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# **Transparency of Academic Qualifications as a Gateway for Professionals' Free Movement in Europe**

**- Initial Report -**

**2005**



The project is financed by the EU,  
DGEEnlargement, within the Phare Small  
Projects Action, grant 082-116/2004

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# P A R T N E R S

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## PREFACE

The **overall objective** of the action is *to create a forum for debate gathering representatives from all the involved target groups, geographical areas and institutional backgrounds on the topic **Transparency of Academic Qualifications as a Gateway for Professionals' Free Movement in Europe***. We consider it a must of the moment, in the context of the institutional changes that take place and are expected to take place in Europe, giving the opportunity and suitable framework for well-grounded discussions and debates on the above-mentioned topic. It is obvious that the limitation to the formal provisions of the relevant regulations in the field is not efficient. It is important to analyze the way in which they are put into practice and the particular aspects that characterize the process of ensuring mutual recognition of academic qualifications in Central and Eastern European countries, as well as the potential difficulties and inconveniences that decision makers in different European countries have been facing in the process of implementing this chapter in the *acquis*.

The **specific objectives** of the project are designed in accordance with the broad institutional and geographical areas that it covers as well as with the complexity and boldness of the overall objective:

1. To initiate/intensify communication between all the participants involved in the process. Most of them have already participated in common projects, but there are new parties that have to be actively involved in the action. In this respect, it is vital to consolidate two categories of interfaces:

- the one between decisions makers from Western European Universities, on the one hand and decision makers from Central and Eastern European Universities, on the other hand;
- the one between decision makers from the academic environment and the adjacent groups, namely students and employers across Europe.

2. To evaluate and quantify to the maximum extent possible, the progress that every involved country has made in ensuring the transparency of academic qualifications and the free movement of professionals across Europe; the specificity in the progress of this process by country and region; the difficulties, obstacles and potential ignorance vis-à-vis this process in certain countries/periods of time.

This evaluation is to be accomplished before the workshop takes place, so that the representatives of the target groups would be able to acquire a sort of barometer for the analysed process in their own institutions/countries.

3. To communicate, compare, analyze, and synthesize data on the status of ensuring transparency of academic qualifications, on the occasion of the workshop to take place in the academic year 2004-2005 in Craiova, Romania. This is a good opportunity for presenting the results of the acquired "barometers" and to identify the best lines of action in order to make the process work, according to the Lisbon Convention and other regulatory provisions in the field. Participants from both Western and Central & Eastern European countries will

have to opportunity to tackle various issues regarding this process and to elaborate future strategies. What must be done; what has been done; what needs to be done in future; how to synergize efforts between countries and between institutions – these are some of the questions that the action aims at finding an answer to.

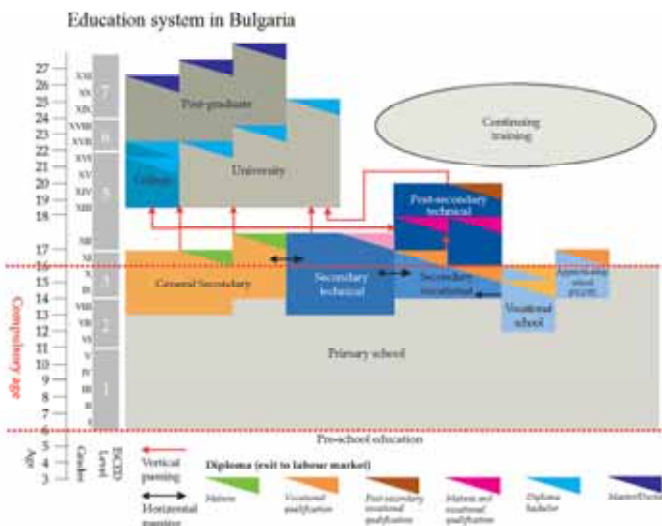
4. To create pathways for communication between participants in future, after the funding from the European Commission ceases. Free movement of professionals in Europe and the demarches that need to be done in this respect are not disparate actions that can be solved by snapping one's fingers. They require permanent interest and preoccupation from the involved parties and consistent efforts in time. The workshop will raise the public opinion's interest and will serve as an alarm signal on the above mentioned issues. Thus, it can be considered as a starting point for future initiatives in the field that can materialize in real progress for ensuring the free movement of professionals in Europe.





**HIGHER EDUCATION IN  
BULGARIA, LIFE LONG  
LEARNING AND  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING IN AN  
EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE**

## STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BULGARIA



### LEGAL FRAMEWORK – HIGHER EDUCATION

Since 1989, Bulgarian higher education has undergone several phases of reform. Two laws affecting higher education have been adopted: The Higher Education Act (1995) and the Amendment to the Higher Education Act (1999). These two sets of legislation legalized previous reform efforts initiated by higher education institutions since 1989. In particular, a new system of academic degrees was introduced, and an agency for quality assessment and

accreditation of postsecondary school activities was created. Efforts were undertaken to impose major restrictions on educational institution finances and to develop and adopt new curricula, especially in the social sciences. The 1999 amendment abolished free education and introduced tuition fees at all public universities, increased competition in admissions and started the process of bringing standards in line with Bologna Declaration. The European-related (Bologna) context of Bulgaria's legislative reform will be discussed below.

### **1. Easily Readable and Comparable Degrees**

- Bulgaria has signed and ratified the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications.
- The procedures for the recognition of foreign credentials is carried out and organized by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, and decisions on recognition are made by a commission established by the ministry. The National Information Center for Academic Recognition and Mobility (ENIC/NARIC) supports the activities of the commission on the recognition of higher-education study periods and qualifications.
- Activities related to the implementation of the **diploma supplement** are oriented towards the development of an adequate legal basis for its official use, as well as towards wide promotion of the document itself. There have been a number of educational campaigns on the use and introduction of the supplement, which were organized by the ENIC/NARIC office and targeted towards students and representatives from institutions of higher education and the ministry of education. Proposals for the implementation of the supplement and the recognition of foreign-issued supplements are currently being drawn up, along with the necessary legal framework.

- A majority of Bulgarian institutions have expressed their willingness to introduce the diploma supplement.
- The national Academic Assessment Commission recognizes doctoral degrees awarded by foreign institutions. The Bulgarian ENIC/NARIC is responsible for the certification of all national qualifications destined for external evaluation by foreign institutions.

## **2. Degree Structure**

- The 1995 Higher Education Act brought considerable changes to the structure of higher education in Bulgaria by introducing a two-tiered system. After the completion of 12 years of elementary and secondary education, students are eligible to enter the higher education system, which is organized as follows:

### **Non-University Higher Education**

Colleges, which are generally incorporated into the structure of universities, offer relatively short, vocationally oriented programs (usually 3 years in length) leading to the award of *Spetsialist* (specialist). Holders of this qualification are eligible for bachelor-level studies or for entry into the labor market.

### **University Higher Education**

**Stage I:** Four-to-five years of study is required at this level leading to the *Bakalavar* (bachelor's degree).

**Stage II:** The second level of higher education requires one-to-two years of additional study after the bachelor's degree, and leads to a **Magistar** (master's degree). The new *magistar* is currently offered in parallel with the traditional, integrated master's-level degree known as the **Diploma za Visshe Obrazovanie** (diploma of higher education). Both qualifications possess the same academic value.

**Stage III:** The third level requires a minimum of three years of study after the master's or four years of study after the bachelor's, and leads to the **Doktor** (doctoral degree).

- In developing the bachelor- and master-level qualifications, the ministry of education tailored the courses of study to increase both the adaptability and mobility of the system so as to be in compliance with the changing conditions of the market and the student. The curricula at the bachelor level provide for basic comprehensive training, thus facilitating direct access to the labor market. Master-level programs are oriented towards profile-oriented studies in a given interdisciplinary specialty.

- Only universities and specialized higher education schools offer a master's degree of one year, building on a bachelor program of four to five years. There are still some long, integrated master's programs of five-to-six years in subject areas such as architecture, law, pharmacy and medicine.

### **3. Credit Transfer**

- The Law on Higher Education foresees the implementation of the modular structure of the curricula and of credits for the evaluation of study periods, although it does not explicitly require the implementation of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System).

- In Bulgaria, ECTS mainly facilitates academic harmonization and student mobility and functions less as a tool for assessment.

- The 2003 draft of the Higher Education Act foresees the adoption of ECTS by all higher education institutions.

- According to a 2002 report by the European University Association, ECTS has been implemented within the ERASMUS framework in 14 of 42 Bulgarian universities. The American University in Bulgaria and New Bulgarian University use a different credit system, although the both are also implementing ECTS.

- The credit system is student workload-based. It is not used as an accumulation system. Sixty credits per semester constitute a full-time workload; the system is fully compatible with ECTS for credit transfer.
- Although the ECTS grading scale is not used in Bulgaria, some institutions provide equivalencies with the Bulgarian scale for mobility purposes. The Bulgarian equivalency differs slightly from institution to institution. The table below displays grade equivalencies suggested by Plovdiv University.

ECTS Grade	Bulgarian Grade	Percentage of Successful Students Normally Obtaining the Grade	Definition
A	6	10 - Excellent	outstanding performance, with only minor errors
B	5	20 - Very Good	above the average standard, with some errors
C	4.50	30 - Good	generally sound work,

			with a number of notable errors
D	4	30 - Satisfactory	fair, with significant shortcomings
E	3	10 - Sufficient	performance meets the minimal criteria
FX	2	Fail	extra work required before the credit can be awarded
F	2	Fail	considerable further work is required

#### **4. Mobility**

- Bulgaria has been a participant in many of the different European mobility programs. Bulgaria first participated in the PHARE and TEMPUS programs, which promote institutional development and education quality. It also has been a recent participant in such programs as SOCRATES-ERASMUS, CEEPUS and the Leonardo Da Vinci program.



- The number of Bulgarian institutions of higher education participating in the SOCRATES-ERASMUS programs has risen from 10 in 1999-2000 to 29 in 2002-03.
- With its integration into many of the European education programs, Bulgaria recognizes the need to adapt its system of education to the changing European environment and to work towards eradicating barriers to mobility.
- In Bulgaria, very few courses are taught in a foreign language. Subsequently, there is an imbalance of outgoing/incoming students to/from Bulgaria in exchange programs because of a perceived language barrier. In 2001-02, the total number of outgoing students through the ERASMUS program was 605 while the number of incoming students was 51.
- Other impediments to greater mobility highlighted by the ministry are: insufficient financial resources and lack of adequate equipment; insufficient motivation to participate in educational and scientific development; and a lack of well-established mechanisms for the coordination of transnational activities at the regional and European levels.
- Bulgaria has stated its readiness – from the date of the country’s accession to the European Union (EU) in May of 2004 – to adopt the terms and conditions of the Bologna agreement to admit students from EU member states to institutions of higher education in Bulgaria.

## **5. Quality Assurance**

- Institutional evaluation and accreditation was required by the Law on Higher Education (1995), but was first introduced in practice by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency in 1998. This was made possible mainly by the PHARE Program funding a one-year National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency Project. For that

project, several pilot institutional accreditation tasks were carried out, and national guidelines for developing quality assurance and quality management systems were developed. In July 1999, amendments to the Law on Higher Education were adopted, which require institutional accreditation to precede the accreditation of programs. The law defines 13 aspects of evaluation, which should be reflected in the evaluation reports but does not distinguish between program and institutional accreditation.

- The National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency is the governmental authority for quality assessment and accreditation of higher school activities. The agency develops and updates criteria and standards for accreditation; develops and approves the procedures and documentation for the accreditation process; evaluates projects for the establishment or transformation of higher schools; and assesses the conditions and activities of higher schools and their faculties on the basis of which accreditation shall either be given or refused.
- Institutional accreditation is valid for five years if a top rating is awarded and for a maximum three years if an “average” rating is awarded.
- Among the difficulties expressed by the ministry are: insufficient harmonization between the amendments to the system and administration of the system, slow adaptation of the staff and faculty toward new requirements of quality assessment and insufficient development of the system of information exchange.
- While setting specific qualitative criteria for the key structural units of universities, the law assigns institutional accreditation merely as a procedure for state licensing of higher education institutions, rather than being an instrument for encouraging the development of institutional systems for quality management. This is motivated by the dominant

belief among academics and politicians that the current state of Bulgarian higher education results from the system's structural inefficiency. It is therefore assumed that a refined structure would create better conditions for improving the quality of education and academic research.

- Over the last year, one of the main tasks of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education has been to establish reliable systems of internal assessment. Toward this end, the Center for the Competitive System for Training and Management of Higher Education was established. Focus is also being placed on the necessity for transparent qualifications, study courses and curriculums.

#### 6. Promotion of European Dimensions in Higher Education

- Bulgaria has no specific legislation concerning the development and award of joint degrees, meaning that bilateral partnerships, rather than multilateral joint degrees, result in the award of two separate degree certificates (“double degree”), in most cases.

- The Bulgarian/Romanian Interuniversity Europe Center (BRIE) in Rousse, Bulgaria, and Giurgiu, Romania, has been founded with Germany's support. BRIE offers master's programs in European studies and business informatics leading to a double degree awarded jointly by the University of Rousse and three German universities: the Center for European Integration Studies at the University of Bonn; Chemnitz University of Technology; European University Viadrina Frankfurt.

### **1.RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET AND CVT) IN A LIFELONG LEARNING PERSPECTIVE**

The National Statistical Institute published the results of the survey entitled Lifelong Learning in 2004. The study is

based on a questionnaire as an additional method for observing the work force in the second quarter of 2003. The study is based on a recommendation from Eurostat and is in compliance with Regulation №1313/2002 of the European Commission.

The conclusions from the study are as follows:

- in the second quarter of 2003, the population aged 15 and over amounts to 6.678mn. Out of these some 1.067mn (16%) are with a higher degree of education, 2.8438mn (42.6%) with a secondary degree of education and about 2.7672mn (41.4%) with primary or lower degree;
- the total number of people aged 15 and over who participate in at least one form of education is 1.3295mn, or 19.9% of the population in the group;
- the distribution of people in the various forms of education is as follows: formal education – 619,600 or 9.3% of the population in the group; non-formal education – 115,800 or 1.7%; independent education – 1.096mn or 16.4%;
- in the system of formal education the most people are educated in the field of social studies, business administration and law, technical studies, manufacturing and construction - 22.3% of those enrolled in a higher education programme and 65% of those enrolled in a secondary vocational institution;
- Non-formal education is primarily carried out in fields such as natural sciences, mathematics and information science – 19.6%, social sciences, business management and law – 18.4%, foreign languages – 14.6%, services – 11%, technical studies, manufacturing and construction 9.2%;

- independent education is the most popular form for improving the knowledge and skills – 1.096mn or 16.4% of the studies group and is implemented through reading magazines, books, information on the internet and others.

## **1.1. Policy development**

The policy on vocational education and training, including that for adults, is developed in accordance with the social and economic conditions and is in compliance with the European requirements.

The National Strategy for Continuing Vocational Training (2005-2010) was elaborated in 2004. The expert group elaborated the strategy ncluded representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the National Educational Institute. The subject of the strategy is the process for training of people over 16 years of age for acquiring, expanding and improving their vocational qualification with a view to increasing their employability, supporting their career and individual development. The major priorities set by the strategy include:

1. improving the access to continuing vocational training;
2. achieving effective cooperation among institutions involved in continuing vocational training;
3. ensuring a high quality of continuing vocational training;
4. increasing investments in continuing vocational training;
5. scientific support for continuing vocational training.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy elaborated a Concept for Lifelong Learning with a view to improving employability. The concept was put up to discussion and recommendations at the national conference treating the issues related to labour force qualifications in July 2003. In the beginning of 2004, the concept was discussed by the National Council on Employment Encouraging to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and will be further developed into a National Strategy for Developing Vocational Qualifications for Adults.

Several upcoming Phare 2003 projects envisage the development of a system for vocational training for adults – determining the needs, improving the skills of the trainers, improving the methodologies used in the training for adults.

The National Centre for Professional Development was established in July 2004. Its establishment fulfils the commitments of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in its function as the managing body of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (2007-2013). The National Centre for Professional Development will carry out training for elaborating and managing projects, which will be financed by the European Social Fund. It will study the needs for training and will elaborate the corresponding programmes and information materials. The centre will organise and carry out training courses for administrative staff related to the implementation of social policy, training for acquiring vocational qualification for both employed and unemployed people through certified vocational training activities.

Based on the National Strategy for Decreasing Poverty and Social Exclusion, adopted in 2003, the National Plan for Decreasing Poverty and Social Exclusion has been adopted in 2004. The strategic objectives of the plan have been determined to be encouraging employment, increasing incomes and avoiding the risk from social exclusion. In order to achieve these objectives it is necessary that a stronger relationship among vocational education, practical training and subsequent employment is established; the qualifications of the unemployed are improved in fields with stronger demand and in alternative professions; the opportunities of the Continuing Vocational Training are activated and utilized. In order to fulfill those objectives, the National Plan for Decreasing Poverty and Social Exclusion envisages the establishment of a National Council for coordinating and monitoring the policies and programmes for reducing poverty and social exclusion; preparing Plans for Decreasing Poverty and Social Exclusion on regional and municipal levels.

## **1.2. Adaptation of the legal framework**

The latest legislative amendments in the Vocational Education and Training Act, the Public Education Act and the Law on Level of Schooling refer to state exams and the exams for acquiring vocational qualifications. According to these amendments, the first compulsory state exams (which include two compulsory exams – Bulgarian language and literature and a subject of the student's choice, as well as an additional subject also chosen by the student) will be carried out in 2006 for the classes, which are taught according to the new curriculum. After the students sit successfully for the exams, they receive a secondary level diploma, which entitles them to the right to apply for higher educational

institutions/Universities. In case of a failure at the exams (or failure to attend), students receive a certificate for a completed course of secondary education, which does not grant them rights to apply to a higher education institution but with which they can apply for positions, which require a secondary educational degree. The student still has the right to sit for the exams and receive a secondary education diploma in future years. In order to receive a certificate for a particular degree of vocational qualification, the student who has passed the respective course of education in a vocation school has to sit for state exams on the theory and practice of the profession. The exams can be scheduled either right after the completion of the course of study or at a later period. The right to sit for the exam in future years does not expire. The two documents – secondary education diploma and certificate for vocational qualification are issued separately and independently.

The project for development in the field of higher education until 2010 is being prepared. An Ordinance for State Educational Requirements for the Introduction of Distance Learning is also to be approved, as well as an Ordinance for Implementing the European System of Credit Transfer. The Ordinance for State Educational Requirements concerning the basic documents issued by higher education institutions, including the European Diploma Supplement has already been adopted.

With amendments to the Employment Promotion Act in 2003 the existing actions, programmes and measures for encouraging employment and vocational training for adults have been improved and new ones have been introduced. The application of fiscal stimuli for employers who ensure employment, maintain and improve the qualification of their



workers was also improved. The license for carrying out training in a particular profession issued to vocational training centres is a requirement for commissioning short and long term training courses for employed and unemployed which is financed by the state budget through the structures of the Employment Agency. In the training of unemployed a placement for a period of no less than one month has been introduced.

### **1.3. Governance and responsible bodies**

Along with the currently functioning bodies for tripartite cooperation on a national level, such as the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation, the National Council for Employment Promotion, the **National Consultative Council on Vocational Qualification of the Labour Force** under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy was established in 2003 in compliance with the requirements of the Employment Promotion Act. The purpose of the Council is to coordinate the national policies and strategies for acquiring vocational qualification for both employed and unemployed people.

On a regional level, the Councils for Tripartite Cooperation and the permanent and temporary employment commissions under the district councils for regional development continue to function with the objective of addressing issues related the actions and measures for employment and for vocational training on a regional level.

### **1.4. Modernisation of the education and training system. Structure and organisation**

The optimisation of the VET schools system has recently improved according to current statistical data – for six years

the number of schools has decreased from 553 in 1998/99 to 496 in 2003/04 school year.

- Programmes and pathways (horizontal and vertical permeability)

In relation to the modernization of the Vocational Education and Training system, the structure of vocational education, offered in the formal system has changed. The students in enrolled in vocational schools are given the opportunity after the successful completion of their XII grade to acquire a secondary degree and a second level of vocational qualification. Those who wish to acquire a third level of vocational qualification can advance to the next (XIII) grade.

- Adaptation of curricula and teaching and learning methodologies

Since the beginning of the 2004/2005 school year new curricula and study programmes are being introduced according to the List of professions for vocational education and training approved in 2003. Based on the new List, which includes 187 professions, 270 curricula for 172 have been elaborated. The curricula comprise three parts: general vocational (common to all professional directions), branch (common to all professions within the branch) and specific, which is being taught in the XII and XIII grade.

The curricula are elaborated in a way, which provides opportunities for acquiring first, second and third level of vocational qualification, which makes the system more flexible and accessible, corresponding to the student's capabilities and desires.

