a) Please include the percentage of the total number of higher education programmes<sup>13</sup> in which all programme components are linked with ECTS credits

100%  75-99%  50-75%  <50%

The ECTS within the three levels is regulated by law and has been fully implemented at all higher education institutions of Liechtenstein. The ratio of bachelor, master and doctoral courses of study using this system is 100 %. There is no intention of using any other credit awarding system.

b) Are ECTS credits linked with learning outcomes<sup>14</sup> in your country? Please tick one:

No  In some programmes  In the majority of programmes   
In all programmes

<sup>12</sup> Please refer to definitions in the ECTS User's guide,

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/guide\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/guide_en.html)

<sup>13</sup> Except doctoral studies

<sup>14</sup> Clarification: Learning outcomes in the form of knowledge, skills and competences are formulated for all programme components and credits are awarded only when the stipulated learning outcomes are actually acquired

c) If you use credit system other than ECTS, please give details of your national credit system:

i) is it compatible with ECTS? Yes  No

ii) what is the ratio between national and ECTS credits?

d) Are you taking any action to improve understanding of learning outcomes?

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please explain:

continuing education for lecturers; planned coaching; consultation with external experts.

e) Are you taking any actions to improve measurement and checking of student workload?

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please explain:

within the framework of Peer Reviews, through interviews with students, through evaluation sheets for each module.

f) Are you taking any actions to assist HE staff or other stakeholders in applying ECTS.

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please explain:

by continuing education for lecturers

## LIFELONG LEARNING

### 16. Recognition of prior learning

Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning (RPL), including non-formal and informal learning (for example learning gained in the workplace or in the community).

a) Do you have nationally established procedures in place to assess RPL as a basis for access to HE programmes?

Yes  No

**If Yes**, please specify:

b) Do you have nationally established RPL procedures in place to allocate credits towards a qualification?

Yes  No

If Yes, please specify:

- c) Do you have nationally established RPL procedures in place to allocate credits for exemption from some programme requirements? Yes  No

If Yes, please specify:

- d) To what extent are any such procedures applied in practice?  
Comprehensively  Some  A little  None

Please describe the current situation:

### 17. Flexible learning paths

Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, to encourage participation by under-represented groups.

Admission conditions are regulated by law for every course of study, whereby a certain degree of leeway is always provided based on the reference to an equivalent other university study course. If deficiencies are determined as a result of the equality evaluation associated with a sur-dossier admission, additional requirements within the meaning of bridging modules may be offered to facilitate admission.

Generally, the courses of study are offered in modules, allowing students within the legal provisions - to decide for themselves within which time they wish to complete the study. A large number of part-time courses of study are also offered.

- a) Are there specific measures in place to promote flexible learning paths within the national qualifications framework? Yes  No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation

- b) Are there any measures to support HE staff in establishing flexible learning paths? Yes  No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation

- c) Is there flexibility in entry requirements aimed at widening participation? Yes  No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between the three Bologna cycles

In the area of continuing education, the higher education institutions offer study courses with executive master programmes and masters of advanced studies that do not require the same strict admission criteria as the study programmes within the three cycles of the Bologna process.

d) Are there any flexible delivery methods to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners

Yes  No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between different Bologna cycle

e) Are there modular structures of programmes to facilitate greater participation?

Yes  No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between different Bologna cycle

f) If possible, please provide any statistics on the results of measures taken to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, to encourage participation by under-represented groups,

not available.

## JOINT DEGREES

### 18. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees<sup>15</sup>

a) Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.

Are joint degrees specifically mentioned in legislation?

Yes  No

Does the legislation fully allow:

i) establishing joint programmes?

Yes  No

**If No** please explain what are the obstacles

In Liechtenstein there are no specific legal provisions concerning the recognition of joint degrees. Joint degrees are not regulated in the Liechtenstein Higher Education Act. There are no legal obstacles, but in the same way there are no legal provisions favouring the recognition of joint degrees. At the beginning of next year the Higher Education Act will be revised. In this context legal provisions favouring the recognition of joint degrees, double or multiple degrees will likely be proved.

ii) awarding joint degrees?

