

# Bologna Hungaricum

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*Where does the world go?*

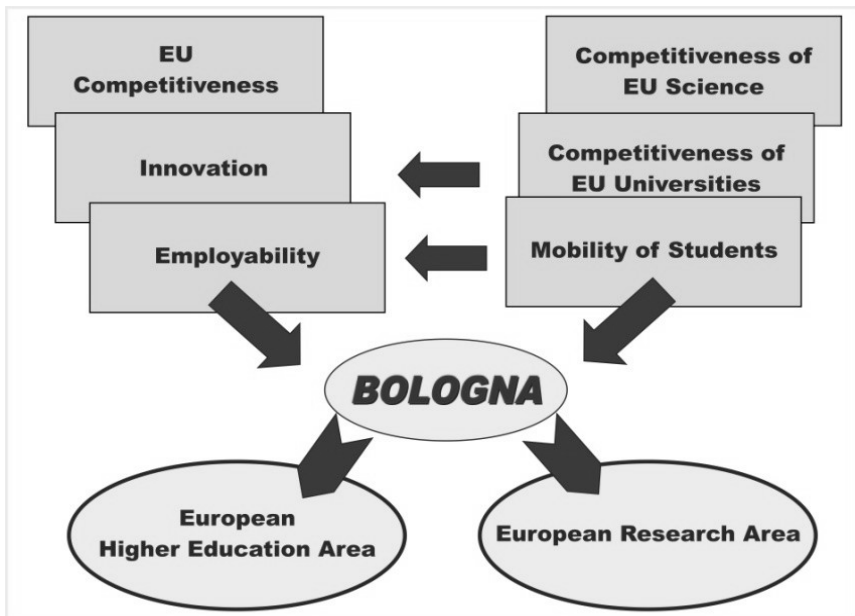
The effects of globalization

During the past 20-30 years there have been radical changes going on throughout the world: the process known as globalization created a new reality. Today technological-scientific achievements produce high technology demanding world-wide structures of research and development, production, marketing and sales systems. National markets, the traditional scenarios of transactions have been relieved by huge international regions. The European Union, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Far East have taken over the role of national markets and competition is going on worldwide: 80% of world trade takes place amongst and within the segments of the Triad. This competition is running for free capital – the question is which nation, which region is able to magnetize capital needed for development of high technology and production based on high technology.

Recent processes of higher education, the Bologna Declaration, generating the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area each serve the purpose of improving competitiveness of the European Union, its nations and their universities (see Figure 1). The state of development of educational (even more importantly higher educational) systems has become a significant factor of competitiveness. Besides favourable financial conditions the state of development of in-service and higher education systems determines the magnetism of a particular nation for free capital. Investors want to be concerned that a nation or a region is able to

satisfy the needs of global economy, i.e. whether it has the capacity to train well and qualified masses of employees who are mobile and flexible for further training. An important prerequisite of employability is the realization of student mobility during one's higher education – to arm students with knowledge about the culture and social relations of the EU and its partner countries skills applicable. This is one of the central goals of the Bologna process: to answer the challenges of student mobility – in order to ensure conditions of forthcoming employability, the *first outcome of student mobility*.

Figure 1: Competitiveness and the Bologna process



Europe has lost her leading role concerning both research and higher education after the Second World War. Her new position can be demonstrated by the number of Nobel Prize Winners of “hard” sci-

ences, such as physics, chemistry, medical science, economy (see Figure 2). The number of foreign students in Europe has decreased while magnetization of the USA towards the gifted ones has become even stronger than before (brain drain). Most of the Nobel Prize winners living and working in the USA was not born in America, including a dozen geniuses born in Hungary. We call this feature the *second outcome of student mobility*: the capacity to magnetize as many talents as possible from foreign countries in order to increase the scientific and academic potential of the country of reception.

Figure 2: Geographical distribution of Nobel Prize winners according to the location of their activities

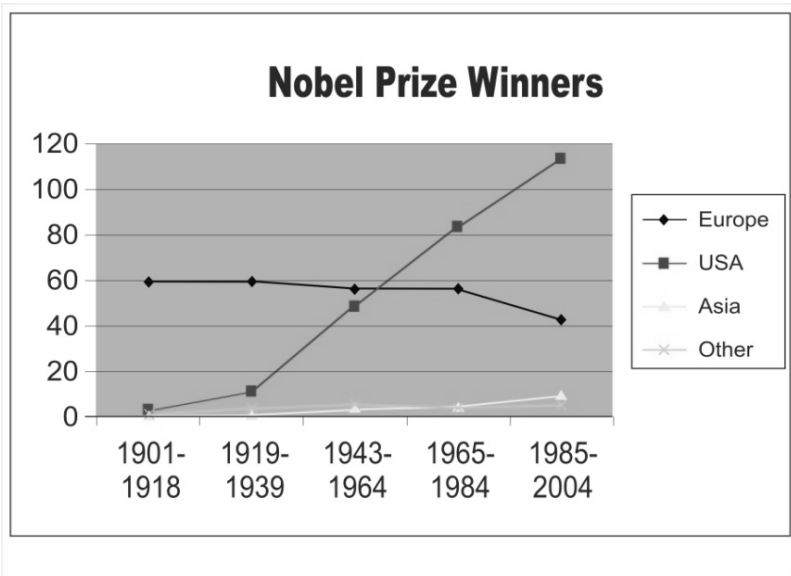


Table 1 and table 2 show tendencies of student mobility in some significant regions (North America, Western Europe, Central Europe and Eastern Europe). France (63,000 people), Germany

(56,000 people), Italy (39,000 people) and Spain (27,000 people) are the countries that forward the most students (numbers in brackets) in Western Europe. Canada sends 41,000 people whereas the USA forwards 39,000 students. In Center and Eastern Europe the most active forwarders are Turkey (52,000 people), Russia (34,000 people), Poland (27,000 people), Bulgaria and the Ukraine (25,000 people each), and Romania (21,000 people). The most significant recipient is the USA (673,000 people) and the most determinative countries in Europe: the United Kingdom (300,000 people), Germany (260,000 people) and France (238,000 people).