The curricula for all professions include subjects, which provide knowledge in economics, entrepreneurship and

business communication. The number of school hours for subjects, which provide skills for using contemporary software applications relevant to the respective profession has been increased. The number of school hours for mathematics and first foreign language has been increased by 144. About 600 new study programmes have been elaborated based on these curricula. The teams which have developed the curricula comprised representatives of vocational schools, social partners and higher education institutions.

- Development of educational and occupational standards

In the Jan-Mar 2004 period, 24 State Educational Requirements have been published in the State Journal. According to the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training 48 new ones have been in the process of elaboration by the beginning of September 2004.

- Assessment and certification

In the 2003/2004 school year, state examinations for acquiring a second level of vocational qualification were carried out for the first time on national exam programmes. The theoretical exam is carried on a date common to all professional schools in the country and each vocational school determines its own date for carrying out the practical exam. According to data of the Ministry of Education and Science, in the beginning of next year, the national programmes for state exams for acquiring a third level of vocational qualification will be ready to implement.

For the first time the examination committees will include representatives of employers and trade unions in the respective sector.

- Quality assurance and accreditation

The accreditation of institutions in the system of vocational education and training – vocational schools, vocational high schools and centres for vocational training – is carried out by the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, using special accreditation criteria and indicators, such as the institution's legitimacy, management, sustainability of the quality of education, resources (human, financial and physical), domestic and international relations and events. The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training utilizes similar criteria in the accreditation of the centres for Vocational Education and Training. The accreditation of higher education institutions is carried out by the National Agency for Assessment and Accreditation.

- Developments in formal and non-formal education and training

The development in the field of formal education is represented by the multifaceted effect of the module principle of training following the end of the PHARE BG9506 program, vocational education and training. There are 33 projects from 18 towns included in the module training method for 18 vocations. During the 2003/2004 the method was adopted in 64 schools (288 classes, 7000 students). The number of teachers trained in 2004 is 594 (in 1999 - 217).

New possibilities for development of non-formal education have been available since 2004 with the initiation of projects

and national programmes, which include a training component.

In 2004, a pilot phase of the project on “Vocational training and social realization of young individuals who have dropped out of the educational system” began. The project covers the whole territory of Bulgaria and is realized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, The Ministry of Education and Science, the Regional Inspectorates of MES, the Employment Agency, including its regional structures, the Bulgarian-German centers for vocational training in Pleven and Stara Zagora, vocational schools and gymnasia.

The project “Apprenticeship based on the dual system (pilot project - 2004)” is a typical example of ensuring training for young individuals/older than 16/ with primary education. The project includes development of training programs for 4 professions, training of masters, apprenticeship and employment of the unemployed young individuals.

- Links between initial and continuing training, formal and non-formal training (including accreditation of prior learning)

The connection between secondary and continuing, formal and non-formal vocational education is stipulated in the VET Act, the state educational requirements and the list of regulated professions. The links between secondary and continuing, formal and non-formal vocational education and training are secured by:

- General criteria for vocational qualification acquisition as stated in the state educational requirements, irrespective of the institution where the training takes place;

- Implementation of a unified list of VET professions and specialized courses, connected with the professions and job descriptions in the National Classification of Professions in the Republic of Bulgaria, 1996.
- Legal frame regarding the vocational training as stated in the VET Act and the Employment Promotion Act
- General standards for quality of training that are required for the issuing of a vocational qualification certificate;
- Dividing education into two parts- theoretical and practical.

At the end of 2003, six VET frame programmes were approved; they could be applied with both initial and continuing VET. The programmes include the training frame and stipulate the conditions for the acquisition of a primary, secondary, third and fourth level of qualification, for the acquisition of certain vocational qualification skills and the improvement of the acquired qualification.

### 1.5. Delivery

- Network of formal and non-formal education and training providers

Schools, which provide vocational education and training, can be divided into the following categories:

**Art schools offer** a five-year course, leading to the acquisition of a third level of vocational qualification and a secondary education diploma. The interest in art schools is constant; students in these schools comprise 1.8% of the total number of students in the IVET system from the 1999/2000 school year up to the present.

**Vocational gymnasia offer five or six-year programs** for vocational training which leads to the acquisition of third vocational qualification level and a secondary education diploma. Vocational gymnasia have been attracting a greater number of students during the past few years– 66.8% in 1999/2000, 75% in 2003/2004 out of the total number of students in the IVET system.

**Vocational gymnasia or four-year vocational schools offer** four-year programs, leading to the acquisition of a secondary vocational qualification level and a secondary education diploma. Interest in these types of schools is decreasing- from 26.3% in 1999/2000 to 20.7% in 2003/2004 out of the total number of students in vocational schools.

**Vocational schools that offer one, two or three-year vocational programs,** leading to the acquisition of a first vocational qualification level and basic education diploma. The number of students in vocational schools with admission after 6-th or 7-th grade and three or two-year programs is decreasing from 1.2% in 1999/2000 to 0.9% in 2003/2004 out of the total number of students in the system.

**Vocational schools with admission after the 8-th grade,** offering one-year training programmes, leading to the acquisition of basic education diploma and a first vocational qualification level, play an insignificant role - only 0.2% in 1999/2000 and 0.4% in 2003/2004.

**Vocational colleges** offer training only for acquisition of fourth vocational qualification level and two-year programmes. The percentage of students in these schools is decreasing- from 3.5% in 1999/2000 to 1.3% in 2003/2004.

Vocational schools and gymnasia can offer vocational education and training as well as continuing vocational training. The process of decentralization of the formal

system is most advanced with the organization and realization of continuing vocational training at vocational schools and gymnasia. These schools can develop their own vocational training curricula and school syllabus for individuals older than 16 in accordance with the legislation requirements.

A positive aspect of the formal VET system is the possibility of choosing among different programmes with different continuity, not only at different schools, but at one school, for example- a vocational gymnasia can carry out a five or six-year training for the acquisition of a third vocational qualification level and at the same time a four-year training programmes for the acquisition of a secondary vocational qualification level.

There is no division of vocational and general higher education institutions. Many of the humanitarian higher education institutions offer training based on pedagogical, methodological and practical specialized course for acquisition of teaching qualification in respective subject, related to general educational profile in the faculty. Some of higher education institutions /HEIs/ offer vocational training for medical staff, engineering, etc. There are 51 accredited higher education institutions, 35 of which are state schools and 9 colleges. (Information available from the State Register of HEIs, MES: [www.minedu.government.bg](http://www.minedu.government.bg)).

It is most common that non-formal vocational training is organized by institutions- providers of vocational training for adults. Organizations for vocational training of adults who can issue certificates are in fact the Centres for Vocational Training, licensed according to the stipulations of the VET Act. Two hundred and twenty Centres for Vocational Training have been licensed; they are presently functioning.



The quantity distribution in regions in the country, as well as the distribution according to professions and specializations, is uneven. In some cases, this presents difficulties for the provision of an effective vocational training.

- Modernization of Infrastructure and Equipment

The envisaged modernization of the educational system includes the establishment of a secondary education network based on a special infrastructure, where each school will have a computer classroom and each computer will be logged on to the net of computer classrooms in the country. The implementation of the Informational strategy for the establishment of all school informational net, will be carried out in three stages. During the first stage, 50 informational study centres will be set up where teachers will be trained. The second stage is planned to begin in 2005; 700 computer classrooms in vocational and general secondary schools will be set up. During the third stage, primary schools will be equipped. Sixty million BGN are planned for the project implementation.

- Training for unemployed (including specific target groups: long-term unemployed, early school leavers, young graduates, disabled, Romany)

The training for unemployed is organized according to the provisions of the Employment Promotion Act. In 2003, the Employment Agency through the Labour Office Departments organized 1482 vocational training courses (in 2002 they were 1016). Over 29 thousand unemployed individuals have been trained.

Based on the type of the training the highest percentage belongs to the acquisition of additional qualification and prequalification— almost two third of the organized courses.

The initial vocational training mostly involved courses in the traditional jobs such tailors, cooks, hairdressers, beauticians, construction engineers, drivers, etc.

The most popular course includes computer training and language courses, which enhance the general employability. Specialized economics-oriented courses such as accounting, finances, management, small business management and accounting are also organized.

Motivational training and individual vocational information and guidance of unemployed as preliminary measures preceding the vocational training and the employment measures, are also carried out.

Young unemployed individuals and long-term unemployed individuals comprise an important target group. Apart from the training courses organized by the Employment Agency, these target groups are also included in a number of national and international projects and programs (Labour Market Initiatives, Phare 2001, the JOBS project and Beautiful Bulgaria Programme of UNDP, etc.).

Dropouts from the educational system comprise a group with specific problems; they are included in a special project for vocational training in the 2004 National Employment Action Plan (description available on page 12).

Specialized programmes and measures for people with disabilities are also carried out.

Vocational training courses are also available for young individuals, who have graduated without having acquired a vocational qualification.

People with low level of education, with low or without qualification from ethnic minorities are trained according to the individual method principle, by including these in initial

and additional vocational qualification courses, as well as in different programs and measures. The national program “From Social Cares to Employment” is of great importance, which offers when necessary adequate vocational training. The literacy, qualification and employment programme directed towards these groups is also of great importance. A stable base for employment is achieved through the three modules of the programme - literacy, vocational qualification and employment.

- Management training and business education

Management and business training is quite popular; It is realized through specialized courses in the relevant subjects, as well as through different national programs or specific modules included in these.

- Training in enterprises

The study on vocational training organized by enterprises<sup>1</sup> (initial and continuing), carried out by the NSI in November 2003, points to the conclusion that staff training at enterprises does not reach the necessary dimensions and does not support effectively vocational development. Training is most often connected to the introduction of new lines of production, new products and services. This is the reason why most enterprises do not carry out regular assessment of qualifications and skills of employed individuals; they do not develop a training plan/program and do not ensure financial

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<sup>1</sup> “Continuing vocational training”, National Statistical Institute, Sofia, 2004

resources for staff training<sup>2</sup>. It can be noted that mainly bigger and economically stable enterprises have developed their own systems for human resource development and provide the necessary training. Most of the enterprises in the private sector voice the opinion that responsibility for continuing vocational training lies within the employees and do not consider the money spent on training an investment, rather an additional load for their budget.

In 2002 only 34,5% of the enterprises have organized vocational training for their employees. The preferred forms of training are at work, usually accompanied by self-learning, as well as short-term courses inside or outside the company, participation in courses, seminars, etc. More attention is paid to the training of directors and specialists; less attention is paid to the training of technical and low-level staff. Very few of the enterprises that have organized training courses, have also carried out monitoring and evaluating activities on the training effects.

As stipulated in the Employment Promotion Act, the Employment Agency can organize training for employees in micro and small enterprises, as well as in restructuring enterprises, which is followed by change in qualification requirements.

- Training to promote labour market and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups

The new Strategy on Social Policy in Bulgaria (2002) envisages different activities directed towards support of

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<sup>2</sup> In 2002 ¼ of the enterprises (32,7% in public sector and 22,9% - in private) had staff assessment, 8,8% - had staff training strategy and 5,2% had special budget for training.

socially disadvantaged groups and their social integration. Employment of socially disadvantaged individuals accompanied by vocational training activities and an individual approach method with every unemployed individual, especially the discouraged ones and individuals belonging to certain risk groups, creates suitable conditions for their labour and social integration. The mechanism of subsidy employment is implemented; it is directed towards these individuals (long term unemployed, young individuals, individuals with low working capacity, women, single moms, women with children younger than 3, orphans, individuals with no qualification and with primary or lower education, unemployed over 50, etc.).

The Employment Promotion Act stipulates the measures, directed towards employability improvement of disadvantaged groups. The National Employment Action Plan includes programs and measures for disadvantaged groups on the labour market in order to improve their access to the labour market and ensure their social integration.

## **1.6. Participation in education and training**

- Formal/non-formal

In 2003, 90844 students have completed their basic education, 33331 students- general secondary education, 30283 students- secondary vocational education in vocational gymnasia /third level of vocational qualification/ , 13355 students- vocational gymnasia and schools (secondary level of vocational qualification), 674 students- art schools.

In 2003/2004 51711 students were admitted to vocational schools (in 2002/2003 they were 51284), 36374 of which in vocational gymnasia (third vocational qualification level),

10546 in vocational gymnasias and schools (secondary vocational qualification level), vocational schools and classes after the 6-th and 7-th grade – 655, vocational schools and classes with admission after the 8-th grade- 421 and in vocational colleges- 1851.

Participation in non-formal education is characterized mainly by individual initiative for training or learning outside the formal system. This type of vocational qualification acquisition is a form of Life-long learning, which has certain traditions in Bulgaria. Surveys<sup>3</sup> show that during the period second quarter of 2002 – the second quarter 2003 almost 20 % of the population older than 15 have participated in formal and non-formal education. Non-formal and informal learning is carried out from 18.1 % of individuals. Young persons have a significant participation in non-formal and individual learning.

- Young people/adults

Young individuals and adults up to the age of 45 are more active in educational and training activities than persons in the rest age groups. Training connected to preserving employment, high-tech courses, entrepreneurship and foreign language courses are preferred.

- Employed/unemployed persons

In 2003 the number of unemployed persons, participating in different forms of training, organized by the Employment Agency was the most significant for the past five years. Thirty-eight thousand unemployed persons participated in

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<sup>3</sup> Life-long learning, NSI, 2003

training courses, which is twice more compared to 2002. The increase in the number of unemployed involved in training courses is due to the abolition of the requirement that participants must have a job guaranteed in advance as a condition for participation in training. Participation in training for a specific working place is prevailed (57.9%). 41.6% have participated in different training measures, programs and projects including a module for vocational training. A positive fact is the increased participation of individuals with basic and lower levels of education.

The increased participation of unemployed persons in motivational training is evident. In 2003 some 4536 individuals have completed a motivational course; this number is the biggest for the past five years- compared to the previous year it has increased 2,5 times.

In 2003, almost 9 thousand individuals have participated in training, organized by the Employment Agency; for the previous year, they were only 554. In this respect the improved co-operation between the Labour Office Departments and the social partners should be pointed out; it is being improved methodically and in terms of legislation.

According to the NSI survey on Continuing Vocational Training out of 1 610 390 individuals in the enterprises observed in 2002, 176 030 individuals or 10,9% out of the total number of employed, have participated in VET courses (which is the predominant educational form). It is evident that enterprises do not realize the benefits from higher qualification with regard to the enhancement enterprise competitiveness.

## **1.7.Guidance and counseling**

Vocational guidance and counseling of young people, adults and students is organized mainly through the Employment Agency system. It is carried out individually or in groups in the Labour Office Departments, Centres for vocational information, and in the Job clubs. In 2003, there were 11 Centres for vocational information, 4 Guidance Centers and 39 Job clubs. They provide information on vacancies in the local labour market, the requirements of employees, specific characteristics of the job, as well as vocational guidance regarding the enhancement of possibilities on the labour market through training for the acquisition of vocational qualification. Vocational information and guidance has been provided for 208 512 individuals. These activities are provided with a priority for the risk groups.





# **FRANCE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM**

## *S U M M A R Y*

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#### ***I. Description of the French Education System***

##### **1. Education population and language of instruction**

In 2002/03, the school population in metropolitan France and its overseas *départements* (DOM) stood at 14 334 000 pupils and students, out of a total population of a little over 60 million inhabitants, which was broken down as follows :

- 6 529 000 pupils in primary education (‘pre-elementary’ and ‘elementary’ education),
- 5 596 000 pupils in secondary education,
- 2 209 000 students in higher education.

The language of instruction is French. The regional languages are taught as part of the modern languages branch of studies.

## **2. Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education**

In France, school education comes under the Minister for Youth, Education and Research. Free public-sector provision, which caters for 86.5% of pupils in primary education and 79.9% of those in secondary education, exists alongside education offered by private schools. The great majority of the private schools have entered into a contract with the State enabling it to assume responsibility for teacher remuneration and also in most cases, as a result of the so-called *contrats d'association* ('association contracts'); the functioning of the school itself.

Notwithstanding certain decentralisation measures under which responsibility for the construction and maintenance of public-sector school buildings has been entrusted to the local area authorities (*région*), the central government has retained a decisive role in the area of educational policy. The ministry responsible for education draws up in detail the curriculum for each subject and level of education and provides guidelines for teaching, without however obliging teachers to adopt a particular method. It administers the recruitment, training and management of teaching staff, determines the status and regulations of schools, allocating them their appropriate quota of staff. The ministry also organises examinations and awards national qualifications, in particular the baccalaureate which testifies to the satisfactory completion of secondary schooling.

In order to implement this policy and the accomplishment of its numerous management tasks, the ministry has 'external' administrative departments known as « *académies* ». France is thus divided into 30 such *académies*, each headed by a

« recteur » acting directly on behalf of the minister. A single *académie* covers several *départements* (the *département* corresponds to the traditional administrative subdivision of France since the Revolution). Each *département* is managed by an *inspecteur d'académie*.

### **3. Pre-primary education**

France has a long tradition of ‘pre-elementary’ education. Despite the fact that it is not compulsory, all the children in France attend the *école maternelle* (nursery school) from the age of 3 onwards. Nursery schools are indeed schools in the full sense with programmes of teaching and learning activity. They correspond to the ‘initial learning’ stage. As a rule, children are grouped together by age into three ‘sections’: a first ‘small’ section (for those aged 3), an intermediate section (those aged 4) and a ‘main’ section (for 5-year-olds). The main educational areas of activity contribute to the overall development of children and prepare them for ‘elementary’ school. Teachers belong to the same professional category of *professeurs des écoles* as those in ‘elementary’ school. They are trained to the same level (the baccalaureate followed by five years of tertiary education) as the so-called *professeurs certifiés* of the secondary education.

### **4. Compulsory education**

#### a) Phases

Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 16 and divided into three stages:

- primary education : all pupils go to the *école élémentaire* between the ages of 6 and 11,

- lower secondary education : all pupils attend *collège* from the ages of 11 to 15,
- upper secondary education : pupils gain admission, normally at the age of 15, either to a *lycée d'enseignement général et technologique* (general and technological lycée) or to a *lycée professionnel* (vocational lycée) in order to begin the *classe de seconde* (fifth year of secondary schooling), on completion of which, they reach the age corresponding to the ending of the compulsory education.

#### b) Admissions criteria

The enrolment of pupils in state schooling is based on a 'sectorial' principle: pupils are normally registered in the primary school, *collège* or *lycée* of the geographical area in which their parents live (known as a *secteur* in the case of the *collège*, and a *district* in that of the *lycée*). State education is free of charge. Parents who so wish may register their child in private education, freely choosing their school provided that places are available. Fees in schools that have entered into a contract with the State are not usually very high, as a result of the substantial state funding received by these institutions.

#### (c) Length of the school day/week/year

The school year comprises 180 days between September and June. Schools are open six days a week, but no classes are given on Wednesday or Saturday afternoons. Each week includes 26 one-hour lessons at primary level and 25.5 to 30 hours (55-minute lessons) in secondary education (with three additional hours for pupils who have fallen behind or for optional subjects). The annual minimum number of hours is 846 in primary education and 842 at lower secondary level.

#### d) Class size/student grouping

There is no recommended size for classes, which may vary in accordance with the policy of the *recteur* and the *inspecteur d'académie*, who should take account of local circumstances (such as those of disadvantaged or rural areas). The national average is close to 25 pupils per class in primary education, 24 in *collèges*, 28 in *lycées généraux et technologiques* and 20 in *lycées professionnels*. Pupils are generally grouped on the basis of their age. Primary school classes have a single teacher for all subjects, whereas secondary school classes have different teachers for each subject.

(e) Curricular control and content

The education ministry determines school curricula and the aims underlying the acquisition of knowledge and skills by pupils. Teachers choose their own teaching methods and school textbooks.

- The 'elementary' school curriculum concentrates on the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as on physical education (normal motor skills, etc.) and enhancing awareness and sensitivity
- .The lower secondary education curriculum consists of eight or nine compulsory subjects depending on the year of study. It becomes increasingly diversified with the inclusion of optional subjects.

f) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Pupils are continuously assessed by teachers throughout the course of their primary and secondary schooling. Since 1989, 'diagnostic assessment' of pupils at the beginning of the third and sixth years of compulsory education has enabled teachers to identify the progresses and weaknesses of their pupils in French and mathematics. The work of primary

schools and *collèges* is organised into successive stages of teaching as follows:

- the *école élémentaire* consists of two stages: the stage of fundamental learning which begins in the ‘main’ section of nursery school and is continued during the first two years of ‘elementary’ school (preparatory classes, or CP, followed by first-year ‘elementary’ classes, or CE 1), and then the stage of further learning comprising the final three years (CE 2, followed by first- and second-year intermediate classes known as CM 1 and CM 2, respectively) prior to entering *collège*. In order to take account of individual learning rates, the period spent by a pupil in each of the stages may be extended or reduced by a year, by decision of the *conseil des professeurs* (board of teachers),
- education at *collège* lasts four years (corresponding to what are known as the sixth, fifth, fourth and third classes, respectively). It is broken down into three stages:
  - the ‘adaptation’ stage, corresponding to the sixth class;
  - the consolidation stage consisting of the fifth and fourth classes;
  - the ‘orientation’ stage corresponding to the third class, including classes with a ‘technology’ option.

