“The Lisbon Recognition Convention – Principles and Practice: the students’ point of view”

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Is the LRC enough to guarantee mobility in Higher Education?
Importance of Mobility in HE

Continued increase for the last 20 years

2009
- 115,500 German students enrolled at foreign universities
- An average 62 of 1000 German students are enrolled at a foreign university

Increase of 8.1% compared to 2008

1991
- An average 20 of 1000 German students are enrolled at a German university

Increase of over 200% compared to 2009

Source: Statistische Bundesamt, Deutsche Studierenden im Ausland 1999 - 2009
Importance of Mobility in Higher Education

Countries 2011
- 75% of all German students that do an semester abroad were enrolled in European countries
- Preferred countries: Spain, France, GB

Length of stay/point in time in the course of education
- 4-6 months, usually between third and sixth semester

Subjects of study
- Especially students studying cultural-, economic-, social science and sports

Source: DAAD (Anerkennung – (k)ein Problem?, 2011)
Recognition of academic achievement in 2007

- 50% of European universities used ECTS
- 41% of interviewed students had no problems with recognition at all
- 23% of interviewed German students said that there wasn’t any process of recognition
- Even though that there were “learning agreements“, 83% of interviewed students had to verify their academic achievement in their home universities again

Mistrust of what students learned abroad?

Source: DAAD (Anerkennung – (k)ein Problem?, 2007)
Recognition of academic achievement in 2011 – an improvement?!

- If ECTS was used at the host university, 66% of interviewed students said that recognition of the academic achievement caused no difficulties
  
  - Increase of 25% compared to 2007!

- Even if ECTS was used, 35% of interviewed students said that there was no recognition of academic achievement or only parts of it were recognised
  
  - Increase compared to 2007

Source: DAAD (Anerkennung – (k)ein Problem?, 2011)
Recognition of academic achievement

*types of verification (2011)*

- Content and formal verification: 31.7%
- Only content verification: 7.4%
- Only formal verification: 46.2%
- No verification because of the same curriculum between the home and host university: 1.6%

But: content verification should not be a part of the recognition process

Source: DAAD (Anerkennung – (k)ein Problem?, 2011)
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The Reversal of Evidence

- Main legal instrument for recognition of qualification in higher education
- Sets the basic principles for recognition
- LRC Article III 3 (5) „The responsibility to demonstrate that an application does not fulfill the relevant requirements lies with the body undertaking the assessment.”

Reversal of evidence

- Academic achievement of students has to be recognized, except if the university can prove that there are not equal

That article changes the point of view about recognition in higher education
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**What are problems?!**

**e.g. Germany**

- One decade between signing and ratification of LRC
- Only 9 of 16 federal states integrate the LRC in their law of higher education
- In general, universities are characterised by ignorance and dissimulation of LRC

- “Sectionalism“ in higher education curricula
- Different practice of recognition at universities beyond the LRC
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*Practice examples of recognition in at German universities*

1. No verification
2. Particular mobility modules
3. Particular practice semester as a precondition for the Bachelor or Master certificate – but with no credits
4. Only recognition of practical courses
5. … there are no borders of creativity
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No recognition – reason for not going abroad?

81 % of interviewed German students said that their academic achievements would not be recognised.

Source: DAAD (Anerkennung – (k)ein Problem?, 2011)
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Suggestions

- Better information service for students, professors and assistants of universities

Guidelines

- **Distinct regulation** in law of higher education (and LRC has to be part of law)
- We need a new definition of **competence**

Input thinking becomes Learning outcome
Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning.

- Learning outcomes are a way to “internationalize” the curricula
- New way to verify academic achievements of students

Source: ECTS User’s guide p. 35
Conclusion

*Is the LRC enough to guarantee mobility in Higher Education?*

The LRC has a big potential to increase the mobility, if there will be a stringent appliance.

But: The LRC cannot alone increase the mobility.

86% of interviewed German students said that general problems with financing are a reason for not going abroad.

Source: DAAD (Anerkennung – (k)ein Problem?, 2011)