Yes  No

**If No** please explain what are the obstacles

In Liechtenstein there are no specific legal provisions concerning the recognition of joint degrees. Joint degrees are not regulated in the Liechtenstein Higher Education Act. There are no legal obstacles, but in the same way there are no legal provisions favouring the recognition of joint degrees. At the beginning of next year the Higher Education Act will be revised. In this context legal provisions fa-

<sup>15</sup> A *joint degree* is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.



vouring the recognition of joint degrees, double or multiple degrees will likely be proved.

b) Please give an estimate of the percentage of institutions in your country which are involved in

i) joint degrees

75-100%  50-75%  25-50%  1-25%  0%

ii) joint programmes

75-100%  50-75%  25-50%  1-25%  0%

c) What is the level of joint degree/ programme cooperation in your country

In the first cycle? None  Little  Widespread

In the second cycle? None  Little  Widespread

In the third cycle? None  Little  Widespread

d) In which subject areas/disciplines is joint degree/programme co-operation most widespread (please list if possible)?

e) Estimate the number of joint programmes in your country

no programs

f) Describe any actions being taken to encourage or allow joint programmes.

Revision HG The revision of the Higher Education Act will consider Joint degrees in particular.

g) Are there any specific support systems for students to encourage joint degree cooperation?

No.

## MOBILITY

### 19. Removing obstacles to student and staff mobility

a) What measures have been taken by your country both at governmental and institutional level to enhance student and staff mobility and overcome main obstacles?

For students at Liechtenstein's higher education institutions, obstacles in terms of mobility are very minor. Therefore, a very high ratio of students is involved in mobility measures compared to other countries.

The collaboration with other higher education institutions at home and abroad as well as internationality and mobility are a legal obligation of Liechtenstein's higher education institutions.

Liechtenstein's participation in the Erasmus programme also promotes the mobility of staff at higher education institutions (professors and lecturers). In addition, the higher education institutions entertain an extensive cooperation network with foreign higher education institutions.

When concluding new cooperation arrangements, we always pay attention to ensuring that activities in various areas can be defined. Because the mobility of lecturers at higher education institutions usually represents a key basis for intensifying the collaboration between the institutions and for creating a culture of trust, lecturer mobility is always in the foreground during cooperation negotiations. Successful mobility measures for lecturers often represent the basis that allow Liechtenstein's higher education institutions to negotiate activities in the areas of intensified programmes and student mobility with its partner universities.

b) Have arrangements for visas, residence and work permits been amended to enhance student and staff mobility?

Yes  No

**Please add** appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

Students who have been admitted to a higher education institution will not face any problems to get a student residence permit in Liechtenstein.

At the national level, students have been permitted to work part time (up to 35 %) since 1 January 2005. During the semester breaks (mid July until end September), students are free to work up to 100 %.

Students who are eager to work, search an internship or who simply want to job in addition to studying, find all relevant information on the "career service" website of the Hochschule Liechtenstein.

c) Is there financial support for national and foreign mobile students and staff?

Yes  No

**Please add** appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

The "Lifelong Learning Programme" provides financial support for the mobility of students and academic staff.

d) Are study periods taken abroad recognised?

Yes  No

**Please add** appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

We constantly strive to fully recognise any credits earned abroad with respect to the credits required in Liechtenstein's higher education institutions.

e) Is there accommodation for mobile students and staff?

Yes  No

**Please add** appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

The Hochschule Liechtenstein has its own student dormitory and several flat-sharing communities.

f) Have any measures been taken to increase outward student and staff mobility?

Yes  No

**Please add** appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

The courses of study promote the completion of stays abroad or make them mandatory.

## 20. Portability of loans and grants

a) Are portable grants available in your country? Yes  No

**If No**, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants.

b) Are portable loans available in your country? Yes  No

**If No**, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of loans.

## THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE EHEA AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

### 21. Implementation of strategy

a) Describe any measures being taken by your country to implement the strategy "European Higher Education in a Global Setting"

The consistent implementation of the Bologna Process has significantly contributed to the increased attractiveness of Liechtenstein's higher education institutions. Particularly the Liechtenstein University of Applied Sciences has enjoyed an immense growth in development as a result.

The internationalisation of the higher education institutions associated with this process is another positive outcome of this trend.