A year can only be repeated at the end of a complete stage; a decision against which parents can appeal. Pupils in very considerable difficulty at school and/or socially, at the end of primary education, are catered for within sections for specially adapted general and vocational teaching (SECPA) in *collèges*. Furthermore from the ‘fourth’ form onwards, arrangements for alternated school/workplace provision enable pupils in difficulty to become directly familiar with the world of work and discover more about different occupations. Finally, a reform of the ‘third’ form, due to take



effect at the beginning of the 2005/06 school year, plans to make discovering the world of work one of the optional courses on offer. On completion of their *collège* schooling, pupils are awarded a *brevet* (national certificate) on the basis of their marks in the final two years (fourth and third classes) and a national examination. The *brevet* is not a compulsory qualification and continuation of their schooling in a *lycée* is not dependent on their passing the examination.

## 5. Upper secondary and post-secondary education

### a) Types of education

On completion of *collège*, pupils are offered three educational options:

- general studies which after three years (the so-called ‘second’, ‘first’ and ‘final’ classes) lead to the general baccalaureate,
- technological studies which lead to the technological baccalaureate, also after three years,
- vocational training which, after two years, leads to the *certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* (CAP) or the *brevet d'études professionnelles* (BEP) and then, after a further two years, to the *baccalauréat professionnel*.

At the *lycée d'enseignement général et technologique*, which caters for pupils who have chosen either of the first two possibilities, provision lasts three years consisting of the ‘second’, ‘first’ and ‘final’ classes, and leads to the general baccalaureate examination.

Only on completion of the ‘second’ class, common to all, the pupils do the latter choose about the type of baccalaureate they intend to work towards: this may be one of the three

general categories (economic and social, literary, or scientific) or one of seven technological categories.

The *lycée professionnel* prepares students in two years for the first level of vocational qualification, corresponding to the *certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* (CAP) or *brevet d'études professionnelles* (BEP). These qualifications are designed to provide direct access to employment. However, pupils who so wish may then go on to study for two more years (in the first and final vocational classes) for a vocational baccalaureate in one of the 48 specialised fields on offer.

#### b) Admissions criteria

See b) above; compulsory education

#### c) Curricular control and content

From the start of upper secondary education onwards, the existence of very clearly distinctive paths and categories of provision results in a certain variety of contents and, above all, in major differences in the relative scale of provision across subject areas, depending on what the pupils choose. Yet curricular content remains entirely the prerogative of the State.

Basic subjects in the first year of the *lycées généraux et technologiques* are French, mathematics, physics / chemistry, life and earth sciences, foreign language 1, history, geography, physical education and sport, supplemented by two further subjects that must be chosen by the pupils. In penultimate and final-year classes, the list of compulsory subjects and time devoted to them depend on how they are grouped (into any one of three general or seven technological subject combinations).

The vocational *lycées* (*lycée professionnel*) offer both general education and theoretical and practical vocational training, including in-company placements. The reference system for vocational qualifications awarded by the education ministry (see d) below) is always worked out in partnership with the economic sector concerned, within consultative vocational committees (*commissions professionnelles consultatives*, or CPC).

#### d) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Pupils admitted to a *lycée d'enseignement général et technologique* are assessed throughout their first year (the so-called second class), during which they choose the kind of baccalaureate that appears to correspond best to their ability and interests. At the end of the year and with due regard for the results of assessment, the teachers' board accepts or refuses to accept their choice. In the latter case, their parents are entitled to appeal.

The baccalaureate is held on completion of the final class but, in some subject areas, pupils take the examination on completion of the first class (second year).

The *lycées professionnels* prepare students for qualifications at two levels: the first of them (level V), leads to two types of national qualification: the *certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* and the *brevet d'études professionnelles*; satisfactory completion of the second (level IV) culminates in the award of the *baccalauréat professionnel*. Work for these qualifications always includes an in-company placement period. In appropriate cases, a procedure for validating professional qualifications and experience may exempt students from taking some of the examinations that normally have to be sat. The baccalaureate, whether general, technological or vocational, gives access to higher education.

However, while the general and technological baccalaureates (*lycée d'enseignement général et technologique*) are geared to the continuation of further studies, the vocational baccalaureate (*lycée professionnel*) is primarily intended to provide direct access to employment.

## 6. Higher Education

### a) Types of institution

Higher education is provided in the *universités*, or in higher public or private 'schools'. Some of them are known as *grandes écoles* (Polytechnique, E.N.A., Centrale, H.E.C., etc.). Institutes or schools may be attached to universities. They include *instituts universitaires de technologie* (IUTs) providing short technological courses, *instituts universitaires professionnalisés* (IUPs) for students working for qualifications in engineering, and *instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* (IUFMs) which prepare students for competitive examinations to recruit teachers and provide teacher training, etc. Some *lycées* contribute to higher education because they offer preparatory tuition to those seeking admission to the *grandes écoles*, in so-called *classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles* (CPGE), or because they include *sections de techniciens supérieurs* (STS, or sections for higher technicians) which provide short technical training courses.

### b) Access

- Universities accept either holders of the baccalaureate, those holders of the *diplôme d'accès aux études universitaires* (DAEU, or 'diploma for admission to

university studies'), or those with a qualification regarded as equivalent, without any further selection procedure, except in the medical, dental and pharmaceutical fields and in the case of the IUTs (*instituts universitaires de technologie*).

- Admission to the most prestigious higher 'schools' normally known as *grandes écoles* is by competitive examination, on the recommendation of an Admissions Board or by specific qualifications, for which students receive preparatory tuition lasting two years in the CPGE. Generally speaking, admission to the very wide variety of institutions in the non-university sector is based on strict selection procedures.

### c) Qualifications

Long university courses have traditionally been structured into three successive stages of study leading to national degrees: the *diplôme d'études universitaires générales* (DEUG, or 'diploma of general university studies') covering a two-year period after the baccalaureate; the *licence* (roughly equivalent to a Bachelor's degree, a further year), the *maîtrise* (roughly equivalent to a Master's degree, a further year still, corresponding to four years after the baccalaureate), and then qualifications obtained in the third stage of studies, namely the *diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées* (DESS, or 'diploma of specialised higher studies'), the *diplôme d'études approfondies* (DEA, or 'diploma of more advanced studies') and the doctorate.

However, since April 2002 and in accordance with the implementation of the Bologna Process to develop a European Higher Education Area, a set of regulations has been published with a view to gradually gearing the structure of French higher education to the European system of 3-5-8

(corresponding to three, five and eight years after the baccalaureate), or LMD standing for *Licence*, *Master* and *Doctorat*.

Accordingly, the ministry responsible for higher education is encouraging universities in the process of renewing their four-yearly contract to structure their courses into semesters and modules enabling students to obtain credits in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Students who acquire 180 credits normally over a period of three years (6 semesters) may obtain the *licence* (degree); 300 credits are necessary (i.e. an additional 120 after the *licence*, corresponding to two further years / 4 semesters of study) for the award of the *master*.

Furthermore, there is a *master professionnel* (Master's vocational qualification) geared to the labour market, and *master recherche* (Master's research qualification), preparation for which is similar to study for the DEA and constitutes the first stage of doctoral studies lasting three years until the doctorate itself is obtained (480 credits).

Short technological higher education courses lasting two years lead to the *diplôme universitaire de technologie* (DUT) prepared in the IUTs (*instituts universitaires de technologie*), or to the *brevet de technicien supérieur* (BTS, or higher technician's diploma) that students work towards in the higher technician's sections in some *lycées*.

The *écoles supérieures* (schools for higher education) award their own diplomas. Public-sector or private engineering schools award a diploma that has to be recognised by the committee for engineering qualifications. Business and management schools award a diploma which, under certain circumstances, may be recognised by the State.

## 7. Apprenticeship

In France, this both theoretical and technical training is greatly appreciated by the firms.

Apprenticeship aims at providing young people between the ages of 16 and 25 with general, theoretical and practical training so that they may earn any degree, from the CAP/BEP (most frequently) to an engineering diploma. Apprenticeships involve alternating work-study training. During the contract period, the young person is an apprentice: as such, he or she is both an employee of a firm and a student in an apprentice training centre (CFA), vocational school, higher school or university.

## 8. Special education

Pupils with special educational needs normally attend mainstream schools. At primary school, *classes d'intégration scolaire* (CLIS, or classes for school integration) cater for pupils who have mental difficulties, or problems with their hearing, sight or normal bodily movements, but who are able to benefit in conventional school surroundings from provision adapted to their age, ability and the nature and scale of their own particular difficulty. In secondary education, *sections d'enseignement général et professionnel adapté* (SEGPA, or streams for specially adapted general and vocational provision) in *collèges* cater for pupils who have experienced serious difficulty at school on leaving primary education. Furthermore, *unités pédagogiques d'intégration* (UPI, or units for educational integration) have been set up in the last few years in some *collèges*. These units are intended specifically for pupils in difficulty, with the special purpose of ensuring that those who have attended CLIS progress

smoothly from primary to secondary education. These pupils may thus continue to receive specially adapted provision in a normal school environment. The minister has decided to significantly increase the number of such units.

Specialised institutions for pupils in more serious difficulty are the responsibility of either the education ministry (in the case of *établissements régionaux d'enseignement adapté* catering for pupils aged mainly between 11 and 18, who gain little from attending other schools for which the ministry is responsible), or the Ministry of Health, the Family and Handicapped Persons.

## 9. Teachers

Teachers in public-sector primary and secondary schools are state civil servants recruited by competitive examination open to holders of a *licence* (obtained three years after the baccalaureate) or, in the case of the *agrégation*, a *maîtrise* (four years after the baccalaureate), or any qualification regarded as equivalent. Preparation for these examinations is provided for those who so wish by the *instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* (IUFMs). Successful performance in the examination is followed by a compulsory year's training for the teaching profession, which combines theoretical work at an IUFM with practical placements. Teachers in private schools are recruited by means of special competitive examinations, and then employed on an individual basis in accordance with either public law contracts – as part of a *contrat d'association* – or private law, even though their remuneration is paid by the State.



## **II. Trend in France towards internationalisation of its institutions and their participation in construction of an European area.**

### **1) Developing European harmonisation**

The declarations of the Sorbonne (25 May 1998) and Bologna (29 June 1999) laid the foundations of European policy to align higher education systems. During their summit meeting in Berlin on 19 September, the education ministers of the 33 countries agreed to “*co-ordinate their policies*” with a view to promoting “*a system of understandable, comparable diplomas*”, “*improving the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies*” and in order to encourage student and teacher mobility, they agreed to harmonise the length of studies.

Further to the 33 countries currently part of the Bologna Process, seven countries decided to join in : Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Vatican, Serbia and Montenegro, “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and, last but not least, Russia. With Russia coming on board, the European higher education area will be doubling in size.

To implement this policy, France will have definitively completed to introduce the system of modules and semesters in higher education and to impose a « *credit system* » compatible with ECTS by 2006. France has laid down regulations to create a higher education architecture based on three levels: the degree, the Master and the doctorate :

### **The Vocational Degree**

The ministerial decision dated April 23 2002 on university studies leading to the degree is based on two goals:

- application of the principles selected for construction of the European higher education area to the degree courses,
- definition of a regulatory framework enabling universities to submit innovative courses, not least pluridisciplinary and fostering professional skills, for national recognition.

This course is offered in initial and continuing education; it is the fruit of close partnership between institutions and the business world. It also enhances the potential of the European credit system.

### **The national Master diploma**

This new diploma also falls under the regulations which form the French construction of the European higher education area. The Master diploma gives universities a framework in which to organise studies after the degree by offering courses corresponding to 120 European credits after the degree. The Master courses include a range of subjects within a single field of training, enabling progressive guidance of students either into a vocational choice with a vocational Master, or in a research field with a research Master. These courses are designed to attract foreign students too.

The grade of Master was automatically awarded as of 1999 to students holding a DEA, DESS or engineering diploma, and since 2002, holding a Master diploma. It is also awarded in Grandes Ecoles and may be awarded to holders of other diplomas of the same level, listed by the Minister for higher education. It requires national “*habilitation*” based on periodical assessments in the framework of the contractual policy.

## **Student mobility**

The common architecture of diplomas based on the degree and pre- and post master studies, and the spread of the ECTS credit system enable an ambitious mobility policy to be implemented. This supposes improved linguistic and cultural preparation of students, as well as stepped up participation in EC mobility programmes such as Socrates and Leonardo. It will provide for more use of a range of tools and procedures such as recognition of previous acquisitions of knowledge or experience and validation of study periods abroad, double diplomas and integrated courses, development and acknowledgement of outplacements in other countries, European doctoral exchanges and the development of double thesis direction, and finally, the organisation of European summer schools.

In that context, french universities have associated with their European partners to set up :

- « integrated courses», which will enable students to follow their studies in two or three institutions in the partner countries and obtain their diplomas from their home university,
- « joint thesis direction », with the financial backing of the Ministry of National Education, enabling doctoral students to work with two research directors and present their theses before joint panels comprising members of both universities, and obtain a doctorate signed and recognised by the partners in both countries.

Furthermore, the creation of bi-national universities should be mentioned. These institutions “without walls” aim to promote courses followed partly in the university of origin and partly in the partner university. At this time there are two bi-national universities: the Franco-German university and the Franco-Italian

university. The Franco-German university took over the tasks of the Franco-German College, widening them to adapt them to the level of university courses. The new courses it has initiated are sanctioned by a Franco-German diploma, which is a highly significant advance in the field of university co-operation. Thus, almost 5,000 students followed 300 integrated courses in France and Germany in 2005, under the aegis of the Franco-German university.

The expansion of the European summer schools is one of the measures of the Plan of Action for mobility to step up exchanges and co-operation, adopted at the Nice European Summit in December 2000. These, steered by higher education institutions in partnership with local authorities and cultural institutions, saw their number growing: there are now over 80 sites, compared to 12 in 2000, and they offer courses to over 5,000 students. The summer schools, offering a more flexible and convivial sort of mobility, complement the existing European programmes. They receive the authorisation “label” of the Ministry of National Education to ensure quality and promote and advertise them.

## **2) Ensuring the internationalisation of research**

Excellence in research is sought by research teams recognised by national contracts and internationally. Various international operations undertaken by doctoral schools in higher education institutions as well as in research organisations may promote French research outside French borders. The development of internationalisation in Doctoral Schools may involve:

- a strategy for welcoming foreign doctoral and post-doctoral researchers,
- continued development of jointly directed thesis,
- European or international doctoral networks.

International co-operation between research units may be based on joint international laboratories, for example, or on European or international research-training networks of excellence. European co-operation may be achieved by the PCRD, a privileged framework in which to strengthen research and development which can be used by institutions seeking to foster determined implication on the part of their research teams.

### **3) Enhancing the attraction of French institutions internationally**

French institutions must be capable of playing their role in international competition to the full. This means:

- implementation of an information policy on institutions' educational offer (modern information tools and supports, websites in foreign languages, participation in foreign promotions and exhibitions, not least those initiated by Edufrance),
- implementation of a proper welcoming and accompaniment policy for foreign students, teachers and researchers (a service package including open days, administrative and educational follow up, assistance with installation problems, various forms of tutoring, and follow up of former foreign students),
- creation of specific training products adapted to foreign demand, especially distance education.

The EduFrance agency was created by the Ministries of National Education and Foreign Affairs in November 1998 to:

- promote France's educational and academic expertise potential throughout the world,

- offer foreign students an overall service for their reception and stay in France,
- co-ordinate the French offer in educational engineering.

The agency's action is based on a French diplomatic and university network abroad. In France, the agency is gradually spreading its action by setting up partnerships with various directorates in the ministries involved and organisations vested with duties involving the international dimension of education and research.

### **III. Foreign students wishing to study in France**

Each year, almost 150,000 young people from all over the world come to France to study. They choose France because the French higher education system has a number of features that make it very successful and attractive. In particular, a wide range of institutions is available: universities, "grandes écoles", and specialist schools. They choose France because of its high level of cultural and technological development, its modernity and also because of the quality of life France offers.

#### **Foreign students may enter any of the French higher education institutions**

##### **a) Enrolment procedures**

They differ according to whether the institution at which the foreign student wishes to register is a university, one of the "grandes écoles" or a specialist school, and according to the degree that he or she already holds and the level at which he or she wishes to pursue a course of study.

To enrol in a university in France applicant must have a diploma showing an achieved level of secondary school education equivalent to the French baccalaureate. There is no selection for entry into university. However, the procedure is not the same for all foreign students: some students can enrol directly (EU residents), while others must comply with pre-inscription requirements. In both cases, they must take a language test and pay particular attention to complete the application formalities at the required dates.

A foreign student wishing to enrol in a higher education program should find out about possible courses and the relevant enrolment procedures by contacting the cultural attaché of the French embassy or consulate in his or her own country.

#### b) Possible financial assistance

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs gives study grants to foreign students wishing to study in France in the framework of specific programmes directly under its Paris departments (General directorate for international co-operation and development, Under-directorate for academic and scientific co-operation, and Bureau for foreign scholars in France). These grants are managed by two organisations :

- CNOUS (National centre for University and School assistance), under-directorate for foreign grant beneficiaries and international affairs (SDBEAI),
- The French centre for international students and exchanges (EGIDE).

Furthermore, two grant programmes are designed to attract the best foreign students :

- The « Eiffel » grants for excellence, designed for the best foreign students wishing to follow their higher education

- in France at second and third cycle level in engineering, economics, business studies, law or political sciences,
- The « Major » grants for excellence, which enables former pupils of *French Lycées* abroad, holding a French baccalauréat and who have passed their first cycle examinations to study for three further years at university or in a grande école and obtain the grade of master (baccalauréat plus five years). Eighty to a hundred grants are offered each year under this programme, a total of 250 to 300 over the full cycle.

Depending on their nationality or status, some foreign students may also apply for funding from the French Ministry of National Education. An annual guide is published by the National Association of Doctors of Science (ANDES) with the backing of the various ministries concerned, for foreign students wishing to find out about funding for doctoral and post-doctoral studies.

All information on these grant programmes is available by contacting the Cultural Attaché of the French embassy or consulate.

### **c) Academic guidance services in universities**

There are joint university services for the reception, guidance and professional integration of students (SCUIO) set up in each university. The role of the SCUIOs is to receive, inform, and guide students and take steps to ensure professional integration. The SCUIOs are parts of the “Euroguidance Network” which actively promotes mobility within Europe, particularly for people undergoing initial vocational training or lifelong learning. It operates by forming a contact network for the guidance services of Europe, exchanging quality careers information and



answering individual enquiries. Organised by university teachers with the assistance of researchers, and guidance counsellors, the SCUIOs offer a range of services from simple documentary research to individual counselling, thus helping the student to adapt to university.

#### **IV. The French Digital Campuses**

The French open distance learning sites in higher or continuing education and training offer complete catalogues of available courses, forums for the sharing of information and ideas, information on research and teaching tools, on-line news section, as well as details of all the training courses provided by the education institutions. Visitors can consult conventional paper-based or on-line programmes, individual modules or complete courses, as well as finding out how to enrol in an institution and keeping up to date with new developments in open distance learning in France

The integration of some innovative technology trends has brought many institutions of higher education in France to move steadily toward the digital campus of tomorrow. Digital campuses are now the most dynamic examples of new forms of open and distance learning in France. Although their primary objective is national in scope, they were designed from the very beginning to also meet the needs and expectations of France's partners abroad. There are currently about fifty foreign institutions outside of France that are directly involved in digital campus consortiums.

In 2000, the French Ministries of Education and Research, out of a concern to preserve the excellence of French higher

education and to modernise it, launched a Project for the construction of "French Digital Campuses". These campuses are intended to offer open distance post-baccalaureate training, using new technologies, in all fields for clearly identified target audiences. All of the major disciplines are covered by this new range of training programmes : science and technology, medicine, the humanities and social sciences, educational engineering and information and communication technologies. Both initial training and continuing education are involved.

The Digital campuses not only allow learners to access training programmes from any location, far or near, but also allow them to progress at their own pace at chosen periods throughout their lifetimes.

They consist in modular training programmes, responsive to well-identified needs, with individualised programmes combining the use of multimedia resources, interactive digital environments, along with the human and administrative supervision necessary for learning and validation.

Training programmes are available in versions ranging from traditional classroom situations enriched by the use of ICT, to programmes that rely entirely on distance learning techniques, depending on the course of study and the needs and objectives of the learners or the students.

