



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

14 November 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 (shaded areas) 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

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Date	2009-01-29
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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.

After the long debates and preparation process in which weak points of the current legislation in the field of higher education were identified, on 14 March 2008, the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, adopted a new Law on higher education (Official Journal of the Republic of Macedonia, 35/2008).

The Law on higher education is divided into several chapters and regulates the following areas:

- Autonomy of the University;
- Higher education facilities and their operation;
- Establishment and dismissal of higher education facilities;
- Internal organization of the University and types of cooperation;
- Authorities and bodies of higher education facilities;
- Higher education quality provision and assessment;
- Development, financing and property of the higher education facilities;
- Higher education activity;
- Educational - scientific, educational and supporting staff positions;
- Students;
- Equivalency and recognition of higher education qualifications;
- Supervision of the higher education facility;
- Misdemeanour provisions.

The main areas of legal intervention are:

- Change of the current structure of the university as loose association of legal entities into an integrated university. Taking into consideration the complexity of this demanding task, a transitional period for transformation of the University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" – Skopje and the University "St. Kliment of Ohrid" - Bitola into integrated universities was defined till January 2009. In this period the new Statutes of both universities should be adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia.

oBroader activities for the Senate and Rectors are envisaged;

oNew body should be established - University Council comprised by the

representatives of students, employers' association, local self-government etc.

- Despite of public and private body of Universities, the new form of public-private non-profitable higher education institutions is introduced. Currently, under this form of universities are South-East European University established in Tetovo in 2001, with financial contribution from numerous international donors and Higher education institution of Religious Communities.

- The role of the Universities is strengthened by the new forms of their organization and management. The public universities are organized within the Rector Conference of public universities and private universities are organized within the Rector Conference of private universities. The issues of mutual interest are under the responsibility of Inter – University Conference.

- Quality Assurance:

- oStrengthened the role of the Higher Education Accreditation Board of the Republic of Macedonia and the Agency for Evaluation of Higher Education of the Republic of Macedonia into one national body for quality assurance in higher education;

- oTaking into consideration the weak points of the national quality assurance system identified during the stocktaking process for the Conference of the European ministers responsible for higher education, the Law introduces student participation, as well as participation of employers representatives (from the economy and from the public sector);

- oInternational cooperation in the quality assurance process should be introduced (peer reviewers, other quality assurance agencies and/or relevant associations);

- oMembership of the national bodies for quality assurance in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) is foreseen.

- oThe Law introduces the necessity for compliance of the national quality assurance system with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area that were adopted by the European ministers responsible for higher education (Bergen Communiqué, 2005).

- Three cycle based higher education system:

- oThe first and second cycle are described by using ECTS and generic descriptors based on learning outcomes and competences;

- oThe doctoral level qualifications are aligned with the EHEA overarching framework for qualifications using the outcomes-based approach. Considering the need for structured doctoral programmes and the need for transparent supervision and assessment, the normal workload of the third cycle would correspond to 3-4 years full time, including teaching and research activities;

- oThe introduction and use of Diploma Supplement is stipulated in the Law;

- oThe Law addresses the regulated professions;

- oLegal basis for joint degrees is established;

- oDevelopment of a national qualifications framework in compliance with the EHEA

overarching framework for qualifications, as well as with the emerging European qualification framework for lifelong learning.

Amendments of Law on Higher Education were adopted on 19 August 2008 (Official Journal of the Republic of Macedonia, 103/2008). With these amendments the tuning in specific areas was made:

- Teaching process in clinics by outstanding professionals is regulated;
- Practical placement of students is envisaged;
- System of upgrading of teaching and scientific staff according their scientific activities is planned.

The situation with the number of state higher education institutions in the country has been changed. In addition to the state universities: the "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" University in Skopje, the "St. Kliment Ohridski" University in Bitola and the State University in Tetovo, on 27 March 2007 the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia passed a Law for establishment of the "Goce Delchev" University in Shtip.

According to the Law for Changes and Amendments to the Law for establishment of State University "Goce Delchev" in Shtip, Law for establishment of Tehnological-Tehnickal Faculty, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Law and Faculty of Security within the University "St. Kliment of Ohrid" in Bitola, and Law for Changes and Amendments to the Law for establishment of State University in Tetovo, (Official Journal of the Republic of Macedonia, 81/2008), the Government of the Republic of Macedonia beginning the process of opening the 10 new faculties within the public universities. Some of them start – up their activities in the academic year 2008/2009.

The most significant reforms in the HE system is the implementation of the country's strategy for opening HE units of dispersed studies in almost every town in the country. The ultimate aim, with the opening of these dipersed study programes in the towns outside the headquarters of the Universities, is to encrease the number of graduates in the country and bring Universities closer to the rural areas.

2. Partnership

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

With the signing of the Bologna Declaration in 2003, the national authorities in the Republic of Macedonia committed themselves to successful implementation of the Bologna principles and objectives. For that purpose the Ministry of Education and Science formed a working group for Bologna follow - up whose main activity is to monitor the implementation of the requirements deriving from the Bologna Process. From the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Bergen in 2005, the signatory countries undertook the responsibility for establishing a National teams of Bologna promoters. In the Republic of Macedonia the National team of Bologna promoters functions as the main dissemination tool at national level for presenting the novelties and trends deriving from the Bologna Process. The two bodies function in mutual close relationship for successful implementation of Bologna action lines and principles. At national level contact person for tuning process is appointed, giving instruction and providing help to the universities in the process of implementation of tuning methodologies in 12 subject areas elaborated under the I, II, III and IV tuning projects.

- a) Does your country have a national working group for Bologna follow-up ¹
- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
- b) Does your national Bologna follow-up group include representatives of
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Ministry | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rectors' conference | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Academic staff | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Staff trade unions | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National Quality Assurance Agency | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Employers | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Other (please specify) _____
- c) Does your country have a Bologna promoters' group²
- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
- d) Does your national Bologna promoters' group include representatives of
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Ministry | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rectors' conference | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Academic staff | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Staff trade unions | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National Quality Assurance Agency | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

¹ A group that develops policy proposals for implementing the Bologna Process

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

Employers _____
Other (please specify) _____

Yes No

Please add any additional comments if necessary:

The work of the National team of Bologna promoters (Higher Education Reform Experts Team) is financially supported by the European Commission, DG EAC, through the working plan and budget of the National Tempus Office. Their work is mostly concentrated on promotion and raising awareness of the Bologna Process benefits at national and institutional level. In 2008, the group of Bologna Promoters, with representatives of the University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius"-Skopje, the University "St. Kliment of Ohrid"-Bitola, State University in Tetovo, the University "Goce Delchev" in Shtip, the South-East European University in Tetovo and student representative organized three thematic seminars on topics relevant for Bologna action lines, in Skopje, Bitola and Tetovo, in order to bring closer the implementation of the Bologna process to the Universities. Exchange of experience of good practice among universities were presented. Information brochure on "Key actions in the Bologna Process" was published and distributed among students and academics at universities in local languages, Macedonian and Albanian.

Another example of good practice was matching the activities of the regional Tempus structural measure project "West Balkan Bologna Promoters Network" and national team of Bologna promoters. Joint presentation of the EC Bologna expert and Bologna promoters from the Republic of Macedonia was made at the University St. Kliment Ohridski in Bitola.

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.

According to the Bologna Process, reforms into the study programmes at the two cycle system were made. Thus, the traditional 5+2 model was transformed into a 4+1 or 4+1.5 model for academic studies and 3+2 for professional studies. Some studies with a duration shorter than three years, as "short cycle" studies in the framework of the first study cycle were introduced.

Experience shows that the 3+2 model for three-year undergraduate studies is the most difficult one to accept by the state higher education institutions, but frequently accepted by the private higher education institutions. The majority of faculties at the state universities maintained the four year duration of the first cycle studies, and in some cases even five or six years, as it is in the field of regulated professions.

In the restructuring of the second cycle studies, the higher education institutions respect the Bologna Process recommendations for Master's Studies with a duration of 1 or 2 years (regardless of the duration study cycle). Different models of studies can be found in the Republic of Macedonia: 3+2; 4+1; 4+1.5; 4+2; 5+2; 6+2.