*Table 1: Student mobility – North America and Western Europe*

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Outwards</b>	<b>Where the students are going to?</b>	<b>Inwards</b>
Austria	11,679	Germany (6,924), United Kingdom (1,308), USA. (899), Switzerland (550), France (495)	31,101
Belgium	10,729	France (2,841), United Kingdom (2,418), Netherlands (1,987), Germany (1,021), USA (823)	26,202
Canada	38,847	USA (27,017), United Kingdom (3,890), Australia (3,100), France (1,267), Germany (556)	40,033
Cyprus	17,381	Greece (10,048), United Kingdom (4,208), USA (1,562), Bulgaria (443), Hungary (297)	5,282
Denmark	6,318	United Kingdom (1,662), Sweden (995), Norway (868), USA (859), Germany (697)	18,120
Finland	9,719	Sweden (4,054), United Kingdom (1,883), Germany (1,056), USA (619), France (332)	7,361
France	53,350	Belgium (12,458), United Kingdom (11,295), USA (6,818), Germany (6,678), Belgium (6,238)	237,587
Germany	56,410	United Kingdom (12,096), USA (8,745), France (6,698), Switzerland (5,823), Austria (5,657)	260,324
Greece	49,631	United Kingdom (22,826), Germany (7,577), Italy (7,159), France (2,288), USA (2,126)	12,456
Iceland	3,007	Denmark (1,081), USA (488), Sweden (434), United Kingdom (317), Norway (251)	10,201

*Table 1 (continued): Student mobility – North America and Western Europe*

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Outwards</b>	<b>Where the students are going to?</b>	<b>Inwards</b>
Israel	11,974	USA (3,474), United Kingdom (1,300), Germany (1,116), Latvia (1,092), Jordan (1,060)	no date
Italy	38,544	Germany (8,111), Austria (6,149), United Kingdom (5,215), France (4,686), Holy See (4,103)	40,641
Luxembourg	6,743	Germany (2,071), France (1,709), Belgium (1,324), United Kingdom (833), Belgium (818)	652
Malta	731	United Kingdom (476), Germany (50), Spain (44), Italy (39), USA (30)	409
Netherlands	11,440	Belgium (2,887), United Kingdom (2,473), Germany (1,876), USA (1,505), Sweden (630)	20,531
Norway	14,732	United Kingdom (3,653), Australia (3,227), Denmark (1,524), USA (1,471), Sweden (1,406)	11,060
Portugal	11,213	France (2,701), United Kingdom (2,649), Germany (1,922), Spain (1,377), USA (880)	15,483
Spain	25,691	United Kingdom (6,105), Germany (6,014), France (3,928), USA (3,631), Belgium (1,042)	15,051
Sweden	13,392	United Kingdom (3,379), USA (3,116), Norway (1,107), Australia (1,049), Germany (839)	32,469
Switzerland	9,545	Germany (2,169), USA (1,561), United Kingdom (1,467), France (1,463), Italy (1,075)	64,046
United Kingdom	23,542	USA (8,439), France (2,611), Germany (2,154), Ireland (2,132), Australia (1,652)	300,056
USA	41,181	United Kingdom (13,381), Canada (4,393), Australia (3,439), Germany (3,419), France (2,687)	572,509

*Source: Makovényi 2007 (conference slide)*

Besides the long term importance of reaching out for the most talented ones the mobility of 2 million students represent a significant *income source* for universities that struggle with everlasting financial difficulties. The sum of tuition fees is *the third outcome of student mobility*. Today Europe does not seem to win the international competition running for students, and Hungary has an insignificant role in it. This is more than pitiful because it is the Bologna process itself that offers a framework for competitiveness within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Unfortunately the higher education system in Hungary is not compatible regarding its structure or its content of the most significant actors of the educational market. In order to close up to the most efficient economies however this prerequisite should gather ground.

*Table 2: Student mobility – Central and Eastern Europe*

Countries	Outwards	Where the students are going to	Inwards
Albania	13,214	Italy (8,494), USA (916), Greece (725), Germany (625), Turkey (608)	458
Belarus	10,490	Russian Fed. (6,010), Germany (1,737), Poland (1,088), France (465), USA (422)	2,428
Bosnia and Herzegovina	9,572	Germany (2,801), Croatia (2,273), Austria (1,308), USA (433), Denmark (432)	no date
Croatia	9,955	Germany (5,437), Italy (1,357), Austria (947), USA (660), Slovenia (425)	2,836
Czech Republic	6,666	Germany (2,483), USA (1,052), France (662), Austria (439), United Kingdom (359)	10,338
Estonia	3,721	Russian Fed. (1,217), Germany (728), Finland (528), USA (271), Sweden (242)	1,090
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>7,750</b>	<b>Germany (3,097), Austria (1,279), USA (997), France (536), United Kingdom (371)</b>	<b>12,226</b>
Latvia	3,730	Russian Fed. (1,022), Germany (916), USA (424), Estonia (305), United Kingdom (186)	2,390