Digital campuses rely on a spirit of co-operation, which must be open and innovative in all regards. This co-operative effort implies a certain number of major challenges that must be dealt with, particularly with regard to providing a regulatory framework for the operation. In that regard, the

French educational institutions and Ministries involved in the Project “French Digital Campuses” have implemented the necessary framework to :

- Define a set of norms and standards. Shared norms and standards are needed for diversified educational programmes and those shared amongst several institutions, particularly with regard to validating the skills acquired by students. The teaching model via modules is based on the European system for the transfer of academic credits (ECTS),
- Develop a suitable legal and regulatory framework. The shared ownership of content and educational programmes amongst multiple partners with very diverse situations and subject to different laws when foreign partners are involved, requires that proponents of change define the legal and regulatory framework most favourable to the modernisation of education, within the new context of international co-operation.

## **V. Effective pathways for transition and life long learning**

Recognition of competencies apart from initial education is linked to the notion, which is spreading in France, that our society is based on a “knowing culture” which enhances lifelong orientation and education.

The objective of the French system of recognition of competencies is to identify and validate achievements from social as well as working life. This process of recognition is divided into two main stages :

## 1) Competence Audit

The personal and occupational competencies of workers are evaluated through *a bilan de competence* (competence audit). This allows the recognition of attainments gained outside the educational system. The “Bilan de compétences” is the property of the person concerned and determines the current state of the individual's competence, both in a personal and occupational sense.

More than 100 CIBSs or "Centres interinstitutionnelles de bilans de compétences" (Inter-institutional centres for competence audit) offer anyone who wishes to have a competence audit drawn up. To do this, they provide interdisciplinary teams, drawing together specialists in counselling, training and employment. Since their inception, the CIBCs have provided a platform for experimentation in the techniques of the bilan. The CIBC also played an important role in bringing together a number of important education and training partners; the national Ministry of Education, the Association for the Vocational Training of Adults (AFPA), the National Agency for Employment (ANPE) and sometimes chambers of commerce and Industry. Each of the 97 French “départements” has at least one CIBC.

A rather complex set of objectives may be identified within the system, differing according to the various target groups involved. Adults facing redundancy, women wishing to return to work, young people without qualifications and unemployed adults are all "target groups" addressed by the initiators of the bilan. The process of compiling the portfolio of competencies, which results from the "bilan" procedure, is in itself viewed as a learning experience. The actual competence audit consists of three phases. A preliminary

phase which is intended to lead the candidate to define and analyse his or her needs, during which full information of the methods and techniques should be given. An investigation phase which should help the candidate to state his or her values, interests and aspirations, general and occupational knowledge, skills and aptitude and identify his motivation. A concluding phase in the form of personal interviews where the aim is to review the details of the results with the candidate. The agent offering a bilan then draws up a summary, but only the candidate has the right to pass it on to a third party. This illustrates the complexity of the process: The portfolio should list the significant competencies acquired by the holder (the aspect of identification), the portfolio should develop or reinforce the holder's awareness of the competencies acquired (the aspect of motivation) and, finally, the portfolio should assist the holder to convince others of his or her special qualities (the market aspect).

## **2) Validation of experiment assets**

Experiential attainments can be accredited for the award of a diploma or credit towards a diploma.

A new law (January 2002) has created the possibility for every person, whatever his age, level of education, status, who has at least 3 years of activity (fulltime or part time activities) on the same job, to ask for a validation of one's experience (professional and extra-professional) to obtain a degree (with the same value that those obtained only by education) which is mentioned in the "National Registry of the Professional Certifications (RNCP). In France, this whole

process is called Recognition of competencies apart from initial education is linked to the notion, which is spreading in France, that our society is based on a “knowing culture” which enhances lifelong orientation and education.

The certification body is the national commission on professional certifications (CNCP), created within the frame of the January 2002 Social Law. The committee includes the representatives of the 14 ministries, social partners with half employers and half employees, the representatives of education and orientation sectors, representatives of teachers and representatives of regions.

All professional diplomas, titles, and certificates must be included in the registry. The following types of qualification may also be obtained through the job experience validation programme as long as they are part of the National Registry and provided that there is no regulation prohibiting use of the programme (for health, safety, or national defence reasons, in particular) for a particular qualification :

- Diplomas or professional degrees awarded by the State,
- Diplomas awarded on behalf of the State by institutions of higher education,
- Degrees conferred by consular or private training organisations,
- Joint qualification certificates.

The Registry aims to provide anyone who wishes to earn credit for past experience with a precise idea of which qualifications may be obtained, by providing reliable, current information on the available professional certifications and by making the certification system easier to understand.

Skills eligible for credit include all professional skills acquired through paid, unpaid, or volunteer work, provided the individual seeking credit has at least three years of relevant work experience, whether continuous or not. The accreditation jury then evaluates the professional nature of the skills acquired and their relationship to the skills required by the course of study corresponding to the desired diploma or certificate. The jury may also consider higher education-level studies done abroad.

When candidates applying for job experience validation know which type of certification they would like to obtain, they may apply directly to the institution or organisation awarding the certificate within previously set and publicly announced conditions and deadlines. Application procedures, supporting documents to be submitted by candidates, and criteria for acceptability are established by decree, either by the relevant ministries for diplomas or degrees awarded by the state, or at the discretion of the organisation awarding certification.

Applicants are eligible to receive guidance in preparing their accreditation files. The counsellor's role is to help the applicant describe work performed and identify links between skills acquired and the skills required for the desired certification. The counsellor provides the applicant with support in analysing past work experience in order to describe it in terms that will facilitate validation. If the counsellor feels that the applicant's professional skills are not sufficient to meet the requirements of the desired certification, he must inform the applicant. However, it is the applicant's decision whether to complete the application process or not.

This recognition of experience represents a window of opportunity for workers with few or no educational qualifications and who have limited access to professional training (29% of white-collar workers and 20% of blue-collar workers complete at least one training course per year, compared with 54% of executives and 45% of engineers). VAE can foster the development of individual skills training, and be a springboard for promotion at work.

Companies welcome the fact that workers gain an opportunity to broaden knowledge acquired through work and that the role of the workplace in skills acquisition can be acknowledged. As part of a skills-based management programme, VAE is likely to transform human resources management and general management practices, as well as work organisation. It allows for an increase in staff qualification levels, a clear picture of in-house competencies, and certification for competencies within a framework of quality standards. The development of competencies should, therefore, be a joint responsibility between the employee and the company.

Three main factors explain the coherence of the French system. Firstly, the introduction of the system is based on a comprehensive co-operation between the social partners and the public authorities. A period of testing and negotiation between the partners preceded the legal formalisation of the system. Secondly, but of course related to the first point made, the strong legal base developed through several decades must be considered. The "unit credit" system developed since 1963 is fundamental to the French validation system. It allows candidates to take one part or all of a diploma, each unit remains valid for five years.



Standards in accordance with information supplied by the occupational sector define the competencies to be achieved. The system has been strengthened and complemented several times. The Law of 23 August 1985 permits the validation of professional competencies acquired outside formal education. The Law of December 1991 states that workers have the right to have a bilan. The initiative may come from the employer (as part of enterprise training budget) as well as from the worker him or herself (who is entitled to an educational leave for the purpose of gaining a bilan, "Le congé pour bilan de compétences"). The Law of 22. July 1992 provided for the validation of prior and informal skills within the national framework of diplomas and certificates, and thus recognises the legal equality in status between competencies acquired inside and outside formal education. Thirdly, the strong institutional basis is important to the system.

## ***VI Useful Contacts and addresses in France***

The information contained in the above sections are extracted from the following resources :

### **French Ministry of Education**

The French government's online education information resource centre :

[www.education.gouv.fr](http://www.education.gouv.fr)

Recognition of diplomas in France and in Europe :

[www.education.gouv.fr/int/euro6.htm/top](http://www.education.gouv.fr/int/euro6.htm/top)

## **Edufrance**

Agency created by the Ministries of National Education and Foreign Affairs in November 1998 to:

- promote France's educational and academic expertise potential throughout the world,
- offer foreign students an overall service for their reception and stay in France, co-ordinate the French offer in educational engineering.

Agence EduFrance  
173, boulevard  
Saint-Germain  
75006 PARIS - France  
Tel: 0033 1 53 63 35 00  
Fax: 0033 1 53 63 35 49  
[www.edufrance.fr](http://www.edufrance.fr)

## ***ONISEP***

National Office for Information on Education and Careers, ONISEP aims to develop and make available comprehensive documentation about training, education resources, employment and jobs in France.

ONISEP  
44, rue Alphonse Penaud  
75020 Paris, France  
Tel: 0033 1 44 62 35 40  
Fax: 0033 1 44 62 35 39  
[www.onisep.fr](http://www.onisep.fr)  
[www.onisep.fr/national/etudiants\\_etr/html/francais/decouvrir\\_esup.htm](http://www.onisep.fr/national/etudiants_etr/html/francais/decouvrir_esup.htm)

## **Centre INFFO**

co-ordinates information and documentation on continuing vocational education and training,

edits and publishes periodicals, information documents, technical files and other information tools. Centre Inffo provides information on the initiatives and operations of international, national and regional institutions, organises study and information days, realises inquiries and studies for bodies or for companies.

### **Centre Inffo**

4, avenue du Stade-de-France  
93218 Saint-Denis-La Plaine, France  
Tel: 0033 1 55 93 91 91  
Fax : .0033 1 55 93 17 25  
[www.centre-inffo.fr](http://www.centre-inffo.fr)

### ***SCUIO / Academic guidance services***

Joint university services for the reception, guidance and professional integration of students.

[www.onisep.fr/national/adressesutiles/html/cadre\\_adresses\\_orga.htm](http://www.onisep.fr/national/adressesutiles/html/cadre_adresses_orga.htm)

### ***Euroguidance France***

European network of National Resource Centres for Vocational Guidance, promoting mobility in Europe and Developing the European feeling in guidance activities.  
[www.euroguidance-france.org/euroguidance/indexuk.htm](http://www.euroguidance-france.org/euroguidance/indexuk.htm)

### **CNOUS (Centre National des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires)**

The CNOUS and its 28 regional centres, the CROUS, have been created to ameliorate the living and working conditions of students. The CROUS offer cheap meals in university restaurants, subsidised housing accommodation, social and cultural services, as well as temporary jobs.

## **CNOUS**

69 quai Orsay  
75007 Paris, France  
Tel: 0033 1 44 18 53 00  
Fax: 0033 1 45 55 48 49  
[www.cnous.fr](http://www.cnous.fr)

## ***EGIDE***

The French centre for international mobility and exchanges. Égide is a non-profit organisation whose main role is to manage the logistical, administrative and financial aspects of educational trips to France for foreign students, researchers and professionals.

Égide  
28 rue de la Grange aux Belles  
75010 Paris, France  
Tel: 0033 1 40 40 58  
Fax: 0033 1 42 0070 08  
[www.egide.asso.fr](http://www.egide.asso.fr)

## **NARIC** network (National Academic Recognition Information Centres)

Created in 1984, the network aims at improving academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study in the Member States of the European Union, the European Economic Area and Central and Eastern European countries. Naric is associated with the ENIC network (European Network of Information Centres) which is made up of national information centres. The role of these centres is to provide information and advice on:

- the recognition of foreign diplomas, degrees and other academic or professional qualifications,

- education systems in other European countries and one's own country,
- opportunities for studying abroad, including information on loans and scholarships, as well as on practical questions related to mobility.

www.enic-naric.net

### ***FIED (Inter-university federation for Distance Learning)***

The FIED (Fédération Interuniversitaire de l'Enseignement à Distance) is an association made up of academic institutions interested in distance learning in all of its forms. It serves as the country-wide co-ordinator for the activities of 25 universities, most of which have their own distance learning centres (CTEU). The FIED ensures, on behalf of France and its universities, that these centres are represented within the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU).: <http://telesup.univ-mrs.fr/htm/fied.htm>

### **The European Association of Distance Teaching Universities**

EADTU is the representative organisation of both the European open and distance learning universities and of the national consortia of higher education institutions active in the field of distance education and e-learning. Therefore it is the main voice of the community for open and distance higher education and e-learning in Europe : [www.eadtu.nl](http://www.eadtu.nl)

### **Formasup**

The open distance learning site for higher education supported by the French Ministry of Education. Formasup offers a complete catalogue of available courses, a forum for the sharing of information and ideas, information on research and teaching tools, as well as a wide-ranging on-line news section. Formasup has details of all the training courses

provided by higher education institutions such as the National Distance Learning Centre (CNED – [www.cned.fr](http://www.cned.fr)) and the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM – [www.cnam.fr](http://www.cnam.fr)) : [www.formasup.education.fr](http://www.formasup.education.fr)

**CNEFAD** (Centre National d’Enseignement et de Formation à Distance)

The Cnefad is a branch of AFPA (French national Association for Adult Vocational Training). Cnefad provides at distance supplementary vocational courses for persons who may find themselves lacking basic knowledge in the subjects they wish to pursue. To make up this shortcoming, supplementary courses are available in almost all the vocational training sectors : [www.cnefad.com](http://www.cnefad.com)



# **POST- SECONDARY EDUCATION IN LITHUANIA: CHALLENGES AND CHANGES**

Asta Radzevičienė

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## **1. LITHUANIA: STRATEGIES ON EDUCATION**

Recent development of society, particularly the movement towards creation knowledge society, restructuring of labour market and rapidly growing economy of the country, the mission of education is to provide society members with possibility to acquire social and professional competences satisfying the needs of individual and society. The education system should guarantee an appropriate access to continuing life-long education and training of each individual and all the society groups without any exclusion. In 2003 a revised version of the Law on Education and the National Education Strategy were adopted, which define basic principles of Lithuanian education system [4]:

- Equal opportunities principle means that 1) education guaranties equal opportunities for all individuals without any exclusion, 2) education provides condition for acquiring general education and the first qualification as well ass create s conditions to improve the acquired qualification and obtain new ones.



- Contextual interdependence principle means that the education is closely linked to the economic, social and cultural development of country, in order to meet the needs of society.
- Effectiveness principle means the continuous assessment analysis and planning of use of available resources and activities.
- Continuity principle means that education system is flexible and open and provides possibilities for life-long learning.

In November 2002 the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania passed a resolution on Long-Term Development Strategy of the State, three main priority areas of the country development were identified: knowledge society, secure society and competitive economy [9]. The role of education in this development is of exceptional importance. The above mentioned document includes the Provisions for the National Education Strategy 2003–2012, the aims of which is providing the framework for implementation of the vision of education in Lithuania. Development of the Provisions is based on the Long-Term Development Strategy of the State, the Economic Development Strategy of the Republic of Lithuania until 2015, the European Memorandum of Life-Long Learning, the European Employment Strategy, the Bologna Declaration 1999, and common aims raised by the EU Commission for development of the education systems in the member states until the year 2010 [9]. Implementation of the Provisions shall be co-ordinated with other structural reforms of the country and priorities of the EU education policy. The Strategic Provisions define the goals for development of education, the means for achieving these goals, as well as establishes the quantitative and qualitative

benchmarks for the targeted outcomes in Lithuania in the period 2003–2012. The main emphasis of the provisions is the necessity for improving of education system responding to recent needs of the society, facing rapid development of country economy, changes in society structure in general and labour market in particular. The reform and the development in Lithuania is focusing therefore on: improving accessibility to education, creating conditions for continuing education and life-long learning, increasing of education system efficiency, ensuring the quality of education that conforms to the European standards and meets the needs of the modern Lithuanian society [9].

## **2. FORMAL EDUCATION IN LITHUANIA**

Formal education comprises state-regulated learning and studies, a successful completion of which leads to a state-recognised diploma or certificate. The Law on Education, the Law on Vocational Education and Training, the Law on Science and Studies, and the Law on Higher Education regulate formal education, which includes general education, vocational education, advanced and higher education-level studies [3;18]. Study programmes offered by higher education establishments must comply with the general requirements set by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. Education and training is delivered on the basis of programmes listed in the Register of Study and Training Programmes. The levels of education according to the official classification in Lithuania (which slightly differs from ISCED 97) are as follows:

Level 7 –Doctoral studies (higher university education), including postgraduate studies in Arts. This level corresponds to Level 6 according ISCED 1997.

Level 6- (higher university education, ISCED -5) Bachelor's and Master's degree studies, programme of specialised professional studies provided at universities). The Bachelor programmes are aimed at expanding one's general education, providing knowledge and skills which would allow starting professional activity and creatively applying accumulated knowledge and skills. The Master's studies are aimed at preparing individuals for their career requiring scientific knowledge and skills, and developing ability to perform scientific or independent complicated creative work in wide areas of activity.

Level 5 (higher non-university education, ISCED -5) – development of the ability to perform complicated creative work in wide areas of activity; ability to engage in autonomous vocational activity based on thorough knowledge, leads to ability to plan and assess the work of others and to assume managerial functions.

Level 4 (advanced VET, which doesn't grant Higher education diploma ISCED -4) – ability to perform complicated work requiring personal responsibility in specific areas of activity. Leads to ability to carry out planning, organisational, administrative, and control functions independently.

Level 3 (basic vocational education) – development of the ability to perform fairly complicated work in areas requiring responsible and independent decisions, and the leads to ability to coordinate group work.

Levels 1 and 2 (labour market vocational training, ISCED -1 and 2) - development of the ability to perform specialised

work not requiring important autonomous decisions or to carry out simple, routine work operations.

## **2.1. Higher education system in Lithuania**

### ***2.2.1. Structure and changes***

In 1991 the Law on Research and Higher Education was approved in Lithuania. The Law introduced three-tier system in higher education, similar to that proposed under the Bologna Declaration: Bachelor's degree studies (4 years), Master's degree studies (2 year) and Doctor's degree or Ph.D. studies (4 years). Undergraduate university studies in Lithuania last 3½ to 4½ years, non-university studies last 3 to 4 years. Upon completing a Bachelor program, a specialized professional or academic master program can be undertaken. Master courses last 1½ to two years. Integrated courses incorporating first- and second-level studies lead to a master's degree and last up to five years. Integrated master studies are offered in such disciplines as medicine, pharmacy and agriculture.

The workload of studies is measured in credit points. One credit point corresponds to 40 relative hours of student workload (including contact hours in classes and laboratories, independent work or self-studies), or to one work week. A full academic year is equal to 40 Lithuanian credits i.e. 60 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits, or one Lithuanian credit = 1.5 ECTS credit. The study level is a classifying parameter of study programmes, reflecting the complexity level of the programme, the rank of the awarded qualification within the national system of qualifications and other indicators.

In 14 years of operation in three-cycle system, some shortcomings came up (particularly lack of continuity), therefore, Bologna Declaration has been a good reason for the improving of existing status of education. The Bologna Declaration has clearly stimulated building of “bridges” [2] between the sub-systems of education systems. Recent changes in Lithuania are aimed to create study system avoiding dead-ends studies for technicum’s and college’s students, who change their plans to start job career and are willing to continue their studies. In response to that the new law introducing a binary system came into force from September 2001 in Lithuania. Lithuanian higher education of today has consecutive and non- consecutive types of studies. Consecutive studies are carried out according to the programmes included into the Registry of Studies and programmes. There are three types of consecutive studies: **full time, evening and extra-mural**. Higher education, obtained on completing the same level but in different modes of studies, is of the same value. The extra-mural studies, by using electronic means of learning, become more and more popular among people who do not have the possibilities to take full time studies. After completing a study programme a person is awarded an academic or a qualification degree. Consecutive studies at higher education institutions can be of two types:

- University studies, when an individual is a given higher education based on wide theoretical background and scientific investigation;
- Non-university studies –vocational studies intended for preparation for professional activities. An individual acquires professional qualifications on the basis of applied scientific investigation or applied research.

After completing consecutive studies an individual receives an academic certificate (diploma). An individual enrolled in non-consecutive studies and having collected a sufficient number of credits within a study programme, can also be considered as having completed studies at a higher education level. In Lithuania the possibility for colleges/polytechnics to award Master degree has been debated too. The outcomes of the debate until now are negative for college graduates [14]. The consolidation of the new system takes time and yet continues, in particular through its extension and development of college/polytechnic sector.

Total admission in Lithuanian higher education institutions in 2003 was 51 117 people or 1.46 per cent of the total population. On the average, the two thirds of the total number of students are studying at the undergraduate level, and one third is at the postgraduate level of studies. The number of people with tertiary education in Lithuania (in the group of the age 21-30) is 44% (to compare: an EU average is 20 %). Within the goals of the government programmes it is stated the necessity to ensure the highest possible fluency in the transition of young people from a secondary school to an institution of higher education on the basis of coordinated requirements, a stable and clear system of knowledge and aptitude testing.