The first study cycle is realised within 180 to 240 credits, which equals the realisation of study programmes with duration of 3 to 4 years. Second cycle of studies are within the limits of 60 to 120 credits, i.e. with duration of 1 to 2 years, depending on the profiles. The ECT system has been implemented across all HEIs in the country at the first and second cycle. It can be concluded that in the past period, the HEIs directed their efforts towards up-grading and modernizing curricular programs and syllabuses that introduce modular courses, which entail replacing the existing, fixed courses with obligatory, elective or optional ones. There is evidence of a wider scope of professional profiling, greater flexibility of programs of study and concerted efforts directed at reaching compatibility with European programs in similar fields. According to the Law on Higher Education, the duration of the studies for regulated professions the EU directives would be applied.

b) Please give the percentage of the total number of all³ 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 ⁴	% of all students enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09
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³ "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*

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

University Ss. Cyril and Methodius - 37.544	37.544***	
University St. Kliment Ohridski - 13.000	2.036	15.7
State University in Tetovo - 10.504	3.010	28.6
University Goce Delchev - 5.200	20	0.5

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

Most of the HEIs in the country have already transformed their study programmes and established the two cycle system. The accreditation of the study programs for the first and the second cycle of the studies was carried out simultaneously according to the chosen model. There are some universities in the country that are introducing the second cycle of studies for the first time in the academic year 2008/2009 like the State University of Tetovo. On the other side the implementation of the study programmes of the second cycle at the "Goce Delchev" University in Shtip are in a process of accreditation except for the Faculty of Mining , Geology and Politechnics and the Faculty of Pedagogy.

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 elements⁵ 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)

The Higher Education system in the Republic of Macedonia included Doctoral studies before the official signing of the Bologna Declaration in 2003. They were not structural studies but were organised on mentorship basis i.e. the doctoral degree was gained by registering, preparing and defending doctoral thesis in a specific scientific field. The Law on Higher Education which is currently in force

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

gives the legal framework for implementation of the third cycle according to the Bologna principles, including both taught courses and independent research. With this Law universities are obliged to design structured study programmes which are with length of at least three year fulltime studies and are awarded 180 ECTS. Universities are actively involved in preparation of the third cycle study programmes and adoption of regulation books in relation to the studies.

Necessity for organisation of doctoral studies has been recognised by the HEIs. In this direction, with the goal of developing a system and a model of doctoral studies (in social sciences) in the Republic of Macedonia and in accordance with the Bologna Declaration and the national legal regulative in the field of higher education, a Tempus Structural Measure project C039B06, entitled: "Developing Doctoral Studies (as third cycle) Social Sciences in FYROM according to Bologna agreement (DOCSTUD)" was implemented. The outcome of the project is to create and implement a model of Doctoral Studies in social sciences in MK. The project partners developed a draft model (proposal) and guidelines of doctoral studies. This draft model was offered to the Universities in the Republic of Macedonia.

Example of good practice: , regional doctoral studies in civil engineering at the University in Skopje, supported by DAAD started in 2004, are continuing to be organised successfully at present. Consortium: 4 universities from Germany, 1 from Japan, 9 universities from 5 SEE countries. Three year studies cover 6 courses/30 lectures each, mentor from a SEE university and a co-mentor from the EU. Coordinated interdisciplinary approach to research and learning was accepted. To obtain the doctoral degree (PhD) the selected PhD candidates have to

1. Participate successfully in a certain number of block lectures;
2. Participate actively in seminars and to report on the progress of their work;
3. Spend a certain time at the institution of the EU advisor;
4. Prepare a dissertation at their home institutions under the guidance of advisors, in general one from SEE region and one from EU.

The PhD candidates should: hold a M.Sc. degree, be in general younger than 35 years and have good knowledge of English.

A detailed study program will be worked out by the "Lecture Committee".

To guarantee the high quality and short duration of the PhD formation the following quality control steps are foreseen:

examination on the subject of each course, intensive consultations with the advisors, and presentation of the progress of research at the two seminars.

Studies should be planned and organized so as to increase the share of young Ms's and PhD's so that the postgraduate education received will allow for swift entry into research work, all together through substantial international cooperation.

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.

According to the Constitution, the state has an obligation to encourage and support the technological development of the country. The governmental body in charge of R&D policy in the Republic of Macedonia is the Ministry of Education and Science with responsibility to organise, finance, develop and promote the research, technological development, technical culture, informatics and information systems as well as the international cooperation related to these issues. The research activities are performed and organised by a network of institutions comprising of: universities, several research institutes active in various fields and R&D units in industry. An important R&D organisation is the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Within the governmental sector, the other ministries covering different aspects of R&D are: the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Water Supply, the Ministry Health and the Ministry Ecology. Support from the National Budget: national and international research projects, publishing, grants for postgraduate and doctoral studies in the country and abroad, R&D meetings, participation of academics to international meetings, study visits abroad, programmes of the public research institutes, equipment, R&D literature etc. Technology transfer centres of national character were established at 5 faculties and one regional for SEE. The HE sector is involved in the EU Framework Programme FP7, COST and Information Society Development projects. R&D cooperation other than EU programmes: bilateral agreements with 15 countries from SEE, TACIS, EU Member States, as well as Japan, China, Turkey, Egypt, and Israel. Multilateral cooperation in framework of: IAEA, NATO-Science for Peace and Security through Science, UNESCO and UNDP.

The revision and amending of the Law on Science and Research and the Law of Technical Development in 2008, brought the national legislation closer to the European regulations, linking EHEA with ERA. Despite of the research activities of scientific institutions, these changes in the Laws give possibility for organising studies at second and third level. Both laws aim at better structuring the organisation and management of national research funding and better linking research to social and economic development. As regards integration into the European Research Area, the country is part of the Euraxess Jobs Portal (formerly known as Mobility Portal) and Euraxess Service Network (formerly known as the ERA-MORE network) and is in the process of setting up its national Euraxess Portal and Network. Further action is expected to stimulate investment in research. Reorganisation of research activities is taking place, enabling support of higher number of research projects of applied character. This encourages university- enterprise cooperation and contributes to establishment of new R&D centres in the companies. Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje has participated in establishing the European Information & Innovation Centre in the Republic of Macedonia (EIICM) in 2007, part of the Enterprise Europe Network and gateway to competitiveness and innovation. The Enterprise Europe Network is made up of close to 600 partner organisations in more than 40 countries, promoting competitiveness and innovation at the local level in Europe and beyond. EIICM services are specifically designed for small and medium

enterprises (SMEs) but are also available to all businesses, research centres and universities in Macedonia. The EIICM is established to provide information on EU legislation, help finding a business partner from any European country, benefit from innovation networks in the region or need information on funding opportunities.

At the first Call for Proposals within the framework of the Tempus IV phase, the following projects which promote research were selected for funding:

- "CREATING R&D Capacities and Instruments for boosting Higher Education-Economy Cooperations";
- "Opening University towards Society: Linking Education-Research-Innovation".

The implementation of these projects will start in January 2009.

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

The budgetary allocation for science in 2008 is still less than 1% of GDP. The level of private investment in science and research is still negligible. Expressed in MK denars the total annual national research expenditure for 2008 from public funds is 180.000.000. From this amount in terms of funding the higher education institutions in the country receive 40%-50%.

The Ministry of Education and Science awards scholarships for postgraduates and doctoral studies for studying, both in the country and abroad, in accordance to the Book of Regulations for Provision of Conditions and Criteria for Financial Award Aimed at Educating Scientific-Research Staff ("Official Journal of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 33/2004). The country allocates 22.000.000 MK denars for funding students at the second and third cycle. The number of scholarship holder and the distribution according to scientific disciplines is determined by a special decision made by the Minister of Education and Science. The candidate selection is done by making a rank list which is determined on the bases of the achieved results during the regular studies of the candidate and the following additional criteria: potential PhD candidates should not be older than 40 years and average grade from previous cycle. The preparation of the rank list is made by a Commission designated by the Minister, but the choice on the basis of the prepared rank list is made by the Minister of Education and Science. Candidates have the right to appeal if the decision is not in their favour. According to the Book of Regulation if the scholarship holder finds an employment during the course of the studies the Ministry of Education and

Science terminates the scholarship. The Ministry of Education and Science also awards single finances for technical preparation and defense of the magisterial and doctoral thesis. For candidates that are in working relationship request for financial award for preparation and defense of the magisterial and doctoral thesis submits the institution where the candidate is employed. Scholarship holder which has once used financial ward for this purpose can not reapply for another.

- c) Is there any tracking system to follow the further career of doctoral graduates?
Yes No If Yes, please specify:

N/A

6. Access⁶ 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

Approximately 90% of the study programmes at all universities in the country are designed to offer the necessary qualifications to students for access to second cycle. For the three year study programmes students must have 180 ECTS and for the four year study programmes 240 ECTS or minimum 300 accumulated ECTS to get access into the third cycle.

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

At the Ss.Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje the following first cycle qualifications do not give access to the second cycle:

- professional studies in informatics
- informatics in production processes
- study programme in industrial design
- study programme in applied thermal engineering
- study programme in hydraulics and automatics
- study programme in constructions design
- study programme in engineering in chemistry and processing
- study programme in metallurgy
- study programme in synthetic and polymer materials
- study programme in nonorganic engineering
- study programme in internet and mobile technologies
- study programme in administration of computer networks
- professional nurse

⁶ Access as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Convention: "Access: the right of qualified candidates to apply and be considered for admission to higher education."