*Table 2 (continued): Student mobility – Central and Eastern Europe*

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Outwards</b>	<b>Where the students are going to</b>	<b>Inwards</b>
Lithuania	6,926	Germany (1,701), Russian Fed. (1,690), USA (691), Poland (628), Latvia (507)	689
Poland	28,786	Germany (15,417), France (3,270), USA (2,913), Austria (1,172), Italy (1,002)	7,608
Republic of Moldova	7,784	Romania (4,111), Russian Fed. (1,267), Germany (597), France (463), Bulgaria (382)	2,502
Romania	20,680	France (4,474), Germany (4,220), USA (3,320), Hungary (3,147), Italy (1,225)	9,730
Russian Federation	34,473	Germany (11,462), USA (5,532), France (2,597), Kazakhstan (2,177), United Kingdom (1,878)	75,786
Serbia and Montenegro	10,038	Germany (3,747), Hungary (1,194), Austria (1,007), Italy (712), France (489)	831
Slovakia	14,458	Czech Republic (6,938), Hungary (2,441), Germany (1,640), Austria (1,387), USA (585)	1,651
Slovenia	2,524	Germany (628), Austria (593), Italy (326), United Kingdom (265), USA (209)	963
The Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	5,348	Bulgaria (2,690), Germany (819), USA (349), Turkey (278), Albania (177)	113
Turkey	52,048	Germany (27,582), USA (11,398), France (2,273), United Kingdom (1,960), Austria (1,820)	12,729
Ukraine	25,188	Germany (7,618), Russian Fed. (6,841), USA (2,004), Poland (1,809), Hungary (1,005)	15,622

*Source: Makovényi 2007. (conference slide)*

## The first revolution of universities

Globalization processes have reached out to higher education – and due to this phenomenon institutions of higher education are forced to make significant changes: today we witness the second revolution of universities. Since their formation in the 12<sup>th</sup> century it has always been the *social factors* that determined the mission and purposes of universities.

- The training and research profiles (theology, law, medicine, liberal arts) of the *universities of the Middle Age* acted upon the demands of the era: they came into existence due to outward press. The church, the emperor, the king, the monarch as the founders of institutions determined the goals and fields of higher education and research.
- It has been social changes, outward power that led to *the first revolution of universities*. The formation of national-liberal states required a demand of new forms of leadership and new types of organizations. Relations between states and economies have also changed. At the last years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Industrial Revolution brought a huge economic development and set new requirements of skilled workers.

These changes of social demands swept away the universities of the Middle Ages and created three different kinds of university cultures: the British, the Napoleonic and Humboldt's model. Three different solutions for the very same problem: How can universities answer the demands of the new socio-economic challenge? Within a couple of decades each European country adopted one of these models or a combination of them.



## The second revolution of universities

The second revolution of universities is a result of globalization, the technological-scientific revolution of our days. Just as the universities of the Middle Ages had no longer been able to fulfil the requirements of the new nation states and those of the Industrial Revolution, the 200 years of experience of the British, the Napoleonic and Humboldt's model of universities have not proved to be capable to satisfy today's political, social and economic demands any more. Changes of university environment can be traced back to three different factors (Mora 2007).

- *Global society.* Labour market that has to be filled up by citizens trained at universities has changed. Due to the requirements of economic mobility an increasing ratio of graduating students go to work in foreign countries or become employed at multinational firms and companies operating in the home country. This situation requires non-traditional knowledge and competencies. The function of universities is not any more to fulfil the requirements of local labour markets but they have to be ready for the challenges set by global employability. We need to note that the Hungarian Bologna process not only neglects the needs of the European Union and global markets but also (as for the draft of the Higher Education Act 2011) seems to ignore those of the national economy.
- *Knowledge-based society.* Concerning the philosophy of the universities of the 19<sup>th</sup> century economic aspects remained hidden (the declared purpose of the Prussian university for instance is to seek and spread justice). The economic value of universities become expressed explicitly at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: technological development can be maintained only if societies have highly qualified citizens. Knowledge and technology turn into key elements of economic and social development in knowledge based societies. Universities become the

engines throughout their research and innovation activities as centers of knowledge generation, as scenarios of knowledge, science and technology distribution and as locales of instruction, studies and technological transfer.

- *Universal higher education institutions.* Due to the needs for qualified workforce of our global world higher education becomes a part of mass education. Nobody argues that universities that had been set up in order to ensure elite education cannot fulfil the requirements of mass education – the need for reform is unambiguous. Institutions of higher education become universal in this way from several regards. On one hand universities become attainable for almost everyone: the ratio of those with A levels accepted at universities has never been as high as today. On the other hand geographical outreach of Hungarian institutions increased: they have started with departments abroad and also institutions of foreign universities have started in Hungary. Virtual universities demolish geographical borders. Universality is true in respect of the targeted age groups too. It is not exclusively those of 18-24 year-olds who can attend universities: institutions of modern higher education reflect on the needs of lifelong learning including professional, in-service and/or cultural studies. This is a totally different university with new goals, new methodology and teaching-learning techniques. Traditional ways of old-established institutions of higher education cannot keep pace with new challenges.

Considering the factors described above the second revolution of universities means that institutions of higher education have to undergo transformation because of the interests of societies, economies and that of their own. The prime movers of these changes can be found outside the walls of universities: the European Union, national governments, international organizations, employers and

stakeholders push forward and support this process of transformation although universities resist – most of the time. Originally universities are ultra-conservative agents: academic circles worldwide oppose to any change because of the intention of keeping certain values, traditions and autonomy. There were people demolishing appliances in times of Industrial Revolution who intended to save systems of manufactures and handcraft – still, industrial development could not have been stopped. What we really need to consider is that this story is not about the universities or the professors themselves. The stake is the well being of our societies, the founding of our future. And it is clear cut that determining forces come from the outside again. The Bologna process is the product of this second revolution of universities induced by globalization. In the forthcoming part of this study we are to see the main targets of this process and evaluate the changes of the Hungarian higher education – whether they are consonant to the international process and support its realization or not.