Liechtenstein's participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme has also contributed to this internationalisation, especially the mobility of students and lecturers within the scope of these programmes and the inclusion into various international networks associated with the participation.

**b) What has your country done to:**

i) improve information on the EHEA outside Europe?

--

ii) promote European higher education, enhance its world-wide attractiveness and competitiveness?

Partnerships and cooperation's with Higher Education Institutions from all over the world

iii) strengthen cooperation based on partnership in higher education?

Liechtenstein's higher education institutions are legally obliged to cooperate with higher education institutions at home and abroad. The institutions have to consider their cooperation efforts in their annual reports.

iv) intensify policy dialogue with partners from other world regions?

See iii)

v) improve recognition of qualifications with other world regions?

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c) What measures have been taken in your country to implement the *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*? Please describe.

d) Are the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education applied to

i) cross-border provision of your education programmes? Yes  No

**If Yes** please explain in what ways the guidelines are applied

ii) incoming higher education provision? Yes  No

**If Yes** please explain in what ways the guidelines are applied

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

### 22. Main challenges for higher education

Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for higher education and the Bologna Process in your country in the short and long term.

The government approved the partial revision of the Higher Education Act. The main reason is the examination of a regulation regarding courses of study in the area of continuing education (e. g. executive master, master of advanced studies, issues involving the bearing of titles). In addition, regulations regarding joint, double or multiple degrees will be examined as well as the implementation of graduate school in connection with doctoral studies.

Another challenge is the creation of a national qualification framework and the development of national outcomes-based descriptors of the main types of qualifications. The development of further reaching measures in terms of the recognition of prior learning, including non-formal and informal learning, is another important task for the future.

## PART II

### TEMPLATE for NATIONAL STRATEGIES on THE SOCIAL DIMENSION of THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

#### Practical instruction

The answers to this questionnaire will be included in the general national report on the implementation of the Bologna Process and reach the Bologna Secretariat (e-mail: [secr@bologna2009benelux.org](mailto:secr@bologna2009benelux.org)) by November 1, 2008. **Please do not exceed the length of 10 pages for the national strategy on social dimension.**

The questions in Annex C are not included in the questionnaire itself but are to be considered as reference material which could facilitate the drafting of the information on the national strategy.

#### I. Definition of the Social Dimension in the London Communiqué

“ We strive for the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations. We therefore pledge to take action to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.”

#### II. AS IS SITUATION (Current state of affairs)

1. Which groups in society are still underrepresented in your national higher education system? What are the main obstacles to participative equity in terms of access and successful completion of studies?

Due to its small size, Liechtenstein's higher education system is very limited: there are only one public higher education institution and two small private institutions which offer doctoral programmes. For this reason, more than 80 % of the students study abroad, most of them in Switzerland or Austria.

Underrepresented groups in the area of higher education include:

- students with migration background
- women (depending on the course of study, e.g. in architecture and economics)
- lower social classes
- persons with disabilities

Reasons for the under representation of these groups are, among others, culture, language, society, and social background.

2. Please describe what measures your Government is taking to increase the representation of the groups identified in the question above. Please refer to the possible actions listed in the Bologna Working Group report on the Social Dimension and Mobility (see Annexes A and B to this document).

The measures to promote equal opportunities in education for migrants start already in preschool and continue through all classes of the school system, e.g. with the program "German as a Second Language."

Regarding equal opportunities of men and women, the Gender Equality Act was adopted in Liechtenstein in 1999 (Act of 10 March 1999). At the provincial level, there is the Department for Equal Opportunities that promotes the equality of men and women in all areas.

At the Hochschule Liechtenstein, the Equal Opportunity Commission represents women's concerns as well as the topic of equal opportunities at the Hochschule and issues opinions on gender equality questions. The Commission works toward achieving a balanced representation of women and men in the operations, teaching, and research of the Hochschule.

Projects of the Hochschule include maternity and child care as well as re-examinations of the general conditions for employees regarding their "work-life balance" (working part time, substitutes, career planning).

On 1 January 2007, the Equal Opportunity Act for Persons with Disabilities came into force. The objective of this law is to eliminate or prevent the discrimination of persons with disabilities, and thus to guarantee that persons with disabilities have equal rights to participate in society, and to empower them to live a self-determined life. The prohibition of discrimination stipulated in the law describes, among other things, measures for education, continuing education, and re-education.