-technicians in radiology
 -logopedy
 -professional dental nurses.
 The three year program studies in the first cycle at the High Medical School at University St. Kliment Ohridski in Bitola does not give direct access to the second cycle.

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

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

N/A

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

The decision is made by the HEI in accordance to the previous study programme. If the study program to the second cycle is organised in a foreign language (English) in spite of the certificate of knowledge additional interview is organised.

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

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

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

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

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

Aproximately 80% of the second cycle studies give access to the third cycle. The approach to the second cycle is preconditioned by successful completion of the first cycle of studies. The degree attained after three years is regarded as a necessary degree of qualification for the European labour market, while the second cycle leads to Master's Degree and the third to a Doctor's Degree.

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

In some fields there are professional second cycle studies that do not give access to the third cycle.

- c) any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles

In regard to the measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles the universities are undertaking initiatives to propose special courses in order to enable access of the professional second cycle studies to the third cycle of studies.

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 HEIs in the country pay special attention to the employability of their graduates and cooperation with employers. Some of them are in an initial phase of developing this kind of strategy.

The Ss. Cyril and Methodius University has established Business Start-up Centre in 2006 as a result of project financed by the Austrian Development Agency. The name of the project is "Skopje University Business Start-Up Centre: Through Networking to Successful Companies, (Phase I – Establishment of the Centre)". The targeted group of the Business Start-up Centre are the students and the recently graduated whose successfully evaluated projects for business start-up are financed by this center. Some faculties, constituent parts of this University, traditionally organise career days within the frame of Skopje Fair - "Days of Education". Within one week interviews with potential employers and students of the final year of studies are organised.

The State University of Tetovo has recently established the Center for Student and Career Services in order to provide each student with the resources required for current academic and future professional success. The Center is in its initial phase of development, but the eventual goals will include the establishment of an alumni network, an honors program in order to identify exceptional students and long term academic advising in order to ensure that each student has the appropriate background for their chosen profession.

South East European University in Tetovo, has created a Career Center and has procedures in place to keep in touch with its alumni. Maintaining employability is connected to some extent with the Republic of Macedonia's progress towards membership of the EU and the wider opportunities this will offer to graduates equipped not just with subject knowledge but also with personal and transferable skills: languages, IT, presentation, etc. The University continues to develop active links with employers, for example, through internships and involving employers more in university life. The Career Centre offers two career courses as electives to all students attending the 5th and 7th semester within the four-year programme. They are also offered in the final two semesters of the three year programme. The courses are:

- "Professional Career Development"
- "Career Search Strategies"

Through these courses, students are equipped with various skills relating to self assessment, professional correspondence (CV, cover letters), interview skills, and job search skills.

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:

N/A

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 prepared⁷?

Yes No

Comment At the first Call for Proposals within the framework of the Tempus IV phase a project entitled Designing and Implementing of the NQF was approved for funding. The objective of this project is:

- To design and develop a model of National Qualifications Framework for the HE, verified by regulation at ministerial level;
- Practical implementation of the NQF through accepted set of levels in which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards in the higher education in the Republic of Macedonia.

The grant applicant institution is University of Linköping in Sweden. Other EU partners are: University of Gent in Belgium and University of Osnabrück in Germany. The beneficiary institutions from the Republic of Macedonia are: University "St. Clement of Ohrid" in Bitola; University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje; State University in Tetovo; University "Goce Delchev" in Shtip and South-East European University in Tetovo. Having in mind the objective of the project and its structural reform, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Macedonia and its already established working group for NQF, is also partner in the project. The working group for NQF within the Ministry of Education and Science participated in the preparation of the Logical Framework Matrix of the project proposal with the following Outcomes and Activities:

Outcomes:

1. The NQF designed and developed;
2. Operational mechanisms for the implementation of NQF set up and verified;
3. Relevant communication equipment for implementation of NQF purchased and installed;
4. Established NQF agency and relevant employability offices;
5. Dissemination;
6. Sustainability;
7. Quality control and monitoring;
8. Management of the project.

Activities:

- 1.1. Reviewing on the existing qualifications at national level; 1.2. Training visits for designing and developing of the NQF; 1.3. Workshop for designing the NQF; 1.4. Assigning qualifications to the levels;
- 2.1. Training visits for implementation of the NQF; 2.2. Setting up criteria for accreditation and registration of qualification in NQF, and verifying at ministerial level; 2.3. Preparing and publishing guide for NQF; 2.4. Designing learning outcome oriented study programmes;

⁷ A national framework of qualifications compatible with the overarching framework of qualifications of the EHEA

3.1. Evaluating communication equipment and IT needs relevant for NQF;
3.2. Purchasing the relevant equipment;
4.1. Establishing of NQF agency; 4.2. Establishing employability offices; 4.3. Preparing a set of europass documents.; 4.4. A pilot group of students on a study visit to EUIs;
5.1. Designing and publishing of a web site; 5.2. Information package for NQF; 5.3. Dissemination Conference;
6.1. Planning and commitment to maintain the project results;
7.1. Evaluation survey on NQF and its harmonization with EQF and ITP monitoring;
8.1. Semi-annual meetings.

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

Yes No

Comment As it can be seen from the objectives of the already mentioned project, the design and practical implementation of the NQF is planned through accepted set of levels in which all learning achievements may be measured and related to each other in a coherent way and which defines the relationship between all education and training awards in the higher education in the Republic of Macedonia.

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

Yes No

Comment According to the current Law on Higher Education which gives the legal framework for degree recognition according to the acquired ECT credits of the students, NQF whose design will commence in January 2009 will include this aspect.

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

Yes No

Comment At the beginning of 2008, the Ministry of Education and Science, established a working group for preparation of working document for NQF. This group represents the stakeholders in education in Macedonia: the Ministry of Education and Science, the Bureau for Development of Education, representatives from the state and the private HE institutions, principals of schools and students. These efforts and processes also represent an integral part of the national Employment Strategy 2010 and the National Action Plan for Employment 2006-2008, developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Politics and is in line with the European Employment Strategy Guidelines, i.e. EU Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs. This project will help Macedonian higher education institutions to ensure that the qualifications meet the country's economic and social needs, are of good quality, provide flexibility and progression for learners and enjoy international recognition.

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 N/A

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 N/A

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 The implementation of the abovementioned project will begin in January 2009. The project is foreseen to last 3 years and during that time the project team will endeavour to implement all envisaged outcomes.

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 N/A

i) Has the self-certification report been published?

Yes No

Comment N/A

Please add any additional comments if necessary:

Comment N/A

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EHEA (ESG)⁸

9. Reviewing the QA system against the ESG⁹ 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.

The review of the National QA system was undertaken in the framework of a Tempus project Structural Measure SCM-CO11B05. The project partners developed new methodology for external quality assurance in higher education, using the results from 2 reports published by project partners where analyzes of the current situation in quality assurance area in EU and neighboring countries was made, and taking into consideration the local specifics of the beneficiary country. The final version of the methodology was submitted at the Board for Accreditation in June 2007 and was officially accepted in July 2007. The process of Adaptation and implementation of recommended European standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies started with establishing an appropriate ICT environment at the Board for Accreditation. In this process the procedure to specify HW and SW requirements, procurement plans, implementation and testing was followed. The necessary activities needed to be undertaken by the Board for Accreditation in HE in order to become compliant with the European standards and guidelines were published in brochure on Macedonian and Albanian language.

As a result, redefinitions of the internal procedures at the Board for Accreditation were made, concerning the transparency of its work. As a tool for improving its quality and transparency, a web site was published (www.board.edu.mk). The web site contains all materials, methodologies, reports and documents produced by the Board for Accreditation. Registry for Higher education institutions was developed where higher education institutions in the country are listed with complete data about their status, study programs, staff etc. Regarding the activities for increasing Boards independency, the process of allocating the Board to new offices different that the current ones owned by the Ministry of HE is under way.

Another project in the field of QA entitled "Quality Management at Universities in Macedonia" was undertaken in the framework of the Tempus programme which has achieved the following results:

- General QM Model and QM System for the four Rectorates created

Because of the differences (in the processes) between the four universities and their rectorates, a general QM Model and general QM System has been first created that covered the specifics of all universities. For this purpose, a scanning

⁸ <http://www.bologna2009benelux.org/documents/Standards-and-Guidelines-for-QA.pdf>

⁹ ESG - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

of the current situation at all universities was carried out and after the needed analysis a QM Model and QM System was created.