### *About the Bologna process*

#### The European reception of the reform

Except from one country, Byelorussia, the EHEA colligates the whole Europe. A huge and united market of knowledge has started to formulate and the catalyst of this transformation is the Bologna process. Contribution to this process lies on a voluntary basis. Along local or national specifics each country has the right to differ from the declared basic principles of the Bologna process. They are free to do so because the commitments do not have a mandatory force. Not even the European Union has a compulsory educational policy (however the European Higher Education Area covers much wider space than the geographical borders of the EU) and the ministers who signed the Bologna Declaration did not agree to main-

tain the codification of each and every item of the agreement. Still, in case we alter the relevant governing principles we need to be sure of what it is that we actually disagree with, what goals of the Bologna Declaration we go against. We need to see clearly the discrepancies we end up with between the national educational policies and those of the European Higher Education Area, we have to ponder the consequences and decide whether we can take the responsibility of going our own (national) way. In case we intend to be competitive in the international market of knowledge than we need to compile EHEA-compatible educational structures. The realization of the Bologna process, constructing and implementing changes necessitates the reform of several other fields. A more harmonized, tight connection with the labour market becomes a necessity university governance has to be renewed. Inclusion of private sources (tuition fee, fund-raising) has to be considered and a new pedagogical paradigm has to be introduced (i.e. learner-centeredness instead of didactics, emphasizing competencies versus lexical knowledge). Also evaluation of universities (gradation, transparency) has to be taken into consideration. In the developed countries the expectance of the reform today can be described as satisfactory. After the initial fierce rejection according to a Gallup poll markers show a positive picture about the desired changes:

- We need to focus on average skills 76%
- Programs need to act upon the needs of the labour market 70%
- Partnerships with the business sphere reinforce universities 73%
- Universities need stronger self-governance 80%
- Fund raising leads to extra income and better achievement 73%
- Tuition fees are acceptable as they ensure extra income for universities 68%

## The Hungarian Bologna process

Although as early as 1999 within the first circle Hungary joined the process, at the ceremony of the declaration only the deputy under-secretary represented our country (while other states sent their ministers of education to sign the document) and our government at the time had not made any further steps in order to realize the process. Substantive analytic and constructive work started in September, 2002 (by this time partner countries had accepted their new higher education acts containing the changes due to the frameworks of the Bologna Declaration) within the framework of the JEHEA (Joining the EHEA) project. The team of experts prepared a 2000 page long summary containing needs analysis, suggestions, manageability studies to serve as a basis for composing the new bill of higher education. A serious communication error followed the compliment of the project. The Ministry of Education encrypted the material so professional circles could not contribute to it. Only a 70 page long summary was published for social debate that proved to be unjustifiable under professional fire. The concept became ridiculous as early as in the first phase of its publicity as it had been changed literally week after week. Academic circles criticized it as they were afraid of losing their autonomy, traditions and the international respect of the Hungarian higher education. On the other hand due to governmental changes the issue became a subject of political rather than professional discussion although there was (and still is) a distinct professional demand for a National Roundtable of Higher Education. Three years after the ratification of new higher education acts of significant European states in 2005 the first version of the law was proclaimed. Because of political fights the most important initiatives such as tuition has been cancelled (2008) and the only constant activity concerning the act remains revision.

Unlike in Western European countries, the acceptance of the Bologna reform can be estimated moderate in Hungary. Unfortu-

nately, since 1999 university lecturers have not been involved in any form of discussion about the Bologna process, a widespread professional debate, which could enable to attract attention to the goals, values and the dangers of its defective realization, has not been organized. We lack academic debate, conferences and discussion forums of the issue. The monthly journal of higher educational issues was ceased by the ministry right at the time when spreading new ways of thinking, discussion and persuasion on elements of the Bologna process would have been needed indeed. This fact contributes to the true but sad reality that actors of Hungarian higher education do not see clearly the goals and significance of the Bologna process and do not have information about relevant changes abroad. Lack of information has led to such a narrow-minded process that cannot be connected to the European Higher Education Area. Consequently it generates a higher education system with significant disadvantage in competition and leads to the conception of a rather grotesque “*Bologna Hungaricum*”. Taking into consideration the Hungarian reality described above let us now examine what an ideal Bologna-structure should be like and how we can evaluate the relevant process we, Hungarians have been through.

### *The goals of the Bologna process and its implementations in Hungary*

Starting with the Bologna Declaration in 1999, states, universities and other institutions of higher education began an intensive cooperation aiming at developing the European Higher Education Area. Besides declarations of bi-yearly summits several seminars and preliminary consultations have been organised in order to discuss occurring challenges and possible ways of their solutions. The European University Association (EUA) has taken an active part in these discussions through carrying out analyses and giving their

commitments. The documents they published contain important statements that are to be examined (altogether with those of the Bologna Declaration) in the following paragraphs concerning EHEA compatible training. These statements are being reflected by the realisations of the Bologna Declaration in Hungary, emphasising discrepancies and dysfunctions in order to point out fields that may be developed. In the case of correction of the most significant discrepancies the Hungarian higher education system with its institutions and students, the Hungarian society and economy could equally become more competitive.