The system of scholarships is an important tool to guarantee equal opportunities. It follows the subsidiarity principle, i.e. the scholarships allocated are based on the financial situation of the applicants. In this way, students with a lower income background should get equal access to education. Furthermore, the revision of the Scholarship Act in 2005 strengthened the dual system of education.

3. Describe what measures are being taken by the Government to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background. Again, please refer to the possible actions listed in the Bologna Working Group report on the Social Dimension and Mobility (see Annexes A and B to this document). Please indicate whether the measures apply to all students or only to certain levels or types of higher education institutions.

A generous system of scholarships (scholarships and loans) offers financial support to students with a lower income background.

The modular concept of studies at the Hochschule Liechtenstein allows the students a certain degree of flexibility to organise their studies.

4. Does your country have statistical and/or other research evidence at disposal to underpin the identification of underrepresented groups and the main obstacles to participative equity (see Q 1)? If yes, please specify. Or are regular student survey organised with the aim to provide data concerning the social dimension?

No.

### III. PROCESS TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM (strategy for the future)

5. How do you plan to tackle the challenges identified under Q 1 in the near future (2008-2010)?

(a) Which concrete goals do you want to achieve?

See b)

(b) What actions are planned for the different target group identified above to overcome the obstacles in access, participation and completion of studies by students? Please refer to Annex B and to the suggested approach outlined in the 2007 report from the Bologna Process Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility (Annex C to this document).

- measures to promote equal opportunities at secondary school level and at higher education level  
- measures to widen access to and participation in higher education for underrepresented groups (gender, immigration, socio-economic status and background, disability)  
- At the Hochschule Liechtenstein, the Equal Opportunity Commission also deals with the project "Gender and Diversity", which includes counselling for foreign students from third countries.

(c) is there a specific budget for these measures for underrepresented groups? If yes, please provide details

At the Hochschule Liechtenstein, the competence of the Equal Opportunity Commission is expanded by the project "Gender and Diversity" for the period 2009-2012.

d) is there a timeline for action? If yes, please provide details.

no

6. What arrangements are planned for monitoring progress towards more equitable access, participation and success?

Permanent Monitoring (statistics, reports ...)

#### **IV. INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PREPARATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGIES**

Please indicate which authority or other actor is responsible for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the national strategy and describe the way in which the various stakeholders are involved. Did your country designate (a) contact point(s) for the national strategy? If so, please add the coordinates of the national contact point(s).

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ministry of Education</li><li>- Office of Education</li></ul> |
|---|

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#### **ANNEX A**

##### **Actions mentioned by the Bologna countries in the 2007 national reports**

###### Financial

- scholarships - means tested
- scholarships - merit based
- research grants
- grants for studying abroad
- grants or loans for (nearly) every student
- unspecified social support system
- free education (at least 1st cycle)
- reimbursement of tuition fees for certain groups
- financial assistance for certain groups/areas
- improved funding systems

###### Structural

- new /expanded routes of access
- broader teaching or learning strategies
- information and preparation at secondary schools
- increase student places
- indirect aid schemes (tax relief, family allowance)
- subsidised residences/meals/transport/books
- provision of student welfare services (health care, day care centres)
- counselling/guidance services

###### Certain groups

- measures for ethnic minorities (not financial)
- measures for disabled (not financial)
- measures for disadvantaged groups (not financial)
- allocation of study places to certain groups
- promote access from all national areas

###### Policy and practice

- explicit widening access policy (devoted funds/units/laws)
- carry out surveys (study & work, disabled students,...)
- evaluations/research of policies and practices
- monitoring access (and retention) by students



## **ANNEX B**

### **Possible actions and tools identified by the 2007 Bologna Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility**

Measures to promote equal opportunities for access, participation and completion

- Anti-discrimination legislation covering higher education
- Admission rules that are simple, fair and transparent

Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education

- Outreach programs for underrepresented groups as defined nationally
- Flexible delivery of higher education
- Flexible learning paths into and within higher education
- Transparency of qualifications and recognition of prior learning
- Incentives for higher education institutions to take action to widen access and participation

Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience

A, Provision of academic services

- Guidance (academic and careers) and tutoring
- Retention measures (modification of curricula, flexibility of delivery, tracking academic success etc.)
- Working tools and environment (well functioning libraries, lecture halls and seminar rooms, internet access, access to scientific data bases etc.)