- Specific QM System for every Rectorate developed and implemented

Based on the created general QM Model and QM System specific QM System for every rectorate of the four universities (University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, University St. Kliment Ohridski, State University of Tetovo and South East European University) was developed. corresponding QM Documentation was developed that includes:

- QM Manuals as brief explanation/presentation of the QM Systems at each university;
- QM Procedures that explain the operative and supporting processes;
- QM Work Instruction for explanations of some parts of the Procedures;
- Records of some activities.

It may be interesting to inform, that over one hundred of different documents at each rectorate have been developed in the frame of this project.

- QM System at the four universities tested and certified

After the QM Documentation at each university was developed, it was tested by the Internal Auditors. After the universities/rectorates were certified, a special promotional/closing conference was organized where the results of the project were presented.

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: The internal quality assurance processes in state institutions including the Board of Accreditation and the Evaluation Agency is financed from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia. In some cases the Board of Accreditation and the Evaluation Agency are also funded by the applicant requesting accreditation.

- Other measures

Yes No

If Yes, please outline these measures N/A

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 N/A

9.1. Internal quality assurance in higher education institutions

Describe the internal QA systems in place in your HEIs.

The self evaluation aims to increase the ability and the mobility of the HEI for continuous quality and efficiency improvement, through out:

- forming an opinion regarding the quality of the HEI, and particularly for the quality of the Higher Education process;
- forming an opinion on the correlation of teaching and research activities of HEI;
- forming an opinion on the relations of the HEI and the domain university;
- monitoring the general activities of the HEI;
- monitoring the structure, the quality and the progress of the academic staff.

The self evaluation presents basic phase of the process of further external evaluation, within the frames of the university, the faculty the Agency. It is performed on the basis of quality analyses of relevant quantitative data. The self evaluation process is carried out on university and faculty level.

Self evaluation at university level:

- The self-assessment process is carried out by the HEIs
- The members of the Assessment Commissions are elected with secret voting by the University Senate
- The members are elected from the academic staff and student representatives which are not members of the University Senate, for a period of four years

The Commission carries out the assessment in accordance with the standards determined with the University Statute and the Guidelines for the Unique Standards of Assessment and Assessment Procedures at the Universities. The Guidelines were brought by the Inter-University Conference and they regulate the following:

- the number of the members of the Commissions;
- guidelines for the self-assessment process and the procedure;
- the rights and duties of the persons undertaking the assessment;
- the creation of working groups;
- guidelines for the contents and the preparation of the assessment reports;
- the rules on the acceptance of the self-assessment reports;
- the measures as per the assessment results;
- the publication of the self-assessment reports;
- other issues concerning the self-assessment process.

Self-assessment at faculty level:

- The self-assessment process at a Faculty level (or at the Higher Professional School level) for certain study programs and for the academic staff is carried out by an Assessment Commission;
- The members of the Assessment Commission are elected by the Faculty Academic Council with secret voting from the members of the academic staff and student representatives, for a period of four years;
- The Assessment Commission works in accordance with the standards defined with the Faculty Statute and the Guidelines for Assessment of the Higher

Education Institutions; the later is in accordance with the Guidelines for the Unique Standards of Assessment and Assessment Procedures at the Universities.

Examples of models of internal QA system at Universities in Republic of Macedonia:

The model of QA system implemented at St.Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola is based on University Evaluation Commission and similar commissions at faculty level. The University Evaluation Commission was elected for the first time in April 2002, by the University Senate according to the Law for Higher Education as an expression for the increased importance assigned to quality issues in the deregulated university sector in the Republic of Macedonia. The University Commission of Evaluation assists to the university, faculties and departments in the tasks of evaluation for quality assurance and improvement of the various study programmes offered by the university. The university's programme for evaluation is oriented towards furthering quality enhancement. The experts at the University Commission of Evaluation contribute to the strategic development work at the institutional level. The recurrent Student Barometers (satisfaction surveys) has started approach students, university teachers and other stakeholders in May 2005. Furthermore, the University Commission of Evaluation takes active interest in cooperating with universities, within and outside the country. It takes part in the national and international development work in the higher education area, including exchange of knowledge, methods, findings and contacts. The members of the University Commission of Evaluation is qualified and varied experience of performing assessments and evaluations in higher education, and are working on voluntary base.

Another internal QA system functions at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. The evaluation commissions of each of the member faculties of UKIM regularly produce evaluation reports in order to gather information and by doing so, promote internal quality within the institution. During the course of the evaluation period, all members of the university prepared annual reports whereby the gathered information was used as a starting point for the creation of their policies. Surveys have become routine practice by UKIM members and they are carried out at the end of the winter and/or summer semester involving students as respondents who follow various programs of study. The management board of the faculties' process the results of the surveys and in cooperation with the students propose measures for overcoming weaknesses. The Evaluation Commission to the UKIM Senate analyses members' state of affairs by means of a SWOT analysis. A report is prepared on the basis of the results of the analysis and evidenced state, which following verification by UKIM bodies, is subsequently subjected to deliberation according to the procedure for the external evaluation of the University. Within the scope of the processes of change being implemented within the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje as part of the European program for institutional evaluation, particular attention has been paid to activities related to assessment, consolidation and increasing of the quality in higher education. Following the self-evaluation guidelines as well as the groundwork involved for the self-evaluation report, the European association included the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje within the program for external evaluation in 2003. Following two successive visits to the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, the expert team, appointed by the association, produced the

External Evaluation Report and submitted it for the needs of the University. Within the framework of effectuating the Action Plan and the Strategy aimed at developing the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje for the period of 2004-2010, and considering the guidelines from the External Evaluation Report for 2002, as well as responding to the need for continuous assessment and reexamination of quality assurance issues within all spheres of its development, UKIM embarked upon the self-evaluation process. The self-evaluation proceedings spanned in the period between 2002-2006. The entire process was given special significance and focused on the following major goals:

- Identifying the changes made since the last evaluation, which was carried out in 2002.
- Screening the current state, conditions, problems and the necessity for modifications.
- Establishing guidelines for effectuating and implementing the UKIM reforms with a clear aim at harmonizing them with the European higher education market.

The intention of South East European University in Tetovo is to comply with European best practices in quality assessment, evaluation, and accountability. The University is developing its curricula, programmes, and quality assurance mechanisms to ensure maximum compatibility with the European Higher Education Area as described in the Bologna Declaration and the statement following the Ministers of Higher Education meetings. SEEU is participating in a European University Association Quality Culture III project and continually keeps up with developments within the European Network for Quality Assurance and other education quality bodies. SEEU has responded to the challenge of the Bologna Declaration by appointing external part-time expert ("Quality Champion"), focused on continuous quality improvement, to work with the University Quality Assurance Commission and faculty commissions including stakeholder representatives. SEEU has already implemented successful evaluation models, such as student evaluation and staff evaluation. In the 2004/2005 school year, the overall participation of the students in the process of evaluation increased to 40%, helping to build the quality culture and strengthen the SEEU community identity. Another example of SEEU's commitment to quality education is the preparatory year offered by the University. The purpose of this year is to prepare students with the basic academic foundation to continue further studies at the University. The European Universities Association (EUA) evaluated SEEU in late 2004 and released a highly positive report in early 2005. The EUA team was composed of current and former rectors from the EU academic community. The report states that: "It is clear from documents and discussions that the University has reached a crossroad in its development. In four short years it has grown into a viable higher education institution that has produced its first set of graduates". You can access the complete report on the University web site: <http://www.seeu.edu.mk/english/files/EUA%20all.pdf>.

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

Universities periodically review their programmes, in order to standardize them and create curricula in conformity with national requirements and the Bologna Process. Departments organize workshops to revise curricula according to clear guidelines. On these workshops the universities invite representatives from the industry and other higher education stakeholders in order to discuss the needs of the labour market for increase of the number of employability of the graduates. In the process of the periodic review of the study programmes the universities are always aware of the European dimension which should be present in their curricula in order to be more attractive for the potential students. Substantial curriculum changes and new programs are accredited externally by the Accreditation Board.

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.

It is a policy of the Universities to assess students not only according to the time they spend in class but also independent study and learning outcomes. Assessing students' achievement is accomplished through weighted tests, classroom and take-home assignments, and assigned projects. Assessment is both formative and summative. Grades are determined by the instructor based on his or her assessment of a student's class-room performance throughout the course and performance on take-home assignments, exams and other graded work. For an example, knowledge and skills are assessed at least three times. Grades are accumulated throughout the course and are not determined by one final test.

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 N/A

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 Quality Assurance System (QAS) in the Higher Education in RM is developed within the following framework:

- The Law of Higher Education of RM (LHE), "Official Gazette of RM" No. 64/2000, as amended;
- The Bologna Declaration and the relevant documents/reports/guidelines;
- The new LHE of RM, "Official Gazette of RM" No.35/2008, as amended; improves the existing solutions on the QAS.

