

Bologna Seminar on
“New Perspectives for Master
Study Programmes in Europe”

Workshop 5: Types of Master Programmes:
Similarities and Differences.
Is there such a Thing as a “European Master”?

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Workshop 5: Types of Master Programmes: Similarities and Differences.

EUA studies

- Survey of Master degrees in Europe 2009
 - Has Bologna produced a recognisable template for the Master qualification?
- Trends 2010
 - Overview of overall progress towards the EHEA during the Bologna decade

Finnish degree reform

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WE HAVE A COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK IN PLACE

- An overarching framework QF-EHEA (adopted in Bergen 2005)
 - three main cycles with associated descriptors (the Dublin descriptors) as shared reference points
 - Learning outcomes
 - Knowledge, skills and competences
 - Credits
- National frameworks (NQF) compatible with the EHEA framework (developed by 2010 – work still in progress)

-> the degrees awarded by HEIs in any of the now 47 countries in EHEA will relate to the degree levels and general qualifications described in the QF-EHEA (2005)

->-> the quality of programmes will be secured as recommended in the ESG (2005)

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**EUROPEAN QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK FOR
THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA**

EQF for EHEA

Doctorate	Learning Outcomes	n.a.
Master		Normally 90 – 120 (Minimum 60)
Bachelor		180 - 240
Cycles		ECTS

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WE HAVE A COMMON EUROPEAN CONCEPT IN PLACE

A BOLOGNA MASTER:

- **ECTS 90-120**, of which at least 60 should be at Master level
- Typical duration **1-2 years**
- Disciplinary content consistent with **generic level descriptors**
- Curriculum design and pedagogy defined by **learning outcomes**
- A recognised point of entry to the European **labour market**

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Three principal forms:

- **Taught Master courses** with a strong professional development application, available in full-time, part-time, distance and mixed modes
- **Research-intensive Master programmes**, integrated into innovation and knowledge transfer activities and functioning as pre-doctoral studies for the career researcher
- **Master-level courses of varying duration** delivered mainly to returning learners on in-service, executive release or self-referral base

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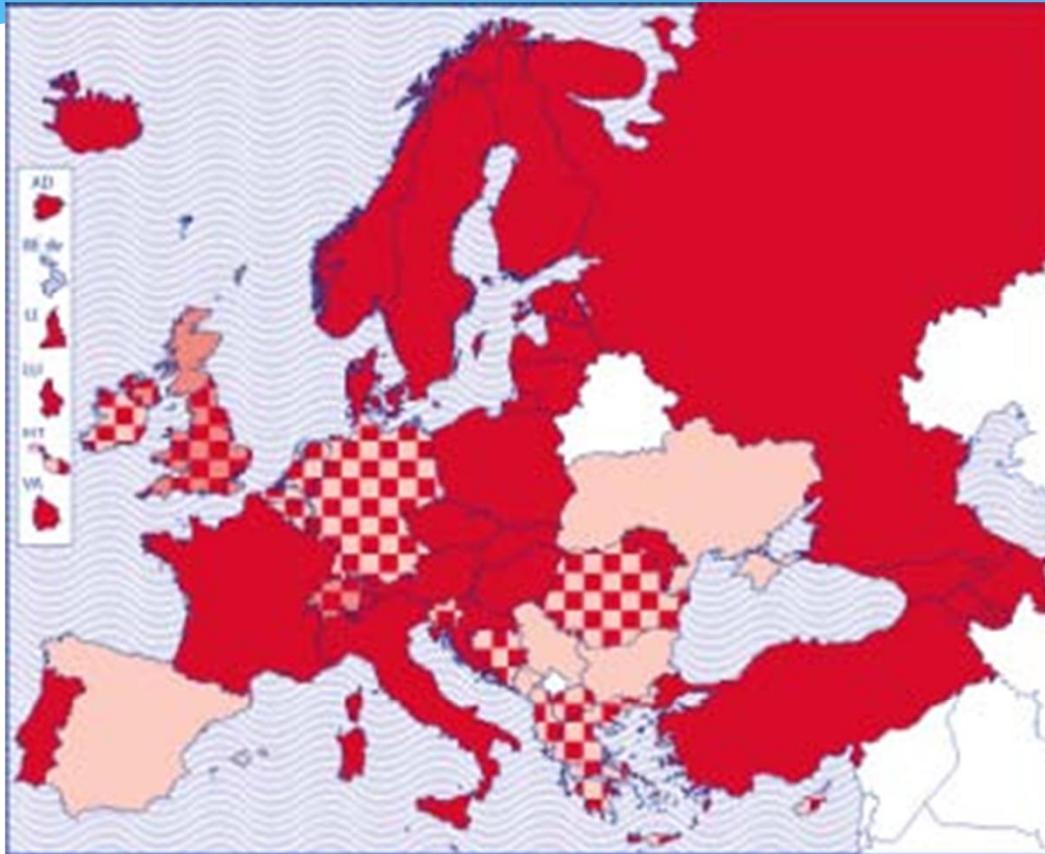
HOWEVER, WE HAVE DIFFERENCES IN NATIONAL LEGISLATION, PACE AND WAY OF IMPLEMENTATION