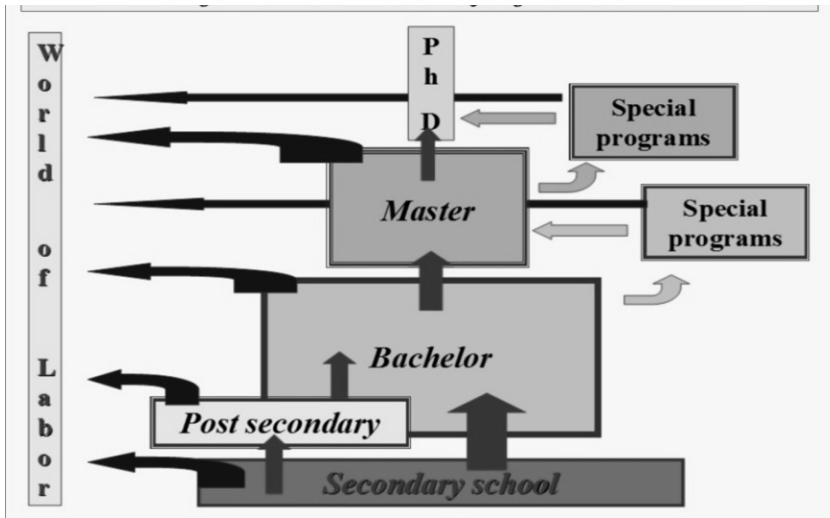
Improvement may lead to avoiding particular interests and focus on the goals of the Bologna process.

## Transparency

1. Introduction of a training structure that offers easily comprehensible and comparable degrees (even applying diploma supplements) in order to facilitate employability of European citizens and competitiveness of the European higher education system.

The first part of the goal expressed above has significance because of transparency. This principle is important because its realisation results in the world of labour ensuring employability, in the competitiveness of European higher education system and that of the economy of the European Union. Through the introduction of the diploma supplement a part of the existing systems can be made compatible with the original goals.

Figure 3: The three-cycle structure of higher education



### The three-cycle structure

2. Introduction of a basically two-phased training system: the undergraduate and graduate levels. The second phase requires the successful compilation of the first one, which has to take at least three years.
  - The undergraduate degree ensures a particular qualification so it can be applied at the European labour market.
  - The second phase has to eventuate in master or PhD degrees – due to the relevant higher education tradition of several European countries.

The two-phased structure was born as a shared European commitment – later on decision makers agreed to complement it with the PhD stage, this is why we call it a *three-cycle structure* today. The first cycle primarily covers mass higher education – this is the scenario of training that aims at satisfying the needs of modern economy. At this stage numerous well-trained and skilled professionals are needed armed with practical knowledge. Master's stage should



offer more theoretical, quality knowledge and at the final stage of the cycle the PhD level represents elite training. Applying this system the EU accepted the traditional linear training structure of Anglo-Saxon countries de-emphasizing the conventional continental dual system. This linear structure apparently meets the conditions of human resource demands of global economy to a greater extent and this is what leading European economic power has recognised. The structure grants flexible accommodation of ever-changing demands and it also means less risk of involving masses to higher education. Student mobility among different fields and institutions is also a significant marker of this pyramid model (lower stages available for masses while top stage offering elite status for a few). Introducing a basically two training cycle structure (undergraduate and graduate) is the essential goal within the Bologna process.

Successful compilation of the first cycle (which has to take at least three years) is the key to enter the second phase. Another Bologna goal is that the degree attainable at the end of the first phase can be applicable at the European labour market while the second cycle has to lead to a master's or PhD degree. The central idea of the process is the initiation of student mobility. Regarding the requirements of training and qualifications a proper solution would involve actors of higher education and those of the economy. Training requirements should be characterised by higher education while qualification markers could be circumscribed by representatives of professionals. Unfortunately partners of education (i.e. relevant actors of economy) do not represent their viewpoints and interests to a necessary extent. Measuring and analysing the needs of the labour market have not started up till most recently in Hungary. In this way the adequate results can only be considered when re-planning the Bologna structure. This is inevitable in the case we really do consider the Bologna criteria – as it is only a formality today, regarding its content remaining theory. At the moment institutions of Hungarian higher education offer 50 branches of training

within the following 14 fields: agrarian, humanities, social sciences, ICT, law, national defence / art of war, economy, technology / engineering, medical science, education / teacher training, sports, natural sciences, fine arts, civilization. An example of branches of a field is humanities (field) and Hungarian Linguistics and Literature, History, Modern and Antique Philology, Psychology, Liberal Arts (branches). Branches are divided to subcategories (subject areas) becoming realised in undergraduate courses and some majors even have specialisations. There have been 107 undergraduate courses accredited so far in Hungary and students can apply to study them at 1100 entries.

Accreditation of postgraduate courses has not closed down yet their number can be estimated around 500. Explicitly the courses are not divided into professional and academic ones either at undergraduate or postgraduate levels. Implicitly postgraduate courses suggest belonging to academic courses. Higher education courses in Hungary can be categorized as follows:

- *Post-secondary*, non-university level technical/vocational type schools (similar to American community colleges) require 120 credits and usually last for two years. They are considered to have a professional filter-role and their significance is due to the fact that they offer practical knowledge and skills.
- Most of the *undergraduate* courses consist of 180 credits and take three years to complete. In some cases another 30 credits have to be taken as field work for an extra term.
- Most *master* courses require 120 credits.
- Studying for the *PhD degree* requires a usually three year long period of instruction and research worth 180 credits, compiling and defending the doctoral dissertation have to happen after this phase.
- *Teacher training* has a slightly different structure. Kindergarten teacher candidates attend a three year long course which requires 180 credits. In order to become a primary teacher (of the

first four grades of schooling) one has to take an undergraduate course which takes four years, with 240 credits. In the case of teacher candidates for grades 5-12 one has to complete a masters' degree which takes 300 + 30 credits (theory and practice).