The QAS in the Higher Education in RM includes the following:

- Approval, verification and recognition of the Higher Education Institution, within the framework defined with the LHE, accomplished through the accreditation process;
- Quality assessment in the following areas:
 - Performance of the activities
 - Management
 - Financing
- Evaluation system for the academic and other related activities
- Other activities and mechanisms that develop and maintain the quality of the higher education as determined with the law and the regulations of the bodies (agencies) that carry out the quality assessment of the higher education.

The structure of the Accreditation System according to the current Law:

Establisher: Preparation of a Project for Establishment of a Higher Education Institution-HEI

PHASE I: Board of Accreditation of the Higher Education of RM:

Accreditation of the Project (within 90 days)

First accreditation of each study program

Decision for Accreditation of the Project

Establisher: Act for Establishment of the HEI

Founding Committee

Preparation for work

Ministry of Education : Temporary Working License

HEI : Constitution of the organs of the HEI

Ministry of Education and The Central Register :

License Registration of the HEI (with remark: in establishment)

1. The Registrar of HEI in RM

2. The Register of Legal Entities

PHASE II (after two academic years): Board of Accreditation of the Higher Education of RM:

Accreditation of the established HEI, including accreditation of the study programs

Decision for Accreditation of the HEI

Ministry of Education : Permanent Working License

HEI : Constitution of the organs of the HEI

Ministry of Education and The Central Register :

Registration of the HEI (permanent)

1. The Registrar of HEI in RM
2. The Register of Legal Entities

The assessment and accreditation is carried out every four years as a condition for the license renewal.

Authorities of the Board of Accreditation:

- determines whether the project for establishment of a higher education institution and the submitted documentation fulfill the conditions set by the law for carrying out higher education activities;
- decides on accreditation of a scientific institution for undertaking postgraduate and doctoral studies;
- determines if the higher education institution fulfills the conditions for organizing new study programs and determines the capacity of studying at the higher education institution;
- accredits study programs;
- maintains records of the accredited higher education institutions and the other accreditations and carries out other activities as determined with the LHE;
- informs the Minister of Education for the issued accreditations and for other issues, as appropriate.

The Evaluation (Quality Assessment) of the HEI is implemented through:

1. External evaluation (external quality assessment)
2. Self-evaluation (internal quality assessment)
3. System of evaluation of the quality of the academic staff

The external evaluation and the overall assessment of the academic staff at the Universities and the other types of higher education institutions in Republic of Macedonia is carried out by the Agency for Evaluation of the Higher Education in Republic of Macedonia (Evaluation Agency, i.e. Quality Assurance Agency).

Organisational structure and responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Agency:

- The members of the Quality Assurance Agency are independent and they cannot be revoked from their position before the end of their mandate;
- The Quality Assurance Agency elects its President from its members by secret voting; the President represents the Agency;

- The Agency undertakes external evaluation on the basis of the Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education Institutions and the Academic Staff in Republic of Macedonia, proposed by the Inter-University Conference and adopted by the Agency;
- The Agency's procedures and the decision-making process are determined with a Regulation brought by the Agency, on the basis of the opinion of the Board of Accreditation and the approval of the Government of RM.

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

Yes No

If **No**, please specify: N/A

c) does your external quality assurance system cover all higher education¹⁰

Yes No

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

N/A

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

¹⁰ 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.

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:*

In accordance with the legal regulations, the statutes and other legal acts, the students, as the major participants in the teaching and learning educational process, take part in all forms of university management. They are members of the managing bodies at all university, faculty and department level. The students have one representative in each faculty/department commission on self-evaluation and three representatives in the University evaluation commission. Representative of Student Association participate in the Agency of Evaluation. Students are not participating in the Board of Accreditation.

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:

The Evaluation Agency as well as the Accreditation Board of the Republic of Macedonia are members of the Network of Central and East European Quality Assurance Agencies (SEE Network) since its establishment in 2001 and is actively participating in all its activities. The international participation in the quality assurance is present in the process of external evaluation of the Universities, faculties and other Higher Education Institution, at least one member of the experts' team is from foreign country, mainly from the neighboring countries due to the benefits of the similar languages.

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

N/A

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)

The Ministry of Education and Science throughout the Centre on Higher Education Information and Mobility /ENIC/, as the main source for providing information on recognition and mobility, is powerful promoter of the introduction and implementation of the European dimension in Higher Education in Macedonia and extremely valuable supporter of European co-operation and integration processes in Higher Education. The Ministry provides information on the institution and programs belonging to higher education system, or more precisely the appointed information centre offer advices on the recognition of foreign qualifications and encourage higher education institutions to issue the Diploma Supplement to the students in order to facilitate recognition. The Information Centre co-operate through the European Network of Information Centers, the ENIC Network. The St. Cyril and Methodius University has adopted the Diploma Supplement on June 11, 2002 by the Rector's Board and distributed to all it members – 23 faculties and 10 institutes. The document's form, content and issuance is in accordance with the University acts (Statute and Book of Rules)⁷, and is in accordance with the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format. The first students will receive the Diploma Supplement in the academic year 2008-2009. The Law on Higher Education regulates the legal provisions regarding the issuing of the Diploma Supplement free of charge to students at each level of the education cycle. With this legislative the Diploma Supplement is a part of the University documents. South East European University is issuing the Diploma Supplement in English language (besides Albanian and Macedonian), free of charge and automatically.

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* 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 The recognition of qualifications in the Republic of Macedonia is based on the general provisions of the Lisbon recognition Convention. In that way, in the Republic of Macedonia qualifications from other countries are recognized as similar to the corresponding qualifications in Macedonian system unless there are substantial differences.

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 In order to avoid problems that will follow from having to translate the documents retrospectively, the Macedonian ENIC accepts the documents in their original form, which is issued in one "widely spoken language in Europe".

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 The Macedonian ENIC besides the Diploma Supplement requires submission of the original degree or diploma. Depending on the level of the degree, submission of Magisterial or doctoral thesis is also required. The existence of a Diploma Supplement does not guarantee the status of an institution, its awards, or whether it is recognised as part of a national higher education system. Although, it should contain information on these aspects. Any way, Diploma Supplement itself is an instrument, good enough to prove the level, the content and the results gained as well as the function of the qualification.

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 The Law on Higher Education regulates the issuing of the Diploma Supplement in addition to the Diploma by the Universities of the Republic of Macedonia, which will promote international academic and professional mobility and easy recognizable qualifications for the labor market.

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

Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary

documents¹¹ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

a) Does appropriate legislation comply with the Lisbon Convention?

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved: The Law on Higher Education and especially the Regulation for Equivalence and Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications, fully complies 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: The main provisions generating from the Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition, are strictly applied in the Regulation for Equivalence and Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications. In accordance to the principles of the Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition, The Regulation for Equivalence and Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications promote fair and transparent assessment procedure. Amending on the national legislation is made, international and national legal frameworks are applied in a flexible way, with a view of making recognition possible. Partial recognition is envisaged, in cases where recognition can not be granted in accordance with the applicant request. There is a right on appeal, when recognition is different from the applicant's request, including the case where no form of recognition is possible. Assessment procedures and assessment criteria prescribed in the Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition are completely incorporated in the national Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications.

ii) Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved: The recognition of joint degrees follows the general procedures for assessment, and recognition of foreign qualifications. In the assessment and recognition of joint degrees, the degree is recognized if the joint degree is recognized by the competent authorities of all countries participating in the joint degree program. The assessment and recognition of joint degrees is based on the principles of Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees.