For the coordinating the activities of higher education institutions and their regulation by the state are responsible the following units: Higher Education Council of Lithuania, The Science Council of Lithuania, the Lithuanian centre for quality assessment in Higher education, the Rectors Conference and College Directors Conference.

### *2.1.2. QUALITY assessment of study programmes*

For external quality assessment of study programmes in Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions is responsible **Lithuanian centre for quality assessment in Higher education**. External quality assessment is organised by the centre according long term (a few-year) and annual external assessment plans. Long-term plans establish which subject areas of research and higher education are to be evaluated in respective years, while annual plans are intended to schedule the evaluation of study programmes, institutions and their subdivisions (indicating the year quarter). The Centre in co-ordination with the Rectors' Conference of Lithuanian Universities, Directors' Conference of Lithuanian College's, the State Research Institutes Directors' Conference and the Science Council of Lithuania prepares the draft plans. Not later than three months before the external assessment the time of any scheduled external assessment and the term to provide the centre with the self-analysis materials is to be known to the institutions to be assessed. **Lithuanian centre for quality assessment in Higher education** is carrying out the assessment of the following domains:

- Evaluation of study programmes (all study subject areas over 8 years);
- Research and development evaluation (all research areas over 8 years);
- Qualitative assessment of research and higher education institutions (all the higher education institutions over 8 year).

If quality of any evaluated unit (a study programme, a research and development or an institution of research and higher education) is unsatisfying, the Centre has to organize a repeated assessment of the unit after one or two years, unless the activity of the unit was stopped. The procedures of external quality assessment are the following [19]:

- Experts' analysis of the self-assessment of an institution of research and higher education,
- Experts' site visit for obtaining information about the unit being assessed,
- Experts' report and discussing it with the representatives of the institution being assessed,
- Delivery of the external assessment report to the institution and the Centre,
- Assessment report (summarized by the Council of Experts if needed) delivery to the Department of Science and Higher education at the Ministry of Education and Science,
- Publication of the summarized final assessment report in the official newsletter of the Centre.

Assessment of institutions is voluntary action and is carried out by international peer-review groups (e.g. by EUA). The institution assessment results don't have direct consequences for institutions.

### ***2.1.3. Academic recognition for enhancing of academic mobility***

Academic recognition of study results abroad is inevitable necessity for organization and enhancing of future student



mobility. The above mentioned **Lithuanian centre for quality assessment in Higher education** fulfils the functions of the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (ENIC/NARIC) in Lithuania.

This Centre gives information, consultations and recommendations for research and higher education institutions, organizations and individuals when it is necessary to assess how diplomas of higher education, certificates or study programmes and their parts in foreign countries meet the system and requirements of Lithuanian higher education. The above mentioned centre :

- Provides information for counterparts and other institutions abroad fulfils functions, which are necessary that qualifications acquired in Lithuania could be evaluated and recognized abroad.
- Collects and analyses material which is necessary to evaluate and recognize qualifications acquired abroad.
- Evaluates qualifications of higher education, other qualifications and part –time studies [19].

For example for the recognition of the higher schools diplomas/certificates acquired abroad the following documents are needed [19]. :

- Copy of diploma of the higher school (legal copy);
- Copy of appendix of diploma (legal copy);
- Copy of translation of diploma and its supplement with transcript of records into Lithuanian language;
- Copy of marriage certificate (if diploma is issued according to maiden name);
- Copy of passport (if not a citizen of Lithuanian Republic);

- Filled in form see webpage of Lithuanian centre for quality assessment in Higher education  
<http://www.skvc.lt/old/wwwskvc/anketa.doc>

A working group with representatives from higher education institutions, the Ministry of Education and ENIC/NARIC began in 2002 to prepare for the full implementation of the supplement, which was first introduced later that year. Lithuania has signed and ratified (1999) the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications. Universities are going to issue **Diploma Supplements** to all students since 2005.

**ECTS - European Credit Transfer System** provides a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements, and transferring them from one institution to another. ECTS helps higher education institutions to enhance their cooperation with other institutions by improving access to information on foreign curricula, providing common procedures for academic recognition. The use of the national credit system is an essential element for the accreditation and registration of study programs in Lithuania and the national credit system has been compatible with ECTS. There were no significant problems for Lithuanian universities to implement the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), unfortunately there are still some problem with credit accumulation. The main obstacles are :

- Lack of internal flexibility of higher education institutions. The registration of students for separate modules or subjects is rarity yet;
- There are some operational problems with the proceeding of studies abroad results in internal information systems of universities, internal

databases are not adjusted yet for part time studies needs.

It is pointed out in the Berlin communiqué [10], that there is a the necessity of the ensuring of a substantial period of study abroad in joint degree programs so that students may achieve full potential for European identity and employability. The most serious obstacles in this way are: lack of resources for international student mobility and support and lack of legal basis for recognition of this type of studies.

#### ***2.1.4. Cooperation on mutual academic transparency and recognition of qualifications: Baltic case***

Considering that a follow-up to the ratification of the Lisbon Convention the Governments of the Republic of Latvia Estonia and Lithuania signed an Agreement **on the Academic Recognition of Educational Qualifications in the Baltic Educational Space** in February 2000 [1]. The agreement was signed in order to strengthen the Baltic common educational space, to stimulate the mobility of students and teaching staff among the Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania as well as recognition of the concrete educational qualifications among the Baltic States

The agreement states, that the Baltic States — the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Lithuania agree to recognise each other's higher education qualifications and qualifications giving access to higher education unless there is an evidence of substantial differences. This Agreement deals with the qualifications awarded after completion of study programmes, which are

recognised in the home country and states that a higher education qualification or a qualification providing access to higher education shall give its holder the same rights in the all Baltic states as it gives in the State in which it has been awarded. The article No. 5 [1] **Recognition of the first Academic degrees** for further studies states the following:

- The Latvian *Bakalaura grāds* , the Estonian *Bakalaureusekraad* and the Lithuanian *Bakalauro laipsnis* give equal access to further studies towards *Maģistra grāds* in Latvia, *Magistrikraad* in Estonia and *Magistro laipsnis* in Lithuania.
- The same conditions apply for access to professional study programmes that have the first academic degrees as the entrance requirement.
- In the case if the first degree in one of the States is awarded after a three-year study programme and the studies towards this degree do not include final thesis, the higher education institutions in the other States may impose additional requirements before admission of the holder to further studies.

The parties agreed, that if a qualification awarded after higher professional studies does not provide access to further studies towards *Maģistra grāds* , *Magistrikraad* or *Magistro laipsnis* in the State in which it was awarded, the Parties should look for possibilities of recognising it as periods of study in applicants further academic studies [1].

The recognition of periods of study abroad is based on the following principles:

- Each State shall recognise the periods of study completed within the framework of a higher education programme in the other States.

- In cases when periods of study have been completed according to previous Agreements among higher education institutions, a full credit transfer shall be granted.
- In all other cases the parties should look towards transfer of maximum credits relevant to the programme.

The academic recognition of higher education qualifications awarded in other States should facilitate recognition of these qualifications also for professional purposes (**Article 10**). When the professional activity is regulated by national or international legislation binding to a State; the appropriate legislation applies to the professional recognition. Special article defines the recognition of the qualifications which are not awarded anymore. Each State shall recognise higher education qualifications and qualifications giving access to higher education awarded in the other States during the transition period after re-gaining independence, and which are not awarded any longer, as following (**Article 11, [1]**):

- qualifications which gave access to higher education and correspond to the present general access requirements in one State shall be given access in the other States;
- higher education qualifications which correspond to the certain qualification in the present higher educational system in one Party shall be recognised in other Parties.

This creates the preconditions for continuing adult studies and life –long learning in Baltic countries. An important role towards implementation of the agreement has been ascribed to the National Academic Recognition Information Centres

(ENIC/NARIC centres). They are supposed to 1) provide the higher education institutions and/or employers with the relevant information regarding educational systems, and qualifications awarded in other states; 2) evaluate the qualifications awarded in other parties; 3) provide and regularly renew information about state recognised higher education institutions and programmes.

## **2.2. Vocational education and Training in Lithuania: continuity demanded**

**Vocational education and training system** encompasses initial vocational training and continuing professional development. Initial vocational training leads to a vocational qualification. It can be acquired at institutions of vocational education and training, advanced schools, and colleges. Continuous professional development comprises formal and non-formal adult education, and provides an opportunity for every citizen to acquire a new vocation or professional qualification and improve it. It can be delivered at any of the institutions mentioned above.

### ***2.2.1. VET Reform: chronology and main facts***

The reform of initial vocational training started with the first days of re-established independence in Lithuania. In 1990 four-level studies were introduced in vocational schools to ensure that initial accessibility of vocational training to every one and to create possibilities for every citizen to acquire a profession that best suits one's interests and abilities. In 1991 former technicums, which provided specialised secondary education, were replaced by advanced VET schools, i.e. institutions of post-secondary education offering practice-oriented 3-year programmes. That meant further

restructuring and diversification of available programmes [18]. The efforts of latter changes were targeted for broadening study fields of formerly rather narrowly specialised programmes. The peak of the reform in Lithuania was reached in 1994. The Government declared vocational education and training to be a priority area within the context of PHARE programme, and received an especially strong impetus in 1995, with the start of the PHARE VET Reform Programme [18]. This allowed us to increase investment into the system of vocational education and training and created opportunities for a planned restructuring of the system [18]. In 1997 the Law on Vocational Education and Training was adopted. The law became a legal basis for regulating of initial VET (focusing on consecutive education of young people) and labour market (in-service) vocational training (oriented towards adult continuous, and in some cases, initial vocational training).

The White Paper on Vocational Education and Training in the Republic of Lithuania (up to university level) mapped out the main directions in the development of vocational education and training to ensure compatibility of education and qualifications with relevant recommendations within the EU and assessing specific social and economic needs of the country with the requirements of the European Union. The Law on Higher Education (2000 m.) formalised non-university higher education and justified the establishment of colleges. The reorganisation of the already existing institutions - advanced VET schools - into colleges, has been an axis of the transformation to the binary system. An assessment of advanced VET schools seeking college status was carried out to determine their preparedness to provide non-university higher education. The assessment showed that 8 state and 3 non-state advanced schools were prepared for

the provision of this type of education. They have developed new curricula in line with the requirements of non-university higher education and possessed adequate resources to ensure successful delivery of the programmes offered. In the result 7 colleges started their activities in September 2000. They have four years to get accreditation; if some of the schools fail their status will be changed into vocational schools.

The overall responsibility for the general policy in the area of initial vocational education and training and its strategic development lies with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), whereas labour market vocational training is within the competence of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour [18].

Tri-partite partnership, i.e. collaboration of educators, employers and industrial lead bodies are the pillars of the social partnership in VET dialogue [18]. The main actor of this process on the national level is **Lithuanian VET Council**, which has a network of regional boards. The Council functions as an advisory institution helping the ministries of Education and Science and Social Security and Labour to deal with strategic VET issues. The boards function as advisory institutions performing the expertise, VET counselling, coordination and evaluation. **Industrial lead bodies (ILB)** are dealing with VET reform problems within a particular branch of economy and advise the staff of the vocational training centres on these issues. The ILBs establish the priorities as far as the drafting of occupational and vocational training standards are concerned perform expert evaluation and validation of draft standards, put forward suggestions to the ministries on the approval of standards [www]. Representatives of **employer organisations** and **trade unions** (Chambers of Industry,



Trade and Crafts, Chambers of Agriculture, etc.) have been authorised to participate in the organisation of qualification and final examinations of vocational and advanced schools and have been granted the right to award qualifications.

The importance of **vocational counselling** and enhancing of its quality is obvious. Information on educational institutions, training programmes qualification certificates, and vocational training possibilities should be enhanced in order to ensure better accessibility to the VET itself and to the related information. This is especially important in peripheral and rural areas, where the lack of information services still occurs (particularly because of low accessibility of the Internet and related services). The VET counselling is directly related with such issues of VET reform as retraining and decreasing of unemployment in the country.

### ***2.2.2. VET providers and the role of the universities***

Institutions of vocational education and training, all types of enterprises, and non-state advanced schools are allowed to deliver formal vocational training only after obtaining a licence issued by the Ministry of Education and Science. Non-state higher educational establishments can operate with the licences from the government, which are issued on the basis of an examination of the documents submitted by the applying institution and the teaching facilities it possesses. Such an audit is carried out by independent experts from research and study institutions, public administration bodies, county governor administrations, employer organisations, VET institutions, etc. [18]. To enhance the transparency and comparability of vocational training and to strive for a better balance between the supply and demand of qualifications, a

**system of standards** regulating VET is being developed [www], the work on VET standards started in 1998.

While reforming VET system in Lithuania it has been paid great attention on teaching and learning as a life-long process, the activities towards a modular structure of the education content in basic and labour market VET implemented. The aim is to make the provision of VET more flexible and capable of better meeting the expectations of trainees and employers. The curriculum is designed in a way that enhances the development of core skills, such as the knowledge of foreign languages and information technologies, team working, independent learning techniques, professional improvement, and decision making. While designing their curricula, vocational and advanced schools are guided by a relevant VET standard.

The continuing vocational education and training as well as distance learning is one of the market niches for the universities in Lithuania [13;14]. The continuing education as a study form which corresponds best the idea of life-long learning. Usually different courses and programmes of continuing education are provided by universities and colleges according to programmes of continuous education, registered at the Ministry of Science and Education or according to in-service training programmes. The development of continuing education programme sand courses is featured by the grooving collaboration with employers: 1) setting goals and content of programmes and courses; 2) providing training and counselling for enterprises and organisations. Universities are actively participating in the continuing vocational training while offering different courses for qualification improvement. E.g. At Vilnius Gediminas Technical University there over 140 courses

offered to the organizations as well to individual customers. All information is continuously updated and provided on university web-site. The majority of these programmes or courses is developed in response to the demand stated by Lithuanian Labour Exchange, professional organizations or enterprises. In a 200-2001 more than 1,5 thous. of participants of these courses were provided by certificates on completion of different training courses at VGTU [13].

### **2.2.3. Free movement and recognition of vocational qualifications**

The recognition of the qualifications directly influences the free movement of labour force. The details on policies and procedures for the recognition of qualifications with regards to freedom of movement in Lithuania provided in this chapter are retrieved from the **European gateway to recognition of academic and professional qualifications** [5]. The basic decisions on free movement of persons were described in the **Position Paper of Lithuania**, in December 2000, There is stated that the Republic of Lithuania accepts in full the *acquis* concerning Free Movement of Persons and will be ready to implement the *acquis* from the date of accession to the European Union.. The *acquis* in the area of professional qualifications and mutual recognition is composed of two Council Directives 89/48/EEC and 92/51/EC, Commission Decision 97/42/EC, and Directive 99/42/EC of the European Parliament and the Council. The provisions of mutual recognition of professional qualifications and diplomas are laid down in the following acts of national legislation [3;5]:

- The Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania;

- Law on Vocational Education and Training of the Republic of Lithuania;
- Law on Higher Education of the Republic of Lithuania;
- Regulations on the Assessment and Recognition of Qualifications Acquired Abroad adopted in 1999 by Government Resolution No 1460;
- Procedure for the Recognition and Assessment of the Evidence of International Bachelor's Education approved by the Order of the Minister of Education and Science No 1195 of 25 September 2000;
- Government resolution No 624 on the Regulations on the Assessment and Recognition of Qualifications and on the Approval of the List of Competent Authorities Exercising the Assessment and Recognition of Qualifications and of Regulated Professions approved in 2000; This Resolution approves 123 regulated professions and 15 competent bodies which will exercise the assessment and recognition of professional qualifications.

The **Position paper** describes the legal frame of the practicing for professionals, the professional qualifications of which are treated in correspondence with general Directives of Council: lawyers, architects, health care specialists etc. The main steps taken before the EU membership *were* 1) preparation and adoption of legal acts regulating the activities of the institutions exercising the assessment and recognition of professional qualifications; 2) seeking membership in the European professional associations.

Striving to guarantee the preconditions for free labour mobility Lithuanian system of vocational education joins such European initiatives on recognition and transparency of qualifications as: **National Reference Point on**

## **Qualifications Network , ECDL, Certificate supplement, Europass etc.**

The network of **national reference points on qualifications** (NRPQ) [5] gives access to information on national vocational training systems. The functions of NRPQ are to be first point of contact when questions relating to national qualifications, certificates and certificate supplements arise, to provide relevant information other national bodies and individuals, which need corresponding information. Lithuania was planning to establish a national reference point in 2004, unfortunately, it has been not done yet.

The **certificate supplement**, developed by the European forum on transparency of vocational qualifications describes competences acquired by certificate holders, which among other data provides information on skills and competences acquired, (including language skills) range of occupations accessible, access opportunities to next level education etc. This certificate is not a substitute for the original qualification and not an automatic system that guarantees recognition. The certificate supplement is rather new initiative for Lithuania, the **Europass** is wider known.

On the initiative of the European Commission, a new Community document, **Europass**, came into effect on 1 January 2000. The aim of the document is to assist and promote mobility within work-linked training by providing a voluntary Europe-wide means of recording periods of training. Europass is available to trainees whose placements began after January 1 2000, and initially will be operated for a period of five years. EUROPASS provides the personal details of the trainee and training period abroad (host partner,

mentor, etc.). This measure is largely decentralized, because of the differences in National training systems [5,17]. All initiatives related to Europass training are coordinated by Lithuanian Leonardo da Vinci Programme Coordination Support Foundation [17]. Since January, 2005 first Eurppasses may be obtained at Lithuanian Higher Education institutions.

### **3. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION**

As it is stated in the Lithuanian Law on Education [7], non-formal adult education covers learning, personal development, or studies undertaken in the interests of an individual and society that do not lead to a state-recognised document attesting to a full or partial education, completion of a regulated module, or to the acquisition of a qualification. Programmes of non-formal education can be prepared and implemented by bodies of non-formal education and also by institutions of vocational education and training, general education and advanced schools, establishments of higher education, other natural and legal persons who, in the manner prescribed by the Government or its authorised institution, have been granted the right to engage in non-formal education activity. Legal bodies can provide non-formal education if this type of activity is included in the statutes (articles of association) of such an enterprise, institution, or organisation. On completion of a non-formal education programme, learners may be issued a certificate that does not grant a vocational qualification. It could be presumed, that Lithuanian non-formal education system will get the development **impulses** from the new initiative of the European Union on **recognition of non-formal learning** [5], which aims to enhance the visibility of skills and competences on the labour market. Recognition of non-

formal learning should cover the overall process of granting status to competences of individuals, either

- **formally** (by awarding certificates or granting equivalence, credit units, validation of gained competences) or
- **informally** (by acknowledging the value of competences by economic and social stakeholders).

It is obvious that recognition of **non-formal learning** is becoming more and more important, because of 1) growing part of competences, which are gained outside the formal educational system; 2) of increasing employability and mobility of workers, if the competences gained within non-formal education system would be recognised.

#### 4. LIFE-LONG LEARNING AND ADULT EDUCATION

The creation of the life-long learning opportunities is an area of prime importance in the national education strategies. Life long learning is widely used concept especially within the context of adult education. The need of the enhancing of this area in Lithuania is obvious, Life long learning and training is an acute necessity for many people involved into economy. Unfortunately there is still lack of coordinated activities and adequate financing. The obstacles for participation of potential students or trainees in life-long learning in many cases could be defined as 1) the lack of resources (basically financial ones), 2) Lack of information about the education and training possibilities, 3) Lack of the recognition of the learning importance, therefore, motivation. Recent initiatives of Lithuanian government is namely addresses to the solving of these problems, especially focusing on increasing of the accessibility to the information

resources, related to adult education and life –long learning [9]. Therefore an external input (e.g. through EU programs such as GRUNDTVIG, MINERVA) is very important here.

For the future of adults' education in Lithuania are extremely important the activities, which ensure appropriate counselling and accessibility of information about learning opportunities, and eliminate such barriers as fixed learning time and speed, limitations of the learning location, strict pre-requirements of formal education at the beginning of learning or studies [9]. The introduction of new methods into non -formal education of adults is still vague. As for example, a widely discussed participatory teaching approach could be more extensive used in adult learning domain, as it takes into account the various needs of learners and provides opportunities for both learners and facilitators to share their experiences. It is especially important for the adult learning, that this approach is particularly effective in regard to a learner's personal empowerment and social capacities building. The limited use of this approach in adult education in Lithuania is still determined by the necessity to have a flexible curriculum with the possibility for students and trainees to choose from different subject area and qualified teachers, who would be able to include all students in participation and discussion. Thus, the training of the teachers, working in the area of vocational training and retraining, especially in the area of adult education is an important constituent towards the quality of education and training. The role of the teacher in this area is changing towards becoming a learning adviser and in some cases even mediator between the learner and sources of learning. This requires very high professional and social competence and continuous renewal of the qualification. The first step here is the defining of status quo of teachers' qualifications and the



needs for the qualifications and the opportunity to satisfy the existing demand. The teacher training importance is one of the target points in the national strategy on education and training.