One of the biggest problems with the Hungarian structure is that it has come to being due to particular interests as a real Bologna Hungaricum. During its formation neither the national demands of the labour market or the intentions and structure of the institutions of the European Higher Education Area have been considered. While compiling the courses there has been a fight going on among traditional universities and colleges. The greatest intention of universities has been to have the exclusive right for running master courses and on the other hand colleges purposed to exclude universities from the accreditation of bachelor courses. The roots of this fight dates back to times when in 2000 mammoth institutions were founded in the capital, Budapest, integrating universities on one hand and at the same colleges on the other (Budapest Technical University versus Budapest Technical College and Budapest University of Economy versus Budapest College of Economy). As the philosophy of the Bologna process was public at that time, a more practical solution could have been the integration of both colleges and universities according to their academic fields. Development of undergraduate and postgraduate courses could have been carried out by common division of labour in order to avoid unnecessary parallelism of training. In the case of institutions of higher education in the country the solution could have been to enter into strategic alliance. Particular institutions could have specialised to launch undergraduate courses ensuring input for universities whereas others could have started with postgraduate courses. As the latter ones could have neglected undergraduate courses there was a chance to specialise in master and PhD courses and to develop as universities of research.

The other mistake we could not avoid concerns content. University professors have done their best to compress traditional basic university curriculum into undergraduate courses although those should not exclusively establish postgraduate studies but scenarios of mass education. As stated earlier at this stage training has to provide qualified workforce not only for the home economy but to the European labour market. Misunderstanding the role of undergraduate courses consequently resulted in uncertainty about the content of postgraduate courses as well. Instead of concentrating on the demands of the labour market postgraduate courses have become scenarios of a structure viable only in the imagination of some university lecturers.

Considering that the goal, content and function of postgraduate courses remained uncertain the undergraduate courses of the new structure had to be compiled without a clear goal of its outcome. We built the ground floor without having the plans of the first floor – at this phase of the reform we *lacked a structural approach*. Describing all these discrepancies show that the three-cycle structure in Hungary should to be renewed as soon as possible so that it would harmonize the specifics of mass education, and the real demands of socio-economic conditions. In its present state the Hungarian application of the Bologna process is inappropriate to realise the goals of the European Higher Education Area as a non EU conform reform cannot ensure active and profitable parts for the Hungarians within the European Higher Education Area.

### Credit system

3. Introduction of credit systems – such as the ECTS – are the most appropriate ways of facilitating the mobility of students. Gathering credits outside institutions of higher education could be a great opportunity of lifelong learning.

This requirement of the Bologna process can be interpreted as the toolbar of the previous ones. It supports the mobility of students by easing their frameworks of timing – courses students have started can be modified during the time of training with less losings than previously in the traditional systems. Lifelong learning possibilities can be attached to undergraduate or postgraduate course through a system of credit approval. Many think that we have already finalised our credit system and do not recognize that it is only an instrument of a more important goal: the facilitation of student mobility. The current credit structure in Hungary had been characterised before anybody could foresee the main goal, without elucidating the principles of the structure.

Not even the requirements of mobility are satisfying through this system as mobility of students can be interpreted as a set of multi-dimensional expectations:

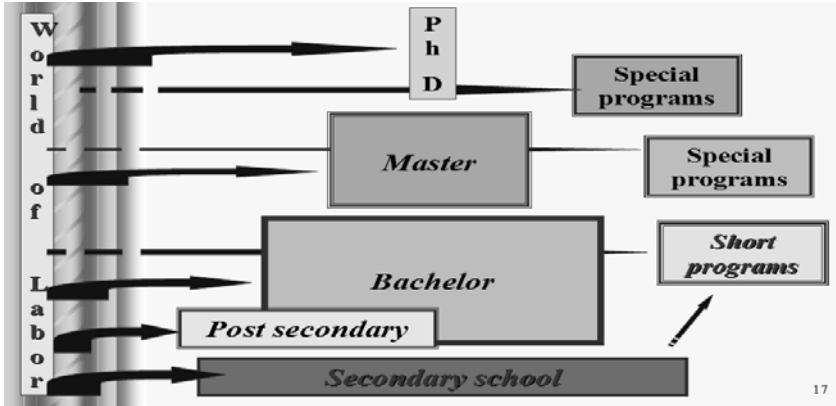
- More flexible (either faster or slower) advancement on a particular field of study.
- Opportunity of mobility among national universities – credit approval of performed studies at different institutions.
- Credit approval opportunities at different faculties of the same university.
- Credit approval of studies at universities of foreign countries.
- Intermittence – orientation to the labour market and returning back to studies after a while (the opportunity of lifelong learning) (see Figure 4).

Unfortunately, throughout the application of the Bologna process in Hungary opportunities given by horizontal mobility has not been recognized yet. There are only a few cases when within the undergraduate phase of training mobility may be realised after the completion of the first or second semester. In order to give wider space to such solutions more jointly built up modules would be needed. At the beginning of the training more subjects dealing with general

information and basic skills should be introduced that deal with essential demands regardless of further orientations of students. In practice we can trace its contrary. As early as in the first semester most of the time hard core professional basic subjects are offered. Consequently in the case of orientation change of students both the individual and society pays a significant price for maintaining an inflexible structure. The Hungarian Bologna process lacks an in-built flexibility. Financial pressure on institutions of higher education can serve as an explanation for the lack of mobility. Fiscal regulations do not support possibilities for students to change courses or institutions. Consequently credit agreements between institutions occur rather rarely concerning both national and international circumstances and accordingly the current Bologna structure does not favour mobility of students in Hungary.

