Quality Assurance and mutual recognition of degrees - through student’s eyes

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1) A long story short

- 1982: WESIB was founded by seven unions
- 1989: The Wall fell and WESIB changed to ESIB
- 1999: The Bologna Process starts and ESIB creates content committees
- ESIB turns into ESIB – The National Unions of Students in Europe
- 2007: ESIB is renamed into ESU and celebrates 25th anniversary
1) 45 members in 38 countries ->
over 11 millions of students in Europe
2) Recognition - state of the art

- Without properly functioning recognition of all types of learning the mainstream goals of the Bologna process will fail!
- Legal implementation versus practical implementation of legal texts
- Continuous problems with recognition of credit recognition signalled by national unions of students
  -> an indication of problems with recognition in general
fig. 21—Situation of national students returning from a period of study abroad encountering problems with the recognition of their credits

- None or almost none have problems
- Some students have problems
- Depends on where they were studying
- Many students have problems
3) Basic requirements for improved recognition

• Without proper implementation of basic Bologna concepts / tools and quality assurance of those, recognition across the EHEA can hardly emerge:
  ▫ Degree structures (cycles)
  ▫ Curriculum planning and evaluation
  ▫ ECTS
  ▫ Diploma Supplement
  ▫ Qualification Frameworks
fig. 25—Reform of degree structures in Europe

- 3 cycles in place and fully operational
- 3 cycles in place with outstanding issues
- 1st and 2nd cycles in place and 3rd cycle yet to be reformed
- 1st and 2nd cycle reform still underway
Fig. 34—Awareness about the Diploma Supplement as anticipated by NUSES

- No awareness
- Little awareness
- Some awareness
- Some awareness and increasing
- Fully aware

Awareness anticipated by respondents

- Students:
  - 7% (No awareness)
  - 27% (Little awareness)
  - 40% (Some awareness)
  - 20% (Some awareness and increasing)
  - 7% (Fully aware)

- Employers:
  - 17% (No awareness)
  - 38% (Little awareness)
  - 31% (Some awareness)
  - 14% (Some awareness and increasing)

- General public:
  - 0% (No awareness)
  - 47% (Little awareness)
  - 40% (Some awareness)
  - 7% (Some awareness and increasing)
  - 7% (Fully aware)
3) Basic requirements for improved recognition

- Institutional recognition procedures and quality assurance of those
  -> coherence
- Trust between HEIs
  -> yet, chicken and egg issue...
4) Relation between QA and recognition

• QA as a chance for real transparency of and between HEIs versus reputation based perception of HEI’s quality
• QA’s main functions are establishing accountability and trust between and within HEIs

→ These are essential requirements for functioning mutual recognition in the EHEA
5) Requirements for QA to foster recognition better

- Functioning QA of both programmes and institutions
- Actually realising internal QA and linking external QA concretely to the internal mechanisms
5) Requirements for QA to foster recognition better

- QA must be linked to the implementation of the basic Bologna tools:
  - Degree structures (cycles)
  - Curriculum planning and evaluation
  - ECTS
  - Diploma Supplement
- QA must take into account all forms of learning
5) Requirements for QA to foster recognition better

- provision of accessible, understandable information on QA procedures and decisions
  - academic infrastructure of the EHEA has been created, but over viewing information is missing
  - information database of the EHEA needed: should be included in the Bucharest Bologna Communiqué (E4 discussion)
- link QF <-> QA
6) Conclusion: How to improve recognition in the EHEA?

- QA of programmes and HEIs, taking into account all forms of learning
- Functioning internal QA and linking external QA concretely to the internal mechanisms
  ➔ Correct implementation of basic Bologna tools and QA of those
  ➔ Institutional recognition procedure and QA of those
- Provision of accessible, understandable information on QA procedures and decisions
Thank you for your attention;

I am looking forward to our discussion!

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