Trends 2010: 95% have implemented the new degree structure.

- professional degrees an exception
 - the masters is still very young in most countries
- > not all countries have produced a first cohort of successful students
- E.g. Sweden: 700 new Master level degrees in 2007
 - 3+2 Bologna myth
- > Variety of models
- > -> Is a longer Masters with more credits 'better' than a shorter Masters with fewer credits?

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Workload/duration for the most common Master programmes in the Bologna countries, 2009/10

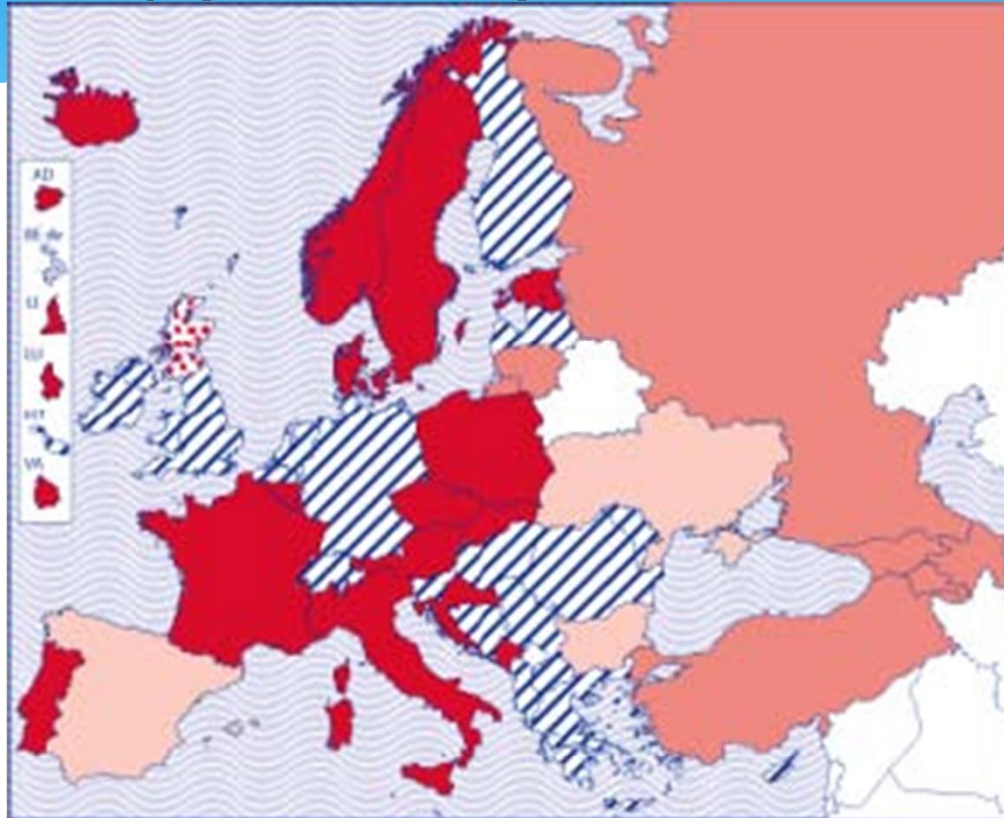


- 120 ECTS credits (2 academic years)
- 90 ECTS credits (1.5 academic years or 1 full calendar year)
- 60 ECTS credits (1 academic year)
- Not applicable

Source: Eurydice

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Overall Bologna structure model implemented in the most common programmes in the Bologna countries, 2009/10



- 180+120 credits (3+2 academic years) model
- 240+120 credits (4+2 academic years) model
- 240+90 credits (4+1.5 academic years) model
- 240+60 credits (4+1 academic years) model
- No dominant model
- Not applicable

Source: Eurydice.