## **5. E-LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT**

Transition from centralised economy to market oriented economy in democratic society caused the restructurisation of the labour market and therefore necessitated new or updated Professional skills. The demand is significant; therefore the expansion of the education services in Lithuania has been one of the main features of recent education and training system development. Traditional face-to-face courses are not always responding to the trainees needs, because of time, space and number of participants' restrictions. The obstacles could be eliminated by introducing modern information technologies and distance learning, that makes teaching process flexible and much more individualised in terms of students or trainees needs. The main users groups of modern life-long e-learning are [11,14]:

1. Employees of public and private sector companies, including SMEs employees and other groups of employed population, as there is significant demand for in-service training (and retraining).
2. Adult population demanding formal post-secondary education, but alienated from this

because of the restrictions of time and place. E-learning could be successfully used as a tool for the diminishing of such barriers.

Emerging of the knowledge society requires ease accessible system of life long learning in country, which could be partially created by modern information technologies. The flexibility and adaptability of modern distance education to the needs of the individual makes it the most user-friendly form of continuous education especially for employed population. The first steps of the implementation of the distance education model (creation of infrastructure, developing of first study guides and programmes) was started with the support of EU programmes, Nordic Countries, Open Society Fund and Lithuanian Investment Fund in 1998. As the result of Phare multi-country cooperation Distance Education Development programme (1995-1999) first modern Distance learning centres were established in Kaunas and Vilnius. In 1996 The Ministry of Education and Science established Lithuanian Distance Education Centre, to coordinate The government of Lithuania recognises the necessity of the creation of information and knowledge –based society [8;11]. The development of science and innovative technologies is a strategic task of Lithuania and a trend of its economic development. Therefore, in Lithuanian government programmes as a task is stated an implementation of a common e-education programme covering schools, teacher training, teaching of students, education of public servants and other professionals. Now Lithuania has several computer networks, e. g. LITNET (**Academic and Research Network in Lithuania**), which are used for life-long learning. Nevertheless there is the necessity to develop

appropriate system of modern equipped education centres, relevant software and interconnections.

In the end of 2000 the National strategy for Implementation of Information and Communication technologies into Lithuanian education was developed and approved. In January 2001 the Ministry of Education and Science launched a program named “Information Technologies for Science and Higher Education”. The program is devoted to one of the most important areas of the society’s activities, i.e. science and higher education, for everyone who creates, accumulates and transfers the information. The program outlines the general directions of its computerization. The program is based on an **Academic and Research Network in Lithuania** LITNET that provides wide scale Internet services for all users. By using lines of permanent connection (mainly fiber optical) there are networks that are united to all higher education institutions, colleges, research institutions, libraries, university clinics and many other organizations. LITNET forms an environment for other systems and networks, e.g. science and education information system, libraries information system, distance education, information system for the admission to higher education institutions and others [12]. This programme was a breakthrough in the development of e-learning too. Among the seven areas that should be developed immediately the following ones related to le-learning were stressed out in the strategy: contents and methods of education; provision of computer equipment and learning aids; management and funding of ICT implementation. The first steps of the strategy implementation proved that the Lithuanian education needs purposeful and systematic ICT implementation policies [mark], which encompass all areas and levels of education. The supporting initiatives, which

carried out in parallel were definitely needed. Further development of E-learning in 2001-2004 was enhanced in-line with the implementation of the **Strategic plan for the Development of Information Society for 2001-2004**. In order to develop and maintain a countrywide Distance Education System and to assist in the preparation of distance education courses the centralized activities were decisive. Since 2001 the programme on Information Technologies for Science and Studies development (ITMiS) became a common basis of further development. The main objective of the ITMiS program is to develop Lithuanian science and education information environment by using the available resources [15,16]. The information environment is meant to:

- Accumulate information about science and studies, which can be used in the activities of the organization, while decision- making and presenting Lithuanian science and education in the international computer networks.
- Help scientists, teachers and students to receive the needed information
- Use information technologies for the education of the Lithuanian people.

The program comprises of three main parts that are closely interrelated: **Lithuanian science and education information system (LieMSIS)**, **Lithuanian distance learning network (LieDM)** and **Lithuanian academic libraries network (LABT)**. All activities works are preformed within the LITNET environment. It is foreseen that while implementing the program it will undergo further development and new sub programs will be added.

**The main aim of the LieMSIS** is standardisation and integration of the information systems developed at different Lithuanian education and research institutions as well at other bodies related to assessment and legislation of education and research in Lithuania [15,16].

**The main aim of the LABT** is to create the virtual library in Lithuania, through unification and standardization of search and access system to available resources. As the establishment of information systems designed for the libraries of higher education institutions was started in 1998, now the LABT services is further developed and improved.

**The aim of the Lithuanian distance learning network LieDM** [15,16] is to develop and coordinate the ICT –based continuous higher education and life –long learning system in Lithuania. The activities within Lithuanian distance learning network LieDM deserve to be presented in more details. While implementing the projects “Development of the Lithuanian distance learning” in the period of 1998-2001 the network of distance learning (LieDM) centers and other distance-learning providers was established. The network was necessary in order to create better conditions for long-life learning as well as to encourage higher education institutions to develop and apply methods of e-learning while developing new courses and full study programmes for different target groups. Teaching within the LieDM network is conducted using video conferences and www environment/medium. The possibilities offered by the LieDM network are especially important for the education and training of the human resources (especially important in the remote regions). From 2001 the further development of the network has been carried out within the frame of the

ITMiS ( Information Technologies for Science and Studies) program.

The LieDM system helps to access studies and training organized by higher education institutions without leaving living and working places, simplify the sharing of knowledge and experience accumulated in scientific centres, create and sustain a universal *e*-learning environment that is used in both distance education and continuous studies. The system is intended to raise the qualifications of the personnel from state institutions (local governments and regional administration), improve the qualification of specialists (teachers, librarians, nursing personnel and others), to train business people, retrain unemployed people, train the disabled people. The main tasks of LieDM at the moment are: establishment of video studios and distance education classrooms; establishment of new connection links; upgrading of software and hardware in video studios and distance education classrooms; maintenance of distance education videoconference network and assistance in the organization of studies; development and delivery of distance education courses; training of distance education participants (lecturers, tutors, consultants, administrators, managers and technical personnel); development of software to enhance the interaction between a lecturer and student within Distance learning process. One of the recent activities of LieDM network is the become a basis of the „common education market” i.e. to develop a portal of all distance-learning courses created and offered by different distance education providers in Lithuania, in order to create possibilities to collect courses and create different individualized combinations of courses corresponding to the needs of each individual.

The demand for the e-learning is rather high, and the major obstacle for faster and wider expanding of distance learning are mainly related to the lack of appropriately trained teaching staff and the raining materials thoroughly adapted to the needs and the specifics of distance education. The increase of general advancement in the use of ICT among society members would also stimulate the demand of such form of education. International projects within such programmes as SOCRATES/MINERVA, SOCRATES/GRUNDTVIG, LEONARDO DA VINCI, PHARE have been very important for meeting national needs to the opening and widening education possibilities through the use of ICT.

## FINAL REMARKS

In response to the Bologna process as well trends stated in Copenhagen and Berlin communiqués, in order to ensure efficiency and sustainability of the education development in all possible forms (formal, non-formal, traditional and distance, adult education, vocational education and retraining) the following tasks shall be fulfilled on the country level in Lithuania:

- 1) Responsibility of education institutions for the quality of studies, close links with the labour market as well forecasting of labour market needs shall be increased, in parallel the influence of labour market on education shall be strengthened through coordinated involvement of all stakeholders of Education into education policy development and implementation processes.
- 2) Accessibility and quality of education within all the country (including all the regions) should be increased. Flexible and open structures of education, integrating all formal and non-formal education

(vocational education and training including) should be developed, using such tool as credit accumulation and the recognition of competences acquired through different forms of education [9].

- 3) The quality of the education and training of teachers for all the levels of education should be enhanced, developing their ability to introduce new active learning methods into teaching process.
- 4) The management system based on periodic status analysis of all levels of education, oriented education to improvement and to the information and participation of the society at large should be introduced [9]. For this purpose functions, obligations, responsibilities and accountability of the state, municipalities and institutions revised and redistributed, following the principles of subsidiarity.
- 5) Raising value of education within modern knowledge society and promotion the idea of lifelong learning, acquisition of skills and competences should be increased in order to build up an adequate attitudes of citizens to the education and training and to increase their awareness and safety facing changing labour market conditions.

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# **A POLISH CASE STUDY WROCLAW UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS**

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# WROCLAW UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS

## General Information

Address: Komandorska 118/120  
53-345 Wrocław, Poland

Web site: [www.ae.wroc.pl](http://www.ae.wroc.pl)

University's status: state university

University's foundation date: 1947

Faculties: Faculty of National Economy  
Faculty of Management and Computer  
Science  
Faculty of Engineering and Economics  
Faculty of Regional Economics and Tourism  
(faculty placed in Jelenia Góra)

Number of students:	17 229
Number of foreign students:	110
Number of academic staff:	655
Number of administrative staff:	436

### **International Relations Office:**

Address of International Relations Office:  
Komandorska 118/120, 53-345 Wrocław, Poland

Telephone to International Relations Office:  
+48 71 36 80 131

Fax to International Relations Office:  
+48 71 367 27 84

### *Academic Calendar*

The academic year is divided into two semesters:

**Winter semester:**

September 30, 2003 – January 23, 2004

Exam period: January 24, 2004 – February 10, 2004

Re-exam period: February 16, 2004 – February 29, 2004

Mid-semester brake: December 20, 2003 – January 4, 2004

Rector's Days (no classes day) November 10, 2003

Brake between semesters: February 11, 2004 - February 15, 2004

**Spring semester:**

February 16, 2004 – June 10, 2004

Exam period: June 11, 2004 – June 27, 2004

Re-exam period: September 6, 2004 – September 24, 2004

Mid-semester brake: April 09, 2004 – April 14, 2004

Rector's Days (no classes day): May 13, 2004

**Public holidays:**

All Saints' Day – November 1, 2003

Independence Day – November 11, 2003

Christmas – December 25-26, 2003

New Year's Day – January 1, 2004

Easter – April 10-12, 2004

Labour Day – May 1, 2004

Constitution Day – May 3, 2004

Corpus Christi – June 10, 2004

**Accommodation.** Wrocław University of Economics provides accommodation for all exchange students in the University's dormitories. Rooms for students are reserved in two dormitories: "Przegubowiec" and "Ślężak". Both dormitories are situated on campus, near to each other, and offer unified conditions. Both of them are recently renewed buildings with single and double rooms, shared bathrooms, kitchen and launderette on each floor. Rooms are equipped

with new furniture, washbasins, bed linen and electric kettles. Students are asked to provide plates and dishes on their own. The dormitories have also computer rooms, TV rooms, and access to the Internet. Each dormitory has such additional facilities as a fitness club and billiards. There is also a student club and a cafeteria in “Śleżak” Dormitory and a grocery shop in “Przegubowiec” Dormitory. There is a limited choice of single rooms and places are distributed according to a date of application.

**Cost.** The costs are as follows:

- single room - 640 PLN per month (1PLN = 0,25 Euro)
- double room – 320 PLN per month
- access to the Internet in a room (optional) – additional 15 PLN per month.

Total cost of your accommodation in a semester is not bound to the length of the semester, but is fixed on real time of accommodation, i.e. if you come for a period shorter than one semester you pay for the actual number of months you stayed at the dormitory.

**Assistance. International Relations Office.** Foreign students always receive assistance and support from the staff of the International Relations Office. The Office is situated in Building G, room 211.

**Academic Tutor.** Foreign students receive an academic tutor who guides through the learning process during the study period.

**Student Patron.** Upon arrival foreign students meet a *patron* – a Polish student who assists in settling down and arranging necessary formalities and offering an advice.

**Insurance. Foreign Students.** Medical insurance is obligatory for all foreign students. You can either obtain it in your home country or once you are in Poland. Insurance is valid from the date you submitted the applications. The insurance entitles you to free full service medical care in every type of public health care centre in Poland.

**Insurance. Foreign Students of the Polish Background.** A student of the Polish background, are subjected to other regulations and Wrocław University of Economics arranges the insurance and covers its cost.

### **The Campus. Location. Facilities.**

Wrocław University of Economics is located within a compact campus in the central part of the city. The Faculty of Regional Economics and Tourism has a separate faculty campus in Jelenia Góra. The University possesses 31 premises for teaching, research, administration, and social purposes. Classes are performed in lecture rooms and exercise rooms, and in computer, chemical and technological laboratories. Rooms are equipped with modern audio-visual aides. Some rooms possess facilities enabling direct tele-transmissions and tele-conferencing activities.

**Facilities for Disabled Students.** Most of the buildings are adjusted for needs of disabled persons. Classes for groups including disabled students are organised in the most convenient locations. Within the frame of the Physical Education Centre there operates the Centre of Sport and Rehabilitation for Disabled People.

**Library.** The Central Library offers 340,000 volumes and nearly 1,000 current periodicals. One quarter of periodicals is of the foreign origin. The Library uses an electronic system for catalogues and lending registration. You will



receive a library card to operate the system. Access to scientific information is available through several data bases including: ABI/Inform Global Proquest via the Internet, Elsevier periodical's, bibliographic and fact bases on optical discs (5), fact bases on optical discs (18), bases on floppy discs (5), and bibliographic bases of self design (3).

The Central Library is open:		Reading rooms at the Central Library are open:	
Monday to Friday a.m. – 7.00 p.m.	9.00	Monday to Friday a.m. – 8.00 p.m.	8.00
Saturday a.m. – 3.30 p.m.	10.00	Saturday a.m. – 3.30 p.m.	10.00
Sunday a.m. – 2.00 p.m.	10.00	Sunday a.m. – 2.00 p.m.	10.00

**Computer Centre and Facilities.** At the campus, there operates the University's Computer Centre. Faculty teaching premises are equipped with modern computer bases available in computer rooms. The access to the Internet is widely available, both in teaching premises and in dormitories.

**Publishing House.** The University possesses its own Publishing House which issues research publications and reference course books for students. There are 3 bookstores on the campus which provide the University's publications as well as books of other publishing houses.

**Sport facilities.** The University's Physical Education Centre owns modern facilities: game halls, an aerobic room, fitness rooms, a rehabilitation room, a swimming pool, and a swimming pool for rehabilitation purposes and for learning how to swim. Physical Education Centre cooperates with Academic Sport Union and together they offer such sport activities for students as: aerobic, badminton, athletics,

skiing, basketball, football, volleyball, swimming, table-tennis, tourist cycling, bridge, horse riding, track athletics, and rock climbing. Additionally, in cooperation with the Economists' Yacht Club, there are organized yachting camps for students in Mazury lake district. At the Centre, there is also a possibility of using such facilities as biological regeneration room, sauna, and solarium.

**Foreign Languages Centre.** Foreign Languages Centre employs 74 teachers and offers courses in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Russian. Language classes are provided by Polish teachers and three native speakers from Germany, England and the United States.

**Medical Centre.** The university has its own Medical Centre located on the campus. The Centre offers both general and specialist public care for the University's students and staff.

**Canteen and Cafeteria.** The student canteen is placed in building D and offers hot meals for lunches (approximately 10 PLN), snacks, hot and cold drinks. Cafeteria is situated in building Z.

**Student Card.** Student card is issued by the Dean's Office. The card gives you a discount for train and bus/tram tickets and for entrance to museums. Some cinemas also offer discount prices for card holders. The student card is valid for one semester and then it must be prolonged at the Dean's Office.

### **Other information. How to Get to Wrocław**

Wrocław has its international airport with direct flights from Frankfurt, Munich, Copenhagen and Warsaw. If you plan to access Wrocław by train you should get off at Wrocław Główny Station. You can also get to Wrocław by one of the international coaches arriving at Dworzec PKS (Central Coach Station). Both Wrocław Główny Station and Dworzec

PKS are close to the Wrocław University of Economics' campus.

**Local Transportation.** One can use buses and trams for travelling around Wrocław. The student card gives you 50% discount on public transportation. A single ticket is valid for one entrance to a bus or a tram and costs 1 PLN. It is better to buy a monthly travel card issued for your name (*bilet imienny*) which costs 34 PLN for regular buses/trams or 39 PLN for regular and fast buses/trams.

**Currency.** The currency in Poland is Polish zloty (PLN). 1 EUR corresponds approximately to 4,00 PLN.

**Shopping.** *Monday to Friday* Shops are open from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. (groceries) and from 10 a.m. to 6 – 7 p.m. (other shops). Shopping malls and supermarkets stay open until 10 p.m. *Saturday* Some groceries and other shops could be open until 3 p.m. only. Shopping malls and supermarkets close at 10 p.m. *Sunday* Some small and medium shops could be closed on Sundays. Shopping malls and supermarkets are open until at 9 p.m. *Public holidays* Most shops are closed.

**Smoking.** Smoking indoors is prohibited, both in the city and at the campus. At restaurants and cafés, smoking is usually allowed in special sections.

### **Approximate Living Costs per Month**

Accommodation 640-320 PLN

Food: 400 PLN

Local travel card: 39-34 PLN

Medical insurance: 33,44 PLN

Books: most of the books are available at the University's Library, but it is possible that you will have to spend approximately 200-250 PLN per semester for additional reference books.

### **Important Telephones:**

Ambulance: 999

Fire Brigade: 998

Police: 997

Information about Wrocław. Capital of Lower Silesia  
Wrocław, the economic, academic and cultural capital of Lower Silesia, is one of the oldest and most beautiful cities in Poland. Situated close to the foot of the Sudety Mountains, upon five rivers, it is a glorious city of 12 islands linked with over 100 bridges. First settlements in the area date back to the Stone Age, however, the city gained importance and began its active growth when Wrocław became a crossing point of trade routes between the Baltic Sea and the Roman Empire and between the Black Sea and Western Europe. At present, the city of 700 000 inhabitants, located at the very centre of Europe, 160 km from Germany and 120 km from the Czech Republic, follows its tradition and dynamically develops its wide international business links.

### ***Free Time, Culture and Entertainment***

A cultural centre of Lower Silesia and an attractive site for sightseeing, Wrocław is also a great place to take advantage of good entertainment. Various museums, theatres, music houses and galleries present a continuous series of artistic events. The historical centre of Wrocław with its magnificent architecture offers a journey throughout centuries. In the evenings, numerous clubs and pubs become places where students from different Wrocław universities integrate and enjoy their free time.

#### **Museums**

<a href="#">Municipal Museum of Wrocław</a> (Muzeum Miejskie) Sukiennice	National Museum in Wrocław (Muzeum Narodowe we
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<p>14/15. The Municipal Museum consists of 6 branches:</p>	<p>Wrocławiu) Powstańców Warszawy Square 5</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History Museum (Muzeum Historyczne) Sukiennice 14/15</li> <li>• Museum of Townspeople's Art (Muzeum Sztuki Mieszczanskiej) Rynek – Ratusz</li> <li>• Museum of Archeology (Muzeum Archeologiczne) Cieszyńskiego 9</li> <li>• Museum of Medal Art (Muzeum Sztuki Medalierskiej) Kielbaśnicza 5</li> <li>• Museum of Military Accessories – City Arsenal (Muzeum Militariów - Arsenal Miejski) Cieszyńskiego 9</li> <li>• Museum of Cemetery Art (Muzeum Sztuki Cmentarnej) Ślężna 37/39</li> </ul>	<p>Museum of Architecture (Muzeum Architektury) Bernardyńska 5</p> <p>Museum of Ethnography (Muzeum Etnograficzne) Kazimierza Wielkiego 34</p> <p><b>Museum of the Archdiocese (Muzeum Archidiecezjalne) Katedralny Square 16</b></p> <p>The Panorama of the Battle of Raclawice (Panorama Raclawicka) Purkyniego 11</p>
<p>Museum of Contemporary Art (Muzeum Sztuki Współczesnej) Powstańców Warszawy Square 5</p>	<p>Museum of Book Art (Muzeum Sztuki Książki) Powstańców Warszawy Square 5</p>
<p>Museum of the University of Wrocław (Muzeum Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego) Uniwersytecki Square 1</p>	<p>Museum of Geology (Muzeum Geologiczne) Cybulskiego 30</p>
<p>Nature Museum of the University of Wrocław (Muzeum Przyrodnicze Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego) Sienkiewicza 21</p>	<p>Museum of Mineralogy (Muzeum Mineralogiczne) Cybulskiego 30</p>

Museum of Post and Telecommunication (Muzeum Poczty i Telekomunikacji) Krasińskiego 1	Branch of the Museum of Mineralogy Kuźnicza 22
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**Theatres.** There are 14 theatres in Wrocław and some of the most established are:

The Polish Theatre (Teatr Polski) with 3 stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main Stage Gabrieli Zapolskiej 3</li> <li>• Small Audience Świdnicka 28 ”</li> <li>• Na Świebodzkim”Orląt Lwowskich Square 20c</li> </ul>	The Centre of Studies on Jerzy Grotowski's Work and of the Theatrical and Cultural Search (Ośrodek Badań Twórczości Jerzego Grotowskiego i Poszukiwań Teatralno – Kulturowych) Rynek-Ratusz 27
Wrocław Contemporary Theatre (Wrocławski Teatr Współczesny) Rzeźnicza 12	Wrocław Mime Theatre (Wrocławski Teatr Pantomimy) Dębowa 16
“K2” Theatre Kuźnicza 29a	“Ad Spectatores” Powstańców Śląskich 82/58

### *Music*

Wrocław Philharmonic House (Filharmonia im. Witolda Lutosławskiego) Piłsudskiego 19	Music Theatre - Wrocław Operetta House Teatr Muzyczny - Operetka Wrocławska Piłsudskiego 72
Lower Silesia Opera House Opera Dolnośląska Świdnicka 35	

**Galleries.** There are tens of galleries in Wrocław exhibiting wide range of artistic work: paintings, sculptures, graphics, drawings, glass, ceramic works, photography, jewellery, and

weaving art. Galleries run variety of performances, happenings and multimedia presentations.