The Hungarian way of realisation of the credit system operates against the relevant original goals and becomes a kind of “l’art pour l’art” game. It supports mobility of students to an extent that the individual can flow in the training tubes faster or slower in time. Mobility of students should cover much more complex issues. Cycles of the linear structure should harmonise the requirements of cross-mobility and be fitted into the structures of the undergraduate and graduate courses of significant institutions of the EHEA. Next the revision of the credit system should follow in order to serve the initial goal (i.e. mobility of students) as efficiently as possible. Regarding the realisation of cross-mobility the modular revision of the training structure is a must as it is a typical practice in countries of the EHEA. Finally bilateral-multilateral credit agreements should be made between national and foreign institutions of higher education. Documents of the Bologna process attract attention to these demands vigorously. Accordingly to the concept of lifelong learning, expanding the application of the credit system, credit accumulation to spheres other than gradual education has not been realised successfully in Hungary.

Figure 4: Lifelong learning – back to school from the world of labour



Supporting equality of opportunities and mobility

4. Supporting access to mobility with equal opportunities, fighting against obstacles, especially
  - access to studies, practical and relevant services in the case of students,
  - concern of social security (insurance) during the period of exchange programmes in the case of lecturers, researchers and administrative workers.

The issue of mobility arises both in the case of students and lecturers. It is concerned significantly within the European Union that mobility of the actors of the European Higher Education Area is granted as much as that of the actors of the labour market. Students who have the chance to study partly within countries of the European Union other than their own would most likely become more flexible and mobile later in the labour market. Mobility of students and professors also add to the development of the European identity. Successfully operating systems of social support, student loans, building and reconstruction of student hostels in the past few

years also serve the equality of opportunities. In spite of these actions the ratio of student mobility is relatively low in Hungary concerning both forwarding and reception of students.

Hungary seems to remain a modest contributor of this segment of the knowledge market – we receive 12,000 people from abroad. Unfortunately our country does not have the capacity to take the advantage of magnetizing talented students – a factor that could strengthen our scientific base. In case the quality of Hungarian higher education is as excellent as we tend to believe than it should expound a much stronger magnetizing force to the knowledge market than it actually does. We lack the basic, prerequisite conditions of this process: programs, curriculum and teaching material in foreign languages, harmonizing undergraduate and postgraduate programs with the countries of the European Higher Education Area, lecturers speaking modern foreign languages, quality infrastructure or the capacity of student hostels.

In order to achieve faster development in this field we should consider the Hungarian speaking students of our neighbouring countries as primarily partners of our strategic actions – at least we do not have to overcome language barriers in these cases. Sporadic Hungarians living in more developed Western European countries could contribute to this process by supporting foundations called into being with the purpose of granting these students at Hungarian universities.

Students going abroad using mobility opportunities are even less than those who come to us. As little as the 2-3% of the total number of students (i.e. 8,000 people) study abroad for no more than one or two semesters, they come back and stay in Hungary after graduation. Financial support is rather restricted for these students – exclusively offsprings of a narrow worthy social layer can afford longer, complete courses and receive degrees abroad. Multi-national firms are eager to employ graduate employees with experience abroad.



## The question of quality

5. Supporting the development of European cooperation based on comparable criteria and methods concerning quality insurance

Transparency is only one prerequisite of mutual acceptance of degrees (i.e. the content of studies, the acquired knowledge and skills and fields of applicability). The evaluation and qualification of an organization independent from training has a similar significance concerning acceptability of degrees. Organisations responsible for evaluation and qualification have to operate along the same standards within the EHEA. Developing quality insurance control is desirable in order to increase the autonomy of institutions and reduce the role of the state concerning universities. The commitment of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee concerning quality is rather arguable. Quality according to them means the involvement of qualified lecturers (those holding at least a PhD degree) in higher education. This criterion is unacceptable concerning undergraduate training. Requirements of quality should harmonize the desired goals. Absolutism of academic measurement concerning undergraduate courses as their primary role is transition of practical knowledge and providing mass education. Instead of or besides requiring an academic degree for lecturers of undergraduate courses, involving experienced professionals of particular fields should have a greater significance. Roles of traditional universities have converted to the levels of master and PhD degrees. Undergraduate training cannot be considered as a part of university in its traditional sense. Masses of students cannot be trained for elite purposes – elitist training remains the challenge of further cycles of higher education.

## The European Dimension of Higher Education

6. Supporting the necessary European concerns of higher education, especially curriculum development, trans-institutional cooperation, opportunities of mobility and integrated programs concerning studies, practical and research.

There are justifiable expectations concerning the EHEA besides satisfying economy-due mobility demands, such as to promote

- increasing the European identity of citizens,
- preserving the cultural inheritance of Europe,
- strengthening the role of the Europe as a determining actress of culture,
- cultivating and circulating (Hungarian) national culture and traditions,
- assist graduate-student to become intelligentsia.

Having been investigating dozens of applications of courses one can have an established view that course descriptions lack the dimension of the European Union as much as promoting markers of a future intelligentsia. Formulation of the European (EU) identity, preservation of the cultural inheritance of Europe should be apparent both in curricula and multi-dimensional trans-institutional relations. The existence of a future intelligentsia is probably more important than training experts more like professional barbarians.

Unfortunately the viewpoints described above lag behind during the realisation of the Bologna process in Hungary. Consequently the structure developed during the reform neither measure up to the Bologna criteria or the expectance of intelligentsia described in the Hungarian Higher Education Act.