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

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved: N/A

c) which of the following principles are applied in practice

i) applicants' right to fair assessment

¹¹ 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)

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level The Regulation for Equivalence and Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications promote fair and transparent assessment procedure. Amending on the national legislation is made, international and national legal frameworks are applied in a flexible way, with a view of making recognition possible. There is a right on appeal, when recognition is different from the applicant's request, including the case where no form of recognition is possible. *****

ii) recognition if no substantial differences can be proven

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level Partial recognition is envisaged, in cases where recognition can not be granted in accordance with the applicant request. *****

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

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is ensured at national and institutional level N/A

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

Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is done in practice

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 **Please refer to the answer given in issue 13 of the this chapter of the Report.**

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

15. Stage of implementation of ECTS¹²

Describe the implementation of ECTS in your country.

a) Please include the percentage of the total number of higher education programmes¹³ in which all programme components are linked with ECTS credits

¹² Please refer to definitions in the ECTS User's guide, http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/guide_en.html

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

ECTS is already implemented in all study programs at the Universities in the country with the support of many successfully realised projects financed in the framework of the Tempus programme. According to the introductions of the most of the HE institutions regulations, the ECTS system is based on three basic elements: information on study programs and student achievement), mutual agreement (between the partner institutions and the student) and the use of ECTS credits (to indicate student workload). These three core elements are made operational through the use of three key documents: the information package, the application form/learning agreement and the transcript of records. Besides, the ECTS is also made operational by students, teachers and institutions who would want to make study abroad an integral part of the educational experience. These are issues of quality which are going to be determined by the higher education institutions when establishing a satisfactory basis for co-operational agreements: bilateral/multilateral.

b) Are ECTS credits linked with learning outcomes¹⁴ in your country? Please tick one:

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

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

N/A

i) is it compatible with ECTS? Yes No

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

N/A

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

Yes No

If Yes, please explain: In order to improve the understanding of learning outcomes the Universities in the country have different strategies and approaches in dealing with this issue. In the framework of the Tempus programme, the University Ss. Cyril and Methodius has taken part in the Tuning projects (III and IV) where as outcomes were produced several tools and brochures for successful implementation of the Bologna process. Also in this direction, the State University of Tetovo organizes seminars and workshops (internal and external sources and lecturers) on dissemination of information related to the application of the learning outcomes as an important instrument for enabling quality assurance and continuous review of curricula. The St. Kilment Ohridski University in Bitola is in a preparation phase of Regulation Book for

¹³ Except doctoral studies

¹⁴ 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

Studying. Within the framework of the Tempus programme, a regional Tempus Structural Measure project C035B06-2006 entitled Recognition of Architectural Degrees in CARDS Countries on Competences and Learning Outcomes was realised. The main objective of the project was the following: enhancement of the capacity for strategic planning and institutional development of schools of architecture in the region in the perspective of their incorporation into the EHAEA. The project also aimed at bringing them together in order to support the reform process and the use of information developed by the schools of architecture in Europe, in the framework of initiatives related to the Bologna process and the creation of coherent European education for architects. The project supplied the target group of heads of schools, directors of departments or academic programme coordinators of the schools in the region with: 1. the possibility to understand the state of the art in architectural education in Europe; 2. the information about the methods and strategies that schools of architecture in Europe tend to implement in their reform process; 3. a broad spectrum of data related to the structure of curricula of different schools of architecture in EU, the evaluation methods they apply, the exchange policies they follow and the links they establish with the professional bodies.

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

Yes No

If Yes, please explain: Some of the universities in the country use different methodologies for measurement and checking improvement of student workload. For example, the State University of Tetovo uses methodology which is implemented through the compilation of syllabi. The student workload is measured and improved through course surveys. Similar methods are used at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University

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

Yes No

If Yes, please explain: Each university has a different approach in undertaking actions to assist the HE staff or other stakeholders in applying ECTS. For example, the Office for ECTS Implementation at the State University of Tetovo through different seminars, workshops and individual assistance offers help to the HE staff. On the other hand, the St. Kliment Ohridski University in Bitola uses the experience gained through participation in various Tempus projects in terms of applying the ECTS. At each faculty at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University and St. Kliment Ohridski University there is ECTS coordinator.

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: N/A

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

Yes No

If Yes, please specify: N/A

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: Within the framework of the Tempus project "Towards EU Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Standards", implemented at the Ss.Cyril and Methodius University, Faculty of Law in Skopje, the target groups which are attending the training courses offered by the CIPE (Centere for Industrial Property Education), which functions as a unit witin the Faculty of Law, are awarded credits for their attendance and successful realisation of the courses. One of the target groups are the judges whose awarded credits are recognised by the Academy of Judges.

d) To what extent are any such procedures applied in practice?

Comprehensively Some A little None

Please describe the current situation: Within the current Law on Higher Education, the prior learning is addressed as a process that is undertaken by adults and is mainly understood as returning to learning. The process of recognizing the prior learning encompasses precise description of experience gained. The final desirable consequence of the recognition of prior learning would be the possibility to access to a certain study program within the tertiary education. According to the Law on Higher Education, HE Institutions may establish different forms of continuous education. Short term courses for refreshment of knowledge of employed, as well as unemployed people for raising their employability can be organised. The longest tradition of continuous education in Higher Education is in teacher training, including vocational education teachers. Besides teachers, representatives of the social partners (Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Economy, Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Education and Culture, as well as employers) are involved in continuous education. Continuous education structures at HE institutions for different stakeholders have been established widely addressed in the framework of the Tempus programe. Through curricula development and institutional building projects the universities are enforcing the LLL dimension with the HE. In that direction since 2002, 5 national and one regional technology transfer centre, institution building centers relevant for European integration (e.g. "European Integration Training Center", Center for EU Industrial Property Law, Center for Assessment of Pressure Equipment) have been established.

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.

For the first time introduced State Baccalaureate (Matura) in secondary education in 2007/2008, replaced university entrance exams. It is realistic to expect an increasing number of secondary students from the under-represented social groups to qualify for university entrance. The most significant reforms in the higher education system is the implementation of the country's strategy for opening higher education units of dispersed studies at almost every town in the country. The ultimate aim, with the opening of these dispersed study programs in the towns outside the headquarters of the Universities, is to increase the number of graduates in the country and bring Universities closer to the rural areas.

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 In direction of designing the NQF this issue will be taken into consideration.

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 Measures for support of HE staff in establishing flexible learning paths will be taken into consideration with the design of the NQF.

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 The Law also ensures adequate and equitable access to higher education to the citizens who belong to the minority groups and to the representatives of the families whose members took part in the war conflict of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia. In order to create real conditions and assumptions for the realization of this right, the so called "positive discrimination" measure is applied. It gives opportunity, in the framework of the already confirmed Announcement conditions, besides the full-time students, in first year, students from the minority ethnical groups, in the Republic of Macedonia, to be enrolled in the so called additional quota. The number of students in the additional quota is determined by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.

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 Study and subject programmes are developed to serve the graduating profile, respect the criteria for grouping teaching disciplines into compulsory, elective and optional, determining their relationship, one-semester, two-semester and more-semester subjects, types and number of courses, studies and study groups, according to the standards for profiling of the graduates and for efficiency in completing the teaching programme with a flexible approach to courses, studies and study groups. The majority of study programmes contain a subject on ICT literacy. Part of the study programmes include application of information-communication technologies in the areas they educate for.*** VO IZMENI I DOPOLNUVANJA NA ZV OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONALS AND TEACHING PROCESS***

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 Recently, universities have been abandoning the broad profile and are introducing the so-called flexible vocational profile. They are creating modularised study programmes in which the student, in accordance with his/her inclinations, can choose one or more narrow vocational profiles.

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,

Higher education institutions are developing study programmes (or sets of modules) that serve the purpose of completed qualification, pre- and re-qualification of graduates and all others that have a need of acquiring qualifications that will make them competitive not only on the national, but also on the European labour market. The development of such study programmes is following the dynamics and changes in the labour market in the country, in Europe and in the world.

JOINT DEGREES

18. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees¹⁵

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 N/A

¹⁵ 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.

ii) awarding joint degrees?

Yes No

If No please explain what are the obstacles N/A

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)?

The most widely spread Joint Programmes are in the following academic disciplines:

- Engineering and Technology
 - Civil Engineering
 - Electrical and Electronic Engineering
 - Computer Aided Engineering
- Agricultural and Food Sciences
 - Agriculture
- Humanities
 - Law
 - Political Sciences
 - Economics
 - E-business

e) Estimate the number of joint programmes in your country

The joint programmes at the Universities in the Republic of Macedonia are as a result of the cooperation between the universities within the framework of various programmes like Tempus, etc.

At the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University the following joint programmes are realised at the first cycle of studies within the framework of the Tempus programme:

CD_JEP-19028-2004 "Development of Environmental and Resources Engineering Curriculum" (realised jointly between the Faculty of Civil Engineering, the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy);

CD_JEP-17030-2002 "E-Business Management for the Faculty of Economics, Skopje".

At the second cycle there is a variety of joint programmes:

CD_JEP-40093-2005 "Master of Ebusiness Management at the Faculty of Economics in Skopje (MEMFES)";

CD_JEP-40015-2005 "STATISTICAL METHODS FOR BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS";

CD_JEP-18126-2003 "Cost Effective & Environmentally Friendly Energy Systems"

Joint M.Sc. Curriculum in Software engineering as a regional studies, organized by the University "Ss Cyril and Methody" in Skopje, University of Novi Sad, University of Belgrade and University of Nis (CD_JEP-18035-2003). The studies are accredited by the Accreditation Board on 14th December 2006; Interdisciplinary studies on environment and resources engineering at undergraduate level, offers a Joint Degree title in the Environmental and Resources Engineering, which is jointly issued by the University "Ss Cyril and Methody" in Skopje and University of Florence (CD_JEP-19028-2004). The first generation of students entered the studies in the 2008/2009 academic year. Another joint study programme organised jointly with the Faculty of Philology in Skopje and the University of Orleans in France, is "Master Specialist Studies in literatures, languages and linguistics, stream languages, business and international trade".