**Cinemas.** Movies are displayed in original language versions with Polish subtitles. There are various cinema types – from large multiplex movie theatres presenting latest premières to small audience cinemas offering movies of less commercial and more artistic choice.

**Green City.** Although a large and economically lively city, Wrocław is full of greenery and places when one could rest close to the nature. Parks, some of them dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, cover considerable part of the city area. Walking through city gardens could be a truly relaxing moment and a pleasure for the eyes. Most famous gardens in Wrocław are:

- Zoological Garden, founded in 1865, and presently the second biggest garden of this kind in Europe. Wróblewskiego 1-5
- Botanical Garden established as a scientific institution of the University of Wrocław in 1811, and presenting a magnificent collection of plants from all over the world and the biggest cactus house in Poland. Sienkiewicza 23
- The Japanese Garden created as a part of the World Exhibition in 1913, with its present shape designed in cooperation with the Japanese Embassy and Japanese specialists from Nagoya. Situated in Szczytnicki Park close to Hala Ludowa (Centenary Hall)

### ***Internet Sites about Wrocław***

<http://www.wroclaw.com/>

<http://www.wroclaw.pl/m/>

## ***The Education Organization***

The organization of the education follow the structure of the University. There are four Faculties:

- Faculty of National Economy (GN)
- Faculty of Management and Computer Science (ZI)
- Faculty of Engineering and Economics (IE)
- Faculty of Regional Economics and Tourism (faculty placed in Jelenia Góra) (GR)

Each Faculty offers own set of Majors and organizational systems. There are the following Majors offered:

1. Economics (GR)
2. Management and Marketing (GN, ZI)
3. Finance and Banking (GN, ZI)
4. International Business Relations (GN)
5. Econometrics and Computer Science (ZI)
6. Business Engineering (IE)

The offer covers undergraduate and postgraduate level of education. Graduate of the undergraduate level receive either Bachelor (Polish description *Licencjat*) or Engineer. Postgraduate receive either master degree (Polish description *Magister*), master in engineering (Polish description *Magister Inżynier*), or PhD in the case of Doctoral Program. The regular students (master program) have a curriculum that covers some 3 thousand hours of teaching hours. Apart from regular students there are extramural students learning in weekend regime or evening regime. Evening regime



requires students to cover 75% of the teaching hours of regular students. Weekend system requires 50% of teaching hours. All three systems are five years master programs.

The undergraduate program covers approximately two thousand hours.

Postgraduate students have choice from several possible forms:

1. Two year master program (weekend organization) – prerequisite is bachelor or engineer.
2. Two year master of business administration (MBA) program (weekend organization – Friday – Saturday) – prerequisite is master, bachelor or engineer.
3. One year postgraduate life long course – (weekend organization) – prerequisite is master, bachelor or engineer.
4. Four years Doctoral Program (regular or weekend organization) – prerequisite is master, or master in engineering.

## **The ECTS System**

**The System** ECTS (the European Credit Transfer System) was introduced by a decision of the European Commission to promote a unified procedure for academic recognition of study periods performed abroad by home universities. The system introduces standards for assessment and comparison of study levels in various academic centres. The system enables also credit transfer between the universities.

**ECTS Credits.** ECTS credits are values allocated to certain course units with reference to certain study time cycle. The

value involves all aspects of student workload per semester: participation in classes, self-study and passing examinations or other forms of assessment. A certain amount of credits describes a relation between the quantity of work required by each course and the total quantity of work required to complete a full academic year. The system assumes that 60 credits reflect the student's workload during the whole academic year and, consequently, one semester requires the student to obtain 30 credits.

**Students in the System.** Students participating in the system receive total credit amount for a defined and successfully accomplished period of study in a host academic centre abroad. Obtained credits can be transferred from the host university to the home university on the basis of previously accepted learning agreement, signed by both universities and the student. Upon the student's return, the system guarantees academic recognition of studies abroad. In this way students can continue their education without a loss of time or previously obtained credits.

### ***The Certification***

Students have the possibility to acquire various certificates which may help them in the future job search.

1. The most popular certificates are those of foreign languages efficiency.
2. The European Certificate of Business Competence is the next type which may be acquired.
3. The Computer Science (eg. CISCO) certificate gives the proof – a student has the necessary skills and knowledge in the certified field of competence.

## ***The Accreditation***

Each offered Major may be accredited. In Polish system there are two possibilities:

1. State Accreditation – obligatory.
2. Private Accreditation – not obligatory.

The difference is that state Accreditation Body checks whether minimal standards are kept. The second one gives the Excellency certificate. Out of eight offered Majors six have Private Accreditation, all have State Accreditation.

## ***The Internationalization***

Important way of quality assurance and transparency of the competences is internationalization. The University has over thirty bilateral agreements with international University level institutions across the whole world. Most of the agreements are within the EU. All continents are represented.

Crucial for the competence transparency in this context is the Diploma Supplement system. It has two functions:

1. To describe student's effort and her/his ability and achievements.
2. To describe the education system.

The system starts March 2005.

## **Faculty of National Economy. General Information**

<i>Address of the Faculty</i>	Wrocław University of Economics Faculty of National Economy Komandorska 118/120 53-345 Wrocław Poland
<i>Dean's Office.</i>	Building A, room 122 The faculty consists of 16 departments. 7 of them are grouped in the following institutes:
<i>Structure</i>	Institute of Economics (4 departments) Institute of Marketing – (3 departments) Additionally, there are 9 separate departments within the faculty frame. There are three fields of study (Major) at the Faculty:
<i>Fields of Study</i>	Management and Marketing, Finance and Banking, International Relations.
<i>Name of Qualifications Awarded by the Faculty</i>	Master's Degree Doctor in Economics Doctor in Enterprise Management
<i>Study Period Leading to Qualification</i>	Master's Degree – 5 years of studies (10 semesters) Doctorate – 4 years of full time studies (8 semesters) / in case of individually tailored programs, the study period vary depending on the student's level of knowledge
<i>Number of Full-time Students</i>	2415
<i>Finance and Banking.</i>	752
<i>International Relations.</i>	1027
<i>Management and</i>	636

*Marketing.*

<i>Teaching Facilities</i>	Lecture rooms, exercise rooms, computer laboratories, access to the University Library (building A)
<i>Teaching Method</i>	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, exercises, laboratory work Written examination Test examination
<i>Methods of Assessment</i>	Oral examination Approval of work with a grade Approval of work without a grade
<i>Grading Scale</i>	Very good (5) Better than good (+4) Good (4) Better than satisfactory (+3) Satisfactory (3) Failure (2)
<i>Study Levels</i>	Level A Basic Level B Major Level C Specialisation

### **Faculty of Management and Computer Science. General Information**

<i>Address of the Faculty</i>	Wrocław University of Economics Faculty of Management and Computer Science Komandorska 118/120 53-345 Wrocław, Poland
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*Dean's  
Office.*

Building Z, 2nd floor, room 206

*Structure.*

The faculty consists of 21 departments.  
19 of them are organized into 5 institutes:  
Institute of Economic Cybernetics –  
4 departments,  
Institute of Economic Computer Science –  
4 departments,  
Institute of Organization and Management –  
5 departments,  
Institute of Accounting –  
3 departments,  
Institute of Finance Management –  
3 departments  
Additionally, there are 2 separate departments  
within the faculty frame.

*Fields of  
Study*

The faculty educates specialists with  
extensive and in-depth knowledge of  
research tools in the field of economic  
science: computer science specialists,  
econometrics specialists, financial  
analysts, chief accountants, financial  
consultants, managers, and organizers  
of economic activities.  
Study program involves application of  
Quantitative methods and the use of computer  
science in various areas of economic and  
management sciences. Students can choose  
among three fields of study:

Finance and Banking, with the following  
specialisations:  
Accounting and Auditing

Banking and Insurance  
Finance Management  
Risk Management  
Financial Services in the Unified European  
Union's Market

**Computer Science and Econometrics,**

with the following specialisations:

Computer Science in Management

Managerial Econometrics

Data Analysis

E – business

**Management and Marketing,** with the  
following specialisations:

Business Management

Human Resources Management

Marketing Information Management

Logistics

Small and Medium Company Management

Apart from uniform and 2-level full-time studies, the faculty runs also uniform evening and extra-mural Master's degree programmes, undergraduate extra-mural programmes, and complementary graduate extra-mural programs in the above fields.

The faculty offers two programs run in English:

Name of  
Qualifications  
Awarded by  
the Faculty:

- *Executive MBA Program in Management* (4 semesters) - the program leads to Master's degree with specialisation in Business Management.

- *Advanced Methods in Finance* (2 semesters) – the program is run in

cooperation with Wrocław University of Technology and is addressed to 5th and 4th-year students who would like to increase their knowledge in the field of application of advanced mathematical methods to finance.

Additionally, the faculty proposes specialised study programs for graduates in tens of thematic areas.

Master's Degree

Doctor in Economics

Doctor in Management Science

- Master's Degree – 5 years of studies (10 semesters).

During the last 4 semesters of studies, a student prepares a Master's degree thesis under supervision of a professor. The qualification is awarded after successful defence of the thesis.

*Study Period  
Leading to  
Qualification*

- Doctorate – 4 years of full time studies (8 semesters)/ 3 years of payable extra-mural studies (6 semesters).

At the end of the doctoral study program a student is obliged to defend his/her doctoral dissertation.

Extra-mural doctoral studies are offered also to graduates holding Master's degree of non-economical fields of studies.

*Number of  
Full-time  
Students*

1726



*Finance and Banking* 881

*Computer Science and Econometrics.* 365  
*Management and Marketing* 480

*Teaching Facilities.*

Lecture rooms, exercise rooms, computer laboratories, access to the University Library (building A)

*Teaching Method.*

Lectures, exercises, laboratory work, seminars, tutorials, workshops, case study, managerial games.

1st and 2nd-year students must take obligatory basic course units. Starting from the 2nd year of studies, students must take obligatory major course units as well. At the end of the 2nd year students decide about their specialisation within the frame of the chosen field of study.

*Methods of Assessment*

Written examination, test examination, oral examination, semester approval assignments, tests, projects, presentations

*Grading Scal*

Very good (5)  
 Better than good (+4)  
 Good (4)  
 Better than satisfactory (+3)  
 Satisfactory (3)  
 Failure (2)

*Study Levels*

Level 0	General
Level A	Basic
Level B	Major
Level C	Specialisation

## **Faculty of Engineering and Economics. General Information**

*Address of the Faculty:*

Wrocław University of Economics

Faculty of Engineering and Economics, 53-345 Wrocław,  
Poland

*Dean's Office:* Building A1, room 127

*Structure:* The faculty consists of 15 departments grouped into 2 institutes:

Institute of Chemistry and Food Technology (8 departments)

Institute of Economic Science (7 departments)

*Fields of Study:* Management and Production Engineering

Within the above field, students can choose among three specialisations:

- Management and Food Production Engineering
- Management and Engineering in Chemical Industry
- Management and Environmental Protection Engineering

*Number of Full-time Students:* 1445

*Teaching Facilities:* Lecture rooms, exercise rooms, analytic laboratories, computer laboratories, faculty library

*Name of Qualification Awarded by the Faculty:* Master's Degree in Engineering

*Study Period Leading to Qualification:* 5 years of studies (10 semesters)

*Teaching Methods:* Lectures, seminars, auditory exercises, computer exercises, laboratory exercises

*Methods of Assessment:* Written examinations, oral examinations, approval of work with a grade, approval of work without a grade.

*Grading Scale:* Very good (5)  
Better than good (+4)  
Good (4)  
Better than satisfactory (+3)  
Satisfactory (3)

*Study Levels:* Level A Basic  
Level B Major  
Level C Specialisation

## Faculty of Regional Economics and Tourism. General Information

<i>Name.</i>	Faculty of Regional Economics and Tourism
<i>Address of the Faculty</i>	Wrocław University of Economics Faculty of Regional Economics and Tourism Nowowiejska 3, 58-500 Jelenia Góra
<i>Dean's Office</i>	Building A, room 55
<i>Structure</i>	The faculty consists of 9 departments:
<i>Fields of Study</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department of Econometrics and Computer Science</li><li>• Department of Economics and Economic Policy</li><li>• Department of Finance and Accounting</li><li>• Department of Spatial Management</li><li>• Department of Regional Economy</li><li>• Department of Marketing and Tourism Management</li><li>• Department of Enterprise Studies</li><li>• Department of Quality and Environmental Management</li><li>• Department of Strategic Management and Logistics</li></ul>
<i>Name of Qualifications Awarded by the Faculty</i>	

The complementary units in the structure are:  
Foreign Languages Centre  
Physical Education Centre

Studies at the faculty are performed in a two-stage system. A basic stage includes the first and the second year of study. Beginning with the third year of study, the students enter a specialization stage and choose one of the following specializations in the *Economics* field of study:

- Finance and Accounting
- Economy and Public Administration
- Marketing
- Tourism and Hotel Business Management
- Quality and Environmental Management
- Enterprise Management
- European Economy
- Economic Analysis

*Study Period Leading to  
Qualification  
Number of Full-time Students*

Master's Degree  
5 years of studies (10 semesters)  
1547

### *Teaching Facilities*

The faculty possesses nine premises, seven in Jelenia Góra, one in Wałbrzych, and one in Bolesławiec. The faculty owns 60 teaching rooms, including 8 computer laboratories with access to the Internet, a library, and a gym hall.

### *Teaching Methods*

The faculty uses variety of teaching forms:

- lectures
- workshops
- exercises
- laboratory work
- field visits
- individual projects
- case studies
- presentation of papers
- knowledge tests (examinations, oral exams, group works)

Important innovations applied in the field of teaching general subjects' methodology are:

- introduction of audiovisual forms of education
- placing broad information for students on the faculty's Internet site [www.ae.jgora.pl](http://www.ae.jgora.pl) concerning syllabuses, recommended literature, exercises and problems for self-study supporting development of additional skills

*Methods of Assessment*

Written examinations, examination tests, semester approval works, written tests, projects, papers

*Grading Scale*

Very good (5)

Better than good (+4)

Good (4)

Better than satisfactory (+3)

Satisfactory (3)

Failure (2)

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## HIGHER EDUCATION IN ROMANIA FROM BOLOGNA PERSPECTIVE

### 1. Generalities

European universities must re-examine their traditional underlying principles, must re-define their identity and mission. They need a new development strategy in order to contribute to the development of the new society of learning and knowledge. This is the foundation of all initiatives aiming at an advanced structural reform in almost every country of the developed world.

In the beginning, European education systems were established *top-down*. There existed marvelous universities for those very few capable to accede to tertiary education, in periods when there were insufficient primary schools for the larger majority of the population.

Industrial development and the increase of businesses with products of the processing industry determined an increased demand for graduate personnel, used equally in research and in design, in running the industry and in trading, in public and private administration.

In order to meet these demands, universities increased the access to studies, and their educational offer has acquired a more and more vocational character. By their getting closer to the business world, many universities have come to neglect fundamental scientific research. The researchers' reaction was prompt: new scientific research structures appeared independent of universities.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century these tendencies were even more powerful: applied sciences form today the basis for highly qualified personnel training, educational demands grow permanently and so does specialization. At the same time, labour and science division goes beyond national state borders, reaching global levels.

Under the pressure of such a dynamic scientific, technological and economic environment, educational systems, in general, and universities, in particular, are faced with a real need for change. There are very few universities not to have tried to identify their roles and objectives from the perspective of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The contemporary society displays its strategy of sustained development by replacing, more and more visibly, its material value with the value of knowledge, stressing the global and digital aspects of all its forms of manifestation.

In order to maintain an active role in society, universities should re-define themselves, by getting closer to society. Educational systems of the new century would no longer meet the requirements of social development if they maintained the top-down paradigm, if they went on promoting a unique, elitist policy, and if they went on isolating themselves in their *ivory towers*.

Without losing their traditional values, universities should match their educational offer and their scientific research potential with the expectations of the local and regional communities. They should start by encouraging graduates to come back to amphitheatres and laboratories in order to complete / change their professional skills and knowledge acquired during their initial training. Universities should start from the social need for a more democratic access to knowledge not only in the traditional forms of study on a real campus, but also by means of using the modern means of open and distance learning. Classic universities lose the monopoly of tertiary education nowadays, just like, in time, they lost the monopoly of scientific research.

Briefly, the higher education systems of the future foreshadow themselves as powerful decentralized systems, with a wide variety of administrative and functional structures, and with a significant flexibility, in view of meeting the dynamic demands of the market. They are more and more *bottom-up built systems*.

The reform in Romania means switching from a centrally managed system, with a budget granted on request, to a decentralized system. The latter is based on real institutional autonomy, as well as on academic freedom and financial competence and accountability.

## **2. Steps in reorganizing the Higher Education System**

Romania has made major steps towards the European Higher Education Area by reorganizing the entire higher education system. A new higher education structure has been adopted following the discussions that occurred within the National

Rectors Council in November 2003 which have shown a general consensus regarding the adoption of this structure. The Declaration of the National Higher Education Conference released on 5 November 2003 expressed the commitment of all academic representatives (Universities, National Rectors Council and Ministry of Education and Research) to sustain the objectives stated in the Bologna declaration and in the Prague 2001, and Berlin 2003, ministerial meetings.

The new legislation of June 2004 (law no. 288/2004) stipulates the reorganisation of university studies in three cycles (Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral). Starting with the academic year 2005-2006, Romanian higher education structure will be as follows:

- First cycle (180-240 ECTS) – Bachelor degree;
- Second cycle (90-120 ECTS, exceptionally 60 ECTS) – Master degree;
- Third cycle (3 years and in special situations 4 or 5 years) - Doctoral degree.

All candidates for the title of doctor must be graduates of master's study programmes.

According to the new law, the applying of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is mandatory to all universities and these will mandatory deliver for free, including in a foreign language of widespread circulation, the Diploma Supplement, whose content is in conformity with the European provisions, starting with 2005/2006 academic year.

The provisions of the law 288/2004 shall apply to the public and private higher education, accredited or temporary authorized, according to the law, starting with the academic year 2005/2006.

The studies leading to professions regulated by European Union sectoral directives are not subject to this law.

As regard the quality assurance field there is a draft law available for public debate on the website of the Ministry of Education and Research (Ministerul Educatiei si Cercetarii - MEdC). At national level is the intention to set up the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, under the coordination of the MEdC; its purpose shall be to develop and implement the national framework for quality assurance in the national education system.

### **3. Higher Education Bodies**

Higher education in Romania is provided in higher education institutions: universities, institutes, academies, conservatories and colleges. Higher education institutions are coordinated, financed and supervised by the Ministry of Education and Research, which is the National Authority for Education. At the end of every academic year, rectors of higher education institutions must submit a report on the state of the higher education institution to the MEdC, which is a public document.

Under the authority of the ministry a number of councils and agencies play a very important role in fields such as financing and scientific research.

The National Rectors Council is composed by all rectors of accredited higher education institutions and is a very active body consulted by the ministry. Its role in adopting the new legislation regarding the reorganization of university studies was fundamental. According to the new law 288/2004, the length of study cycles on fields and specializations will be set by the Ministry of Education and Research, at the proposal of the National Rectors Council which will be approved by Government decision.

The National Council for Higher Education Financing (CNFIS) is a consultative council constituted in 1994. Its main responsibilities are to present to the minister of education proposals regarding the financing needs of higher education, taking into account the objectives of the universities and national strategies in order to develop higher education system and to propose the distribution of the funds provided by the national budget to higher education institutions.