*The New Hungarian Higher Education Act in Progress about the Bologna process*

After the elections of spring, 2010 the new government circulated the draft version of the new higher education act for public debate (the codification of its final version is estimated by the second half of 2011). This conception urges to extinguish the market driven approach of the relevant current legislation and intends to dedicate the new higher education act in service of *national* development and construction of national values. Its primary goal is to increase the educational level of Hungarian citizens serving the interest of present and future generations. *The mission and goal of higher education is to establish the intellectual and economic development of the nation* with a special focus on teacher training – the training of those who are responsible to teach and educate future generations. Below the reader is offered a review of basic principles concerning the Bologna process in the light of the changes compared to current legislation.

1. *Goals.* The essential goal of the forthcoming educational legislation is to ensure the reservation of traditional values of the Hungarian society and higher education. Its intention is to define and regulate higher education not as a service for profit but primarily as a means of public service of the state for the good of citizens of our days and their offspring. Requirements of affiliation to the EHEA or those of the European labour market in light of the Bologna process are not mentioned in the Preamble – these criteria are not mentioned as goals.
2. *Quality.* The concept of quality and its criteria are equally extended to several spheres of higher education: training, research and management.
3. *Correspondence of training, research and practice.* An interpretation based on Humboldt's concerns research in the draft. Due to fast development of modern science a significant part of

curricula becomes obsolescent in a relative short time. Follow up is ensured for those exclusively who are able to carry out research themselves or have access to practical knowledge continuously. Consequently the prerequisites of quality training are quality research and the harmonisation of research outcomes and practice. Authors of the draft seem to forget about undergraduate courses where transmitting timeless skills and knowledge is a must. Circulating the latest findings of research is a demand primarily at the PhD level and at research universities. The approach of the draft is rather elitist, neglecting the concept and requirements of mass education (and the draft even forgets mentioning this term).

4. *Distinction of colleges and universities.* Unlike current legislation the main responsibilities of universities and colleges become rather distinctive. Universities become scenarios of both training and academic workshops ready to hold their ground in the international competition. Ensuring training for professional work remains the primary goal of colleges.
5. *Cyclic (Bologna-structured) teacher training.* Hungarian higher education follows the recommendations of the Bologna Charta with a strong concern of local circumstances and following the guidelines of governmental decisions. According to the new concept Hungarian higher education operates within the framework of cyclic training, except for fields denominated in the act (medical sciences, law, veterinary sciences, arts, architecture), which need to be trained in a non-cyclic system for 10 or 12 semesters. Concerning the peculiarities of professional fields and the demands of the labour market the forthcoming act is offering the possibility of developing non-cyclic training in fields other than listed above (in brackets). In other words the draft gives an opportunity to reconsider the cyclic structure of training, regarding courses operating with this structure today and allowing the traditional, non-cyclic option for further

courses. “*Openness of the training structure*” is emphasised in the concept of the draft.

6. *Academic and professional undergraduate training.* A new element of the concept is that concerning undergraduate training it distinguishes between academic and professional branches. Compilation of the professional branch ensures the student to become a full potential professional at the labour market. Academic undergraduate courses offer wider and deeper theoretical education and less practical training as possible input for quality postgraduate courses. Those who do not wish to continue their studies on master level can complete their thesis in the semester following their final term of undergraduate course.
7. *Teacher training.* Autonomy of teacher training institutions according to the new act becomes more restricted. Government control is well reasoned as it regulates state education – a party that is also becoming centrally operated. In order to become a teacher trainee candidate one has to complete two A-levels and pass an exam of professional appropriateness. They have to specialise in two major fields and are to be trained for 5 (theory) +1 (practical) years. After completing the fifth year of their studies students receive their absolutory and start two semesters as student teachers (residents). At the end of the second residential semester candidates take a professional qualifying exam and become teachers (MEd).
8. *Post-secondary, non-university level technical/vocational training.* Post secondary technical and/or vocational training becomes the responsibility of institutions of higher educations. Credits attainable during these courses become accountable in undergraduate courses. Conversion from undergraduate courses to post secondary courses also has to be granted.
9. *State support.* Institutions of higher education run by churches (recognised by the Hungarian state) are granted state support.

Institutions of higher education maintained by the private sector and/or foundations can be supported only by the state exclusively in the case of state order except for students studying in their final academic year.

In summary we can conclude that the concept of the new Hungarian higher education act show distinct markers of deflection from the European Higher Education Area and from the recognition of the circumstances of the education market.

Concerning the principles of the Bologna Declaration intentions of reversion can be observed. The *most significant ideas* of the new concept different from and/or contradictory to those of the Bologna process can be summarised as follows:

- Outlining national goals versus those of the Bologna process.
- Negligence of education markets, consideration of higher education as public service.
- Granted state support exclusively for institutions run by the state or churches recognised by the state. Institutions maintained by the private sector and foundations can be supported by the state exclusively in the case of state order.
- Negligence of the demands of the European labour market – emphasis on satisfying the demands of the national labour market. No disposition concerning ways, methods, instruments of adaption or clues of responsibilities.
- Elitist tendencies. Negligence of peculiarities of mass education, challenges of lifelong learning and opportunities of interchanges between the world of labour and education.
- Orders the introduction of non-cyclic courses in teacher training explicitly and suggests the implementation of similar structures in other fields implicitly.
- Concerning undergraduate training distinguishes between academic and professional branches.

Accordingly, the process of reconstruction concerning Hungarian higher education seems to avoid the opportunity of integration into

the EHEA. Relevant principles that have already contradicted some essential goals of the Bologna process may position Hungary even further from the current higher education trends of the European Union.

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