B, Provision of social services

- Counselling
- Targeted support for students with special needs and students with children
- Appropriate housing conditions for all students
- Provision of healthcare
- Provision of transportation, student canteens etc.

Student participation in the governance and organisation of higher education

- Legislation or other measures to ensure student participation in higher education governance
- Provisions for the existence of and exercise of influence by student organisations
- Student evaluations of courses, programmes and institutions, including action plans and follow-up of actions taken

Finances in order to start and complete studies

- Financial and legal advice for students
- Appropriate and coordinated national financial support systems that are transparent
- Targeted support for disadvantaged groups as defined nationally
- Support measures for students with children

## **ANNEX C**

### **Suggested approach of the work on national strategies on the social dimension**

In time for the next ministerial meeting in 2009 the Working Group suggests that the countries should report to the BFUG on their national strategies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to show their impact. All stakeholders concerned should actively participate in and support this work at the national level.

The development of a strategy should be followed by a national action plan that includes monitoring mechanisms. Ideally, the strategy and action plan will be based on a national debate on the social dimension and the future priorities of that country depending on the current situation. In order to facilitate a national debate on the social dimension the Working Group proposes the following structure and topics for such a debate:

- Measures to promote equal opportunities

What obstacles are there to equal opportunities within higher education? What protection is there if a student is discriminated when applying for, being admitted to or carrying out studies? Is there a framework for appeal? What action would be the most effective to achieve equal opportunities in higher education?

- Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education for underrepresented groups (gender, ethnic origin, immigration, socio-economic status and background, disability, geography etc.)

What groups are under represented in your national higher education system today? Is there data to show access to higher education by gender, socio-economic background, disabilities, prior immigration, region etc? What obstacles to widened access and participation are there within your higher education system? At other education levels? What actions would be appropriate for the different groups to achieve widened access? Are targeted outreach activities needed?

- Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience

A, Provision of academic services

B, Provision of social services

What kind of academic or career guidance is provided for the students in your country? What is the student – staff ratio? Are there retention measures adapted to different groups or individuals with different needs? Is the academic success of student tracked? What would be/has proven to be the most efficient retention measures? What kind of study environment is there at the higher education institutions? Do student have access to information, electronically or by other means? What is the condition of libraries, lecture halls and seminar rooms? How do students in your country live? Is housing available, of acceptable standard and affordable? Is targeted support provided or needed for specific student groups? Is counselling available if students run in to personal difficulties?

- Measures to increase formal and actual student influence on and participation in higher education governance and other higher education issues

Are there formal provisions for student influence and participation at all governance levels, in consultative as well as decision-making bodies? Are there formal provisions for student evaluation of the education? Are the formal regulations followed-up with actual practices? Are there informal ways of student influence and participation as well? Do students have an influence on all issues related to higher education? Are students aware of their rights? Do students have organisations that

can organise elections to fill elective posts? Is it possible to find enough candidates to fill the posts available? If not – how could this be improved?

- Finances in order to start and complete studies

What kind of information and guidance is provided for students regarding financial issues? How does the average student make his or her living during studies? What kind of state support is provided? Is it appropriate for all groups and individuals? Do certain groups run the risk of being excluded from, or not able to finish their studies, due to financial reasons? Which are these groups or individuals? What could be done to help them? Are students informed about possible employment possibilities after finishing their studies? How is the labour-market relevance of the studies secured? Are former graduates tracked to follow-up their employment rates?

- Monitoring: The participating countries should establish national measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of the national strategy and action plan.

What monitoring mechanisms would be the most appropriate? How could success in strengthening the social dimension be measured short-term and long-term? What quantitative and qualitative data are needed? How is the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation allocated and divided? Are there student surveys carried out to measure the impact of a social dimension strategy? How can student surveys be used in this work?

- Stakeholder involvement

Which stakeholders should be involved in the development of a strategy and an action plan? What should be the responsibility of the different stakeholders when carrying out the agreed strategy and plan?