At the third cycle of studies the International Center for doctoral studies in the field of Engineering offers international doctoral studies. These studies are organised jointly by the Faculty of Civil Engineering and the Institute for Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and Universities in the countries in the region (University of Belgrade-Serbia; University of Nis-Serbia; University of Sarajevo-Bosnia and Herzegovina; University of Mostar (east & west)-Bosnia and Herzegovina; University of Montenegro, Podgorica-Montenegro; University of Tirana-Albania and Germany (Ruhr-Universität Bochum; RWTH Aachen; Bauhaus-Universität Weimar; Universität Kassel) .

At the first Call for Proposals published under the new Tempus IV phase (2007-2013), the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University - Faculty of Law has been awarded a grant by the EC for the Tempus Joint Project entitled "Regional Joint Degree Master of Intellectual Property Law". Grant applicant institution is the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University and the project will start implementing its activities most probably by the end of 2008. The project is regional and will be realised jointly by Macedonian and Serbian Universities partners in the project.

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

The current Law on Higher Education provides precise introduction of joint degrees as well as the recognition of joint degrees. The National Strategy for Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia 2005 – 2015, provides the responsibility for the Ministry of Education and Science to develop secondary legislation for study programs that will lead to the joint degree certificate. The introduction of the ECTS is one of the prerequisites for gearing the Universities closer to the European system of higher education. The compatibility of the study

programmes with the study programmes in Europe gives a common ground for further cooperation and encouraging of joint programmes. Long-term bilateral cooperation with foreign universities is realized in areas that directly reflect the priorities and the interests of the partners. Bilateral, regional and multilateral forms of academic exchange and the direct cooperation of educational institutions are interconnected and mutually dependent. Bilateral cooperation includes 70 cooperative university agreements comprising faculty and student's mobility and exchanges, joint research projects, joint degrees, workshops and seminars.

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

Systems for encouragement of joint degree cooperation in the Republic of Macedonia are:
-CEEPUS;
-Tempus;
-Central European Initiative University Network.

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?

The current Law on HE regulates the legal provisions for mobility and encourages universities to enhance the aspects of mobility through active involvement in international cooperation. Another measures for enhancement of student and staff mobility is the initiative undertaken by each unit operating within the Universities in the country to appoint ECTS coordinators. The Republic of Macedonia is enhancing its participation in EU education and R&D programmes. The main driver of teachers and staff mobility from/to the country are Tempus, the Seventh Framework program, COST, CEEPUS, Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window, Erasmus Mundus Western Balkan Window and bilateral cooperation. It is likely that, in the long term, traditional student and staff mobility will be eclipsed by study program mobility, as more transnational programs are offered.

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: The Agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Community on the facilitation of the issuance of visas entered into force on 1 January 2007. The Agreement facilitates the visa issuance procedures for citizens of the Republic of Macedonia for an intended stay not longer than 90 days in a period of 180 days. The Agreement is applicable for all European Union member-states, with the exception Denmark, UK and Ireland. The Agreement envisages visa facilitations

for persons participating in scientific, research, cultural and artistic activities including university and other exchange programmes. With this Agreement, multiple-entry visas with a term of validity of up to one year are issued to the following categories of persons, provided that during the previous year they have obtained at least one visa, have made use of it in accordance with the laws on entry and stay of the visited State and that there are reasons for requesting a multiple-entry visa:

- Students and post-graduate students who regularly undertake trips for the purposes of study or educational training, including in the framework of exchange programs;
- Persons who participate in scientific, research, cultural and artistic activities, including university and other exchange programs who regularly travel to the Member States.

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 Republic of Macedonia provides financial support for foreign students and staff who realise mobility on bilateral agreements. A good example of this kind of mobility is the mobility realised within the framework of the Central European Exchange Program for University Studies. The CEEPUS offers grants that are comprehensive intended to cover the cost of living, expenses for laboratory fees according to general usage in the host country where applicable, housing and basic medical insurance where applicable during the stay in the host country. CEEPUS grants are linked to the cost of living in the respective host country and it is safeguarded against inflation.

d) Are study periods taken abroad recognised?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation: There are some difficulties in recognising the study periods taken abroad, but the universities are strongly devoted to surpassing this obstacle by concluding learning agreements on bilateral and multilateral level. As an example of best practice is the Faculty of Economics at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje within the framework of postgraduate study program designed through a financial support of the Tempus program in the field of E-business: JEP-40093-2005 (Master of Ebusiness Management at the Faculty of Economics in Skopje (MEMFES).

e) Is there accommodation for mobile students and staff?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation: According to the Book of Regulations for procedure and awarding CEEPUS grant the accommodation is included in the scholarship. Also there are possibilities for accommodation arrangements for incoming students and academic staff which

realise mobility on bilateral basis. Under the Student Standard Department of the Ministry of Education and Science, student dormitories are on disposal if the mobility is announced on time.

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

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation: Measures to increase outward student and staff mobility are undertaken through active participation of the universities in diverse programmes, academic networks and bilateral agreements.

For the Republic of Macedonia, The Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window, was opened in December 2007 with a Call for Proposals for the first time. Six project applications were submitted out of which one was approved for funding. MK HEIs participating in the project: University Ss. Cyril and Methodius - Skopje, University St. Kliment Ohridski – Bitola, South East European University - Tetovo. BASILEUS PROJECT provides funding for academic mobility from the Western Balkans to the EU and vice-versa. The Basileus partnership consists of 8 EU universities and 12 universities in the Western Balkans region. The project is funded by the 'Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window Programme' of the European Commission, and is the first large-scale mobility project for this region. Students and staff members of all partnership universities, both from the Western Balkan countries and the EU, as well as other nationals of the participating Western Balkan countries, can apply for scholarships:

:: Bachelor students: 6 or 10 or 34 months mobility period;

:: Master students: 6 or 10 or 22 months mobility period;

:: Doctoral students: 6 or 10 or 34 months mobility period;

:: Post-doctoral students: 10 months mobility period;

:: Academic staff (teaching, training and research): 1 month mobility period.

For the Republic of Macedonia within the framework of this project are foreseen 101 out of which incoming are 27, and outgoing 74 mobility at all academic levels. The 74 outgoing mobilities are distributed as following:

-undergraduate 31

-postgraduate 16

-doctorate 9

-posdoctorate 9

-academic staff 9.

The EC Erasmus Mundus Western Balkan Window offers scholarships for MK students to study at the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Studies of EU Higher Education Institutions. On the last Call, out of 33 submitted applications from MK students, 8 have received grants and 9 are put on reserve list.

Through CEEPUS, students are given possibility to spend a study period abroad or teachers to undertake a teaching period at a partner university. These opportunities are designed to strengthen professional relationships among Central European scholars. CEEPUS grants are awarded for a minimum stay of 3 months and a maximum of 10 months. Lecturers, visiting professors and teaching staff must carry a workload of at least 6 teaching hours a week at the host university, during a stay of 5 working days.

Another possibility for enhancement of mobility is made through the participation of the universities in the following academic networks:

- UNICA - Network of the Universities from capitals of Europe;
- CEI - Central European Initiative;
- IAU - International Association of Universities;
- AUF - Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie;
- UNI-ADRION - Virtual University of the Adriatic-Ionian Basin;
- INTERREG III (MIREES - Bologna University);
- CIRCEOS - Interuniversity Centre for CEE countries;
- NET/USEE - Network of SEE Universities.

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.
N/A

b) Are portable loans available in your country?

Yes No

If No, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of loans. The national scheme for loans covers only home students. Support to external mobility is not covered with the scheme. Special policy was developed to stimulate mobility of Macedonians from the neighbouring countries to study in the country.

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 country supports the quality and visibility of widely recognised centers of excellence providing: postgraduate and doctoral studies in seismology-regional studies organised; short retraining courses at the Balkan Centre for haemoglobinopathies etc. Tuning the national degree structure to the Bologna concept raised the attractiveness of the HE system. First attempt was made in framework of Erasmus Mundus for promotion of cultural diversity and specificities combined with multimedia e-learning possibilities. In addition to the introduction of the ECTS, all universities prepare information package which explains all the

conditions for studying and the opportunities offered to the student. Finally, there is no doubt that the attractiveness of the national HE system will be raised with the implementation of the Bologna Process requirements (e.g. ECTS, DS, QF, QA, recognition etc.)

b) What has your country done to:

i) improve information on the EHEA outside Europe?