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Emerging Master level (1)

- Trends V : "In many ways, it is at the second cycle level that institutions are becoming most innovative and creative, and the rise of new types of master programmes should therefore be seen as a basis on which to build specific institutional strengths in Europe".
- Trends 2010:" Some measure of diversity in Master provision is welcomed as a way to respond to different needs, as long as the purposes of each Master are clearly identified and communicated".

-> Challenge: **Proliferation and variety of Masters.**

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Emerging Master level (2)

The purpose and readability is often obscured by unclear terms and nomenclature

- Consecutive, Continuation
- Conversion, Non-consecutive
- European
- International
- Lifelong, Further-Education
- Professional
- Academic
- Joint
- Top
- Accreditedetc.

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Emerging Master level (3)

- What does a international Master degree mean?
- What is the difference between professional Master degree and more “academic” degree?
- English delivery
 - <http://www.mastersportal.eu>
 - Example: To what category “Master's Degree Program in Baltic Sea Region Studies – (M.A.)” belongs?
- Bologna second cycle contains degrees designated as Bachelor and post-Master (advanced, master + 1, master complémentaire, post Master-Master...)
- Challenge: **Terminology and lack of data**

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Developing a Master's programme (1)

Reasons:

- a course
- graduate level
- research field
- internationalisation - linked to mobility
- innovativity and competitiveness
- employability (a demand)
- multidisciplinary area
- a need for cooperation
- a professional self-esteem

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Developing a Master's programme (2)

The overall approach to the development of the Master degrees can be divided into

- Traditional
 - Cutting an existing degree in two
 - Programmes where the students individual choice in combining or selecting courses is high
- Innovative
 - research area to be build up, regional demand, lifelong learning/professional up-grading, interdisciplinary linked to institutional strategic development, attract international students
 - Programmes with very narrow defined content and courses – clearly defined **profile** and programme content

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Entering the Master's programme (1)

- There is not yet common practice regarding selection for access to Master
 - Own institution candidates preferred
 - **Most students continue still directly to Master's studies**
 - E.g. Finland – Master degree remains to be the basic degree to be taken
- > should a selection at entry be a norm?
- Progression routes not always so transparent and flexible
- Possibility of cross-border transition from Bachelor to Master is not universal
 - 53% of Trends 2010 respondents expected that the three-cycle will provide students more opportunities to move from one institution to another for the next cycle of study

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Entering the Master's programme (2)

- Recognition of foreign degree/credits is however a challenge
 - Diploma Supplement still has to gain widespread acceptance
 - Of 1500 Master Survey student respondents, 63% did not know if their institution administered a DS
- Transnational joint Master programmes are on the rise, though some legal barriers still exist
- The master is the most 'marketised' Bologna cycle and often the most expensive
 - Great differences in tuition fees
- Access to Master by female students is not demonstrably equal

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EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK ALSO INCLUDE EQUALLY IMPORTANT SHIFT TO OUTCOME-BASED CURRICULA

What about the European curriculum reform?

- Output-based
- Learning-Centred
- European-wide coordination
- Quality Assurance (ESG)

Transition to student-centred learning and to curricula based on learning outcomes is not yet completed

- Trends 2010:
 - 77% have reviewed curricula in all departments
 - 53% have developed learning outcomes in all courses (and 32% in some courses)
 - 46% have modularised their study programmes.

Learning along innovative and flexible study paths

Challenges in optionality and flexibility

- Lack of institutional autonomy
- Lack of resources (counselling, timetable, student uptake, management information systems etc.)
- **Heterogeneous student population**
- **Staff development:** new teaching methods
- Recognition of prior learning is not universally practiced
- Mainstream masters and lifelong-learning opportunities often lack integration:
 - LLL opportunities and mainstream masters have different funding schemes and legal provisions
 - **A risk that LLL could remain a side activity**

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Finding a job

- Linked to the acceptance of the Bachelor
 - Austria: Is 'BA' part of the applicants surname....
 - Netherlands and Finland: University bachelor not fit for labour market entry
- Little employer knowledge of DS (or Bologna degrees)
- Enterprises unaware of HE offer
- Need for better graduate tracking
 - Only **37%** of Trends respondents tracked their graduates
- Some development in involving social partners in institutional governance, work placement schemes, career counselling

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Future prospects: Masters are still new.....

- Joint Master programmes/Cross-border cooperation will continue to thrive
- Readability will improve as National Qualifications Frameworks are gradually put in place
- Student-centred learning will become more firmly established as European Standards and Guidelines are implemented
- Access to the doctorate will become more flexible
- **Flexible, integrated, clearly identified and adequately funded** provision at Master level will help develop the high level of skills needed in today's Europe.

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THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!