The Ministry of Education and Science developed intensive activities for establishing legal bases for bilateral cooperation in the field of education, research and development with countries from Europe and countries like Turkey, Japan, Egypt, Israel, India and China. Among the various activities, these countries finance projects for institution building of the Ministry of education and Science and award scientific and educational scholarships.

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

The Republic of Macedonia promotes European higher education and enhances its world-wide attractiveness and competitiveness through the following issues :

- Increasing the proportion of the younger generation in tertiary education;
- Increasing the number of places in the tertiary education system as a whole and gradually eliminating restrictions on enrolment for the majority of study programs;
- Gradual co-financing part-time studies and discussing the possibilities for free of charge studies for full-time undergraduate study programs and fostering diverse sources of funding for higher education activities;
- Improving and modernizing the scholarship system and student standards of living;
- Increasing the success and effectiveness of undergraduate and postgraduate studies through appropriate investment in personnel, equipment and structure of higher education institutions, as well as through operational modernization, integration of research and educational work, improvement of teaching and educational capabilities, introduction of the credit system, distance education and self assessment of the quality of academic work in higher education institutions, with full student participation.
- Ensuring the conditions for successful, autonomous and socially responsible universities and ensuring their continuous development and allow for the creation of a decentralized higher education infrastructure;
- Encouraging cooperation among universities and cooperation between the economy;
- Improving the success and effectiveness of studies by investing in different forms of university fields;
- Encouraging international cooperation among higher education institutions, in particular in the projects of the European Union and regional programs and encouraging the formation of a European Higher Education Area in accordance with the declaration of the European Education Ministers.

iii) strengthen cooperation based on partnership in higher education?

The cooperation based on partnership in the Higher Education is strengthened by active participation of Macedonian universities numerous programmes, academic networks and bilateral agreements. Such are the already mentioned programmes: The Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window, Tempus, CEEPUS(based on network participation), FP7, COST. For example, the Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology, a member of UKIM, has established international study programmes in earthquake engineering in the second and third cycle of the studies that attract and include students from over 40 countries worldwide.

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

The Republic of Macedonia has intensified policy dialogue with Japan and Israel.

v) improve recognition of qualifications with other world regions?

According to the current Law on Higher Education, the procedure for qualifications recognition is the same, both for degree acquired in some EU country and for countries belonging to other world regions.

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 complexity of the Bologna Process requires continuous updating of the legal framework, with the aim of developing a mandatory regulatory context for higher education reforms. The adoption of the new Law on Higher Education in 2008, gave legal framework for update and change of bylaws and other legal

instruments in the field of higher education as well as the legislation in the areas influencing its development (e.g. financial legislation, legislation covering labour and social security, intellectual property protection legislation, legislation on mobility and movement of citizens, etc.).

Short term challenges:

- The main challenge in near future is the implementation of the integrated structure of university.
- In reaching the goals and principles of the Bologna Declaration the universities in the country are faced with the short term challenge of organising the third cycle of studies according to the Bologna process. The current Law on HE gives the legal framework for this activities and the universities are actively involved in preparation of structured PhD studies which are envisaged to be introduced in the academic year 2010/2011.
- According to the current Law on Higher Education, the Ministry is responsible for establishing a Council of Higher Education which will be independent in its work and will be responsible for the issues regarding the financing and implementation of the Programme for Higher Education Activity.

Following the overarching National Programme for Development of Education 2005-2015, and objectives of the Bologna Declaration, the higher education institutions work on reform of the higher education system and strengthening their capacities. The reforms of the higher education system will continue in accordance with the agreed long-term national objectives:

- Rising the number of citizens with completed higher education;
- Reforms in compliance with the Bologna process;
- Increased percentage of citizens enrolled in higher education;
- Equitable access to higher education;
- Rising efficiency of higher education;
- Strengthening of the forms of life-long learning;
- Support to training for application of information technologies at the universities;
- Support to science and research activities;
- Support to training of the teaching staff for improving the quality of the studies;
- Support to projects that contribute to the implementation of the Bologna Process.

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) 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?

In Republic of Macedonia, the equal access to education is regulated according to the Constitution and the Laws on primary, secondary and higher education delivered from it. The Article 44 from the Constitution stipulates the right to equal conditions for education of each individual, with a special accent on the primary and secondary education which are compulsory. Access to higher education has each individual and it is regulated with the Law on Higher Education ("Official Gazette" of RM n° 35), (Article 7 and 108). This Law also regulates the main conditions for enrolment at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies. In it is stated that the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have equal conditions - right to education at the higher education institutions. The Law also ensures adequate and equitable access to higher education to the citizens who belong to the minority groups and to the representatives of the families whose members took part in the war conflict of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia. Status of students, doctorates and specialist may also have children that are without parents, that are blind, deaf, handicapped in the first and second group, mother of children under six and hospitalised students. They enjoy special benefits determined in the Articles of Association of the respective higher education institution and within the Law on Higher Education, Article 87 and 150. With the legal provisions they are freed from paying the compulsory student fee at the state higher education in the country.

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).

Enrolment at undergraduate studies is carried out according the Announcement which is published by the university. It contains the criteria and conditions for candidate enrolment, which are equal for all citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, in order to ensure equal access to the higher education. In order to create real conditions and assumptions for the realization of the right for equitable access to higher education, the so called "positive discrimination" measure is applied. It gives opportunity, in the framework of the already confirmed Announcement conditions, besides the full-time students, in first year, students from the minority ethnical groups, in the Republic of Macedonia, to be enrolled in the so called additional quota. The number of students in the additional quota is determined by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. Individuals, who do not have citizenship, are allowed to access higher education under conditions stipulated within the Law and within the ratified international Acts. Positive examples of building facilities for access to the institutions are present at the SEE University and partly at the universities in Skopje and Bitola. A Tempus project supported development of a contemporary curriculum united with social work for people with special needs (hearing problems, eyesight etc.). The study courses at this program were subjected to revision and change under the Tempus Joint European project CD_JEP-16012-2001 entitled "Inclusive Education Focusing on Curriculum Development United with Social Work". With this project all study courses were revised and changed according to the latest European trends in the field of special education and rehabilitation. With the help of this Tempus project and other donors, the Institute for Special Education and Rehabilitation managed to extend the Health Care Centre "Centre for monitoring the growth and development of the risk born children" with the foundation of a Centre for Early Intervention and Rehabilitation. In this Centre the students have practical lessons during their study period. The professional profile-general special teacher is trained to perform upbringing-educational and rehabilitation work with children who have developmental disabilities (blind, weak-sighted, deaf, weak-of-hearing, mentally retarded and somato-invalid children) from pre-school and primary school age in special pre-school institutions, special primary schools and rehabilitation institutions. Individuals who attend this study programe are qualified to work as part of professional teams in regular pre-schools and school institutions, as well as in the health and social protection institutions in which processes of protection, education and rehabilitation are realized. Within the Institute for Special Education and Rehabilitation there are additional one-year special education and rehabilitation studies organized for subject teachers which are to be working in special schools and special departments in the regular schools for children and youth with developmental disturbances. These studies are organized as an additional special education and rehabilitation education for graduate subject teachers from adequate faculties, who work or wish to work with children and youth with developmental difficulties.

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.

The most important improvement of access to higher education for students from the Albanian community was achieved by establishing the State University in Tetovo (2004). Another significant reform in the higher education system is the implementation of the country's strategy for opening higher education units of dispersed studies at almost every town in the country. The ultimate aim, with the opening of these dispersed study programs in the towns outside the headquarters of the Universities, is to increase the number of graduates in the country and bring Universities closer to the rural areas. The study programs at the higher education institutions are conducted in Macedonian language. Article 103 from the Law on Higher Education gives opportunity for conducting study programs in the languages of the representatives of ethnical groups under terms stipulated in the Law. The study programs at the higher education institutions can also be conducted in one of the world languages: for separate study programs for foreign languages, for joint study programs, for parts of study programs where lecturers from abroad participate and for study programs where the teaching is also conducted in Macedonian language.

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?

N/A

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?

Following the global trends in HE the Macedonian Government and the Ministry's project "Knowledge is strength, knowledge is power", set their priorities in Macedonian educational system, which includes the segment of Inclusive education. The Government as well as all the other social actors have an important role in providing a quality education for all and, in doing so, recognizes the importance of a broadened concept of inclusive education that addresses the diverse needs of all learners and that is relevant, equitable and effective.

(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).

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

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

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

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).

In the Republic of Macedonia, the following authorities are responsible for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the national strategy:

- Ministry of Education and Science;
- Board of Accreditation;
- Council of Higher Education
- Student Parliament
- Employers
- Rectors Conference.

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?