The National University Research Council (CNCSIS) created at the end of 1994, has been an important part of the reform in higher education. CNCSIS is the main institution to finance scientific research in Romanian universities. It works as a consultative council under the authority of the MEdC and expresses the point of view of the academic community regarding scientific research.

In order to promote a strong partnership between higher education institutions and socioeconomic environment the National Agency for Partnership between Universities and Socio-Economic Environment (APART) has been established by Government decision (2001). The Agency has the mission to promote and support cooperation actions between higher education institutions, economic agents and other institutes and organizations, with the purpose to provide specific partnership development, in the fields of professional training and specialization, technology transfer, organizing of business incubators and technology parks, labour market research, academic opening towards the economic and social environment, facilitation of higher education graduates' absorption by the labour market, development of entrepreneurial dimension of Romanian universities.

#### **4. Higher Education Institutions**

The national higher education system comprises both state and private accredited education institutions and units. The state higher education sector in Romania includes 56 public higher education institutions and other 20 private accredited higher education institutions. In the academic year 2002-2003, there were enrolled 596.297 students in higher education - institutions (source: National Institute of Statistics, Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2003), of which 462.293 at day education, 3006 - evening education, 70.778 - part-time education and 59.581 at distance education. In private higher education institutions were enrolled 139.038 students in academic year 2002-2003 of which 88.741 at day education, 254 - evening education, 27.281 - part-time education and 604 at distance education.

According to education law no. 84/1995, private accredited higher education institutions are included in the national education system and are covered by the same regulations as public higher education. Private higher education represents an alternative and is complementary to public education. It is subject to an accreditation process. These institutions are autonomous in content of organizing and functioning in accordance with the education system legislation.

In private higher education tuition fees are established by each institution or unit according to the law.

The representative of Romania in the follow-up group is the secretary of state for higher education which works directly with the National Rectors Council. General Direction for Higher Education within the MEdC is in charge with the implementation of Bologna objectives and strategies.

In June 2004 was created Romanian Team of Bologna Promoters with the support of European Commission



through a Socrates grant. The main outcome of the Romanian Team of Bologna Promoters will consist in advising higher education institutions in order to fully implement the Bologna provisions in all Romanian universities starting with autumn 2005.

The TBP members are directly implicated in Romanian higher education system having a long and fruitful expertise in higher education and an accurate knowledge of the requirements of the Bologna Process. Among them there are Rectors, Deans, Senior Academics, International Relation Officers, selected by the Ministry of Education and Research on the criteria of representative geographical distribution in order to cover all important academic centres (Bucharest, Iasi, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Timisoara).

The Team is composed of three thematic groups acting in the fields of the Bologna Process' priorities: Quality Assurance, the Three Cycle System and Recognition issues (ECTS and Diploma Supplement). Each group has four members with a deep knowledge of the specific theme (e.g. the Recognition sub-unit has among its members three former ECTS national counsellors and the Head of National Centre for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas Granted Abroad).

TBP's activities consist in:

- Expertise and consultancy for HEI in order to modify the present curricula according to the requirements of the new three cycles structure (through "in situ" visits at universities).
- Dissemination of Bologna Process objectives focusing on quality assurance (through regional workshops) and forms of mutual recognition (an ECTS guide).
- Elaboration of the detailed structure of the Diploma Supplement.

The first step, namely issuing the brochure has been done and, in this way, it offers relevant informations to all interested partners.

## **5. Specific Aspects of Bologna Process**

The existence of the two distinct forms of education has been an extremely favourable premise for the implementation of the cycles stipulated in the Bologna Declaration. Short term education, present in many fields of university education with the purpose to train graduates with a great capacity of insertion on the labour market, can easily be transformed into a first cycle, granting the graduates the title of Bachelor. Romania has signed the Lisboa Convention, April 1997, on recognition of qualifications obtained in the higher education and has ratified this document through Law no. 172/1998.

The National Center for Recognition of Diplomas (CNRED), a structure affiliated to the networks ENIC/NARIC, functions within the Ministry of Education and Research and it is in charge of the recognition of diplomas.

Romanian Higher Education Institutions use as instruments for recognition of degrees and periods of study the European Credit Transfer System.

Several official regulations of the Ministry of Education have gradually enforced the use of ECTS in Romanian higher education institutions – from ECTS as a recommended system (1998) to a compulsory system (the law of June 2004). Some Universities have been using ECTS since 1996.

According to the law 288/2004, starting with academic year 2005-2006, the universities will mandatory deliver the Diploma Supplement free of charge to each graduate, in a foreign language of widespread circulation.

These measures will facilitate the recognition of degrees and periods of study of students in Europe and worldwide.

Doctoral studies are regulated by the Education Law no. 84/1995 and the Government Decision no. 37/1999. Doctoral

Diploma (Diploma de doctor) is the highest academic degree awarded in all fields after 4-6 years of study and original research. It is preceded by the first academic degree - "Diploma de Licenta" and requires the passing of examinations and the submission of an original thesis. University senates may require a master degree for the admission at the doctoral studies.

The doctoral training programme is structured into:

- a) High general training. Duration: 2 years for attendance system and 4 years for no attendance system;
- b) Preparation and elaboration of the doctorate thesis. Duration: 2 years.

The structure of the training programme consists of theoretical and practical activities for the specific field of the doctorate, at least 3 examinations and 3 essays or at least 3 creative works in the artistic field. For the doctorate with regular attendance, the structure of the training programme includes besides examinations and essays/ creative works the attendance of minimum 4 courses and their respective seminars.

The Doctoral studies finish with a Doctorate thesis and graduates receive the scientific title of Doctor, respectively, the Doctor Diploma. According to the new law 288/2004 regarding the organisation of university studies a third cycle (doctoral studies) is foreseen to have 3 years and in special situations 4 or 5 years. All candidates for the title of doctor must be graduates of master's study programmes or its equivalent. The specific regulations for the organization of doctoral university studies shall be elaborated by MEEdC and they have to be submitted to Government's approval.

The changes within higher education due to the Bologna Process require the restructuring of social support national system. In Romania the social dimension of Bologna Process is shaped by state scholarships and grants (study and social

grants, performance scholarships - excellence and merit scholarships, research grants), subsidized accommodation and meals, help with travelling expenses, support with health services.

In 2004 the budgetary support was extended to acquisition of PCs for pupils and students. The amount provided for each PC was of 200 EUR, 105.000 persons have benefitted from this program.

In addition to budgetary scholarships and loans, students may receive private scholarships from employers to fully or partially cover their tuition fees and living expenses.

In order to improve the access of students from rural areas to higher education, there are study scholarships awarded on the basis of the commitment to teach in rural education for a period of time at least equal to the duration of their studies.

In order to assure an equal access for disadvantaged groups, Roma population may benefit at the university admission examination from 400 public budgetary places under the condition of fulfilling admission minimum criteria.

Offering subsidies for non-residence halls accommodation was a helpful measure taken for solving the issue of student accommodation.

From 2004 Romania participated as observer to EUROSTUDENT project, a monitoring system with regard to the socio-economic living conditions of higher education students in EU countries. This could easily develop to become an important instrument for Romania to provide valuable information for higher education policy.

Higher education institutions offer four types of postgraduate studies following the first degree, long-term university studies, as follows: in-depth specialization studies, master's degree studies, postgraduate academic studies, postgraduate studies of specialization and doctoral studies and postgraduate thoroughgoing studies for graduates of short-

term and long term university studies. Also, universities provide assistance on a contract basis to initiators of adult training schemes as part of continuing education and re-training programmes, or may initiate such schemes by themselves.

A comprehensive legal background for adult education was set down in the education law no. 84/1995, revised and updated, which has a special chapter regarding lifelong learning and in the Government Ordinance no. 129/2000, consolidated. Ministries, national authorities, commercial companies or other legal entities, jointly with education units or separately, run adult training and refresher programmes, to improve qualifications of their present or future employees or re-train them. These training courses grant qualification certificates or professional competence recognized on the labour market. The law stipulates incentives for those who follow further-training courses for professional training, namely the right to standard salary, for those issued from public institutions and the payment of housing, per diem and transport, for those who take courses in other localities than that of their domicile. For the training of adults the same law stipulates the possibility of organizing institutions and networks of open or distance education, that make use of modern communication and information technologies. These provisions of the law are applied in all universities. Such flexible learning paths are regulated only for the non-academic sector. In this respect a system of accumulation of credits should be implemented.

The National Council for Adult Vocational Training, a tripartite and autonomous body, is the social dialogue forum that promotes quality of lifelong training and contributes to the elaboration of policies and strategies in the field. The Council will be transformed in a National Qualifications Authority.

## **CASE STUDY: SLOVAK UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN NITRA HIGHER EDUCATION**

The Slovak University of Agriculture (SUA) in Nitra is the only educational institution in Slovakia whose mission is to train university graduates for all resorts of agriculture and food industry. Extensive possibilities to acquire knowledge in the area of biological, economical, technical and social sciences create good conditions for the graduates to find jobs also in other resorts of the Slovak Republic's economy. During recent years all SUA faculties have undergone deep transformation changes resulting in the formation of new educational systems, compatible with other universities, in the development of interdisciplinary programmes as well as cross-disciplinary and part-time study at other faculties in Slovakia and abroad. As the first university in Slovakia, the SUA introduced the ECTS system at all its faculties during the academic year 2001/02.

In accordance with Law No. 131/2002 on Higher Education and on Changes and Supplements to Some Laws as well as with the Slovak higher educational system (as explained in the Annex), the SUA faculties provide higher education at three levels.

### **Bachelor study programmes**

Bachelor study programme (henceforth as BSP) – as a study programme of the first level of higher education - is

focused on providing theoretical and practical knowledge (based on the latest scientific results), on its practical application in all kinds of jobs or its development at the second level of higher education.

A standard length of BSP (together with a vocational practice) is three academic years. BSP is concluded by state exams. State exams include a defence of a bachelor thesis.

BSP graduates acquire the first level of higher education and they are awarded the academic degree of „bakalár“ (abbr. „Bc.“).

### **Master (Engineer) study programmes**

Master study programme (henceforth MSP) – as a study programme of the second level of higher education – aims at providing theoretical and practical knowledge (based on latest scientific results) and at developing skills for its practical application in jobs or at a tertiary level of higher education.

A standard length of MSP (together with a vocational practice) is two academic years.

MSP is completed by state exams and a diploma thesis defence. A defence is one of the state exams.

MSP graduates acquire higher education of the second level and they are awarded the academic degree of „engineer“ (abbr. „Ing.“).

### **Doctoral study programmes**

Doctoral study programme (henceforth as DSP) – as a study programme of the third level of higher education – is focused on scientific investigation and independent creative activities in the fields of research and development.

Doctoral study consists of a study and a scientific part.

The skills to study and research independently must be proved by passing a dissertation exam, writing and defending

a dissertation thesis, by publishing activities as well as other forms of presenting the students' scientific, research and developmental activities.

DPS graduates acquire higher education of the third level and they are awarded the academic degree of „philosophiae doctor“ („PhD.“).

### **Organisation of Study**

The SUA consists of the following 6 faculties and other educational and research institutions:

Faculty of Agrobiology and Food Resources,

Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Sciences,

Faculty of Economics and Management,

Faculty of European Studies and Regional Development,

Faculty of Horticulture and Landscape Engineering,

Faculty of Agriculture Engineering.

### **Graduates at labour market**

The Faculty prepares masters in agriculture able to manage the production of food resources of both plant and animal origin, observing environmental requirements, to develop extra-production functions of agriculture and rural development, to scientifically manage human nutrition, and to apply the knowledge of biology based on the society's needs. Graduates may work in research institutions, in state and private food enterprises, in commercial and charity organizations, in organizations providing food control and protection, in healthy nutrition consultancy centres and in the field of consumer protection, in institutions active in nature protection, at the market with exotic and protected animal species, in institutions involved in the development of agro tourism, in agricultural entities and private farms, etc.



## ***FACULTY OF AGROBIOLOGY AND FOOD RESOURCES***

*Accredited study programmes*                      *FS*                      *T*                      *L*

### **Bachelor study**

▪ <b>management of plant production</b>	F	Bc.	3
▪ <b>management of animal production</b>	F	Bc.	3
▪ <b>general agriculture</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>sustainable agriculture and rural development</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>human nutrition</b>	F	Bc.	3
▪ <b>breeding of special animals</b>	F	Bc.	3

### **Master study**

▪ <b>management of plant production</b>	F	Ing.	2
▪ <b>plant nutrition and protection</b>	F	Ing.	2
▪ <b>management of animal production</b>	F	Ing.	2
▪ <b>animal nutrition and fodder studies</b>	F	Ing.	2
▪ <b>special animal breeding areas</b>	F	Ing.	2
▪ <b>sustainable agriculture and rural development</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>human nutrition</b>	F	Ing.	2
▪ <b>production of food resources</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>genetic technologies in agrobiolgy</b>	F	Ing.	2

Abbreviations: FS – study form (full-time, part-time), D – academic degree (Bc. – bachelor, Ing. – master of engineering), L – length in years

## *FACULTY OF BIOTECHNOLOGY AND FOOD SCIENCES*

### *Accredited study programmes*

*FS T L*

#### Bachelor study

- |                      |      |     |   |
|----------------------|------|-----|---|
| ▪ agro food science  | F, P | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ agro biotechnology | F    | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ applied biology    | F, P | Bc. | 3 |

#### Master study

- |                     |      |      |   |
|---------------------|------|------|---|
| ▪ food technology   | F, P | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ biotechnology     | F    | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ applied biology   | F, P | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ animal physiology | F    | Ing. | 2 |

### **Graduates at the labour market**

Study programmes are conceived to enable graduates to work in agriculture and food sector. Based on the profiles of individual programmes, graduates can work in agricultural and food-related organisations, in research and breeding institutes, in controlling and testing organizations within agriculture and food complex, in enterprises for national and international trade with agricultural products and food, in departments of urban planning and nature protection, in state regulation of national parks, etc.

## *FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT*

### *Accredited study programmes*

	<i>FS</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>L</i>
<b><u>Bachelor study</u></b>			
▪ <b>business management</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>business economics</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>business and trade</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>accounting</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>quantitative methods in economy</b>	F	Bc.	3
▪ <b>economics and management of agro sector</b>	F	Bc.	3
▪ <b>teaching of practical agricultural subjects</b>	P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>business management</b>	P (Dt)	Bc.	3
▪ <b>business management</b>	P (Dt)	Bc.	3
<b><u>Master study</u></b>			
▪ <b>business management</b>	P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>business economics</b>	P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>economics and management of agrosector</b>	P	Ing.	2

## **Graduates at the labour market**

Vocational knowledge and quality foreign language training give students numerous possibilities to work at various levels of business management in agricultural and food resorts, in biological and technical services business, in foreign trade, as well as in trade departments of agricultural businesses, and in financial institutions. Students get training also for the work in public administration institutions and local governments. Graduates may find jobs in central institutions, in consultancy companies, research institutions, etc.

### ***FACULTY OF EUROPEAN STUDIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT***

<i>Accredited study programmes</i>	<i>FS</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>L</i>
<b><u>Bachelor study</u></b>			
▪ <b>European development programmes</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>Regional development</b>	F	Bc.	3
	P	Bc.	3
	P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>Management of rural landscape and tourism development</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>Management of natural resources</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>Management of environment</b>	P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>Protection against natural and economic catastrophes</b>	F, P	Bc.	3

### Master study

▪ <b>European development programmes</b>	P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>Regional development</b>	P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>Management of rural landscape and tourism development</b>	P	Ing.	2

### **Graduates at labour market**

Graduates of the mentioned study programmes are trained to work in branches of regional development, public administration institutions, international organizations, EU institutions as international consultants for various EU projects. They can work as analysts, managers and project-makers of local and regional developmental projects and projects funded by EU's structural funds (in institutions of public administration, as well as in project-consulting organizations), as top managers guiding regional and local development at international, central and regional levels in a wide scale of public administration institutions, as experts in public administration departments for the creation and protection of the environment, in industrial, agricultural and other enterprises and organizations involved in monitoring and evaluating environment, etc.

***FACULTY OF HORTICULTURE AND LANDSCAPE ENGINEERING***

*Accredited study programmes*

*FS*

*T*

*L*

**Bachelor study**

- |   |      |     |   |
|---|------|-----|---|
| ▪ Horticulture  | F, P | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ Landscape engineering                               | F, P | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ ground design<br>and geographic information systems | F, P | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ Water management                                    | F, P | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ Garden and landscape architecture                   | F    | Bc. | 3 |
| ▪ Management of park and landscape design             | F, P | Bc. | 3 |

*Master study*

- |   |      |      |   |
|---|------|------|---|
| ▪ Horticulture                            | F, P | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ Landscape engineering                   | F, P | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ Ground design                           | F, P | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ Garden and landscape architecture       | F    | Ing. | 2 |
| ▪ Management of park and landscape desing | F, P | Ing. | 2 |

### **Graduates at labour market**

Graduates of individual study programmes are employed as technical staff in gardening businesses, as consultants for the application of nutrition, as project-makers for correcting measures in agricultural landscape, as experts for the establishment and maintaining of green vegetation, as independent managers in both state administration and local government, in nature protection bodies, as staff in both state and private businesses involved in the use and protection of water resources. Moreover, they may be involved in activities related to organization of work in state administration bodies, in creative landscape-architectonic teams, etc.

### ***FACULTY OF AGRICULTURAL ENGINEERING***

<i>Accredited study programmes</i>	<i>FS</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>L</i>
<b><u>Bachelor study</u></b>			
▪ <b>production quality management</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>operational security of technology</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>agricultural technology</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>agricultural technology and commercial activities</b>	F, P	Bc.	3
▪ <b>technology and techniques of agricultural product processing</b>	F, P	Bc.	3

### Master study

▪ <b>production quality</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>reliability and security of technical systems</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>information and automatization technology in production quality</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>agricultural technology</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>agricultural technology and commercial activities</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>technology and techniques of agricultural product processing</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>transport mechanisms and devices</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>environmental mechanisms and devices</b>	F, P	Ing.	2
▪ <b>operation of transport mechanisms and devices</b>	F, P	Ing.	2

### **Graduates at labour market**

Faculty graduates can work in all branches of economy at various levels because they are equipped with deep technological knowledge, information technology skills and the familiarity with economic conditions of production. They can work as technical managers, technical staff or department heads in public sector, they can manage teams of workers in areas of mobile and environmental technology. They are able to manage independently complicated projects and be responsible for complex solutions, to solve technological and technical problems related to technology operations, to work as project-makers and technologists in specialized project-engineering organizations, as staff of research and developmental institutions, mechanism-testing institutions, etc.



## **Study forms and methods**

The SUA offers education in full-time or part-time form and through the following methods:

- attendance method,
- distance method
- combined method.

## **Study plan**

Each study programme includes a standard study plan. The student's study plan gives a temporary and content sequence of a study programme's units (subjects) and forms of the evaluation of study results. A study plan is created by the student himself/herself or in cooperation with a study consultant, within determined rules of a particular study programme and in agreement with the SUA or a faculty Study Guide.

Study subjects are categorized as follows:

- compulsory,
- compulsory upon selection,
- optional.

Compulsory subjects are determined according to the requirements stated in a graduate's study programme profile. Compulsory upon selection subjects represent alternative offer, resulting from a student's orientation on certain study field. To achieve a required number of credits, a student can choose any optional subject from the SUA's Catalogue of subjects for a particular academic year.

An inseparable part of a study programme is practice. Student can do it in the University Agricultural Enterprise, in the SUA botanic garden and in other enterprises (banks,

insurance companies, etc.) in Slovakia or abroad, based on a particular study programme.

### **Credit system**

A study at SUA is organized according to a flexible system with the credit evaluation of subjects based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) rules.

The credit system enable students to choose an individual tempo and place of study (university, faculty) and thus to harmonise the study demands with one's own individual abilities and possibilities, as well as with the educational institution's requirements.

A student gains credits for the passing of subjects of a study programme, including a vocational practice and a final thesis. The standard number of credits for one academic year within a standard length of a study is 60, 30 for each semester.

To properly finish the study in a bachelor study programme, within its standard 3-year length of study, a student must acquire 180 credits. To finish a master study programme within its standard 2-year length of study, a student must acquire 120 credits.

### **Completion of Study**

A study programme of each level is completed by passing state exams, including the final thesis defence. Upon the completion of their study, the SUA graduates are awarded the following documents: diploma, state exam certificate, and diploma supplement (annex).

### **Information System Student (ISS)**

Information System Student has been working at the SUA for more than 10 years. It includes a complete database of students and allows processing of a study agenda from

school entrance exams, through student registers, subjects, exams and their terms, registers of time schedules and the processing of other supporting systems, up to the register of graduates. The system is used for the printing of diplomas and their supplements as well.

### **Life-long education**

Based on its mission, the SUA provides wide-scale education not only with regard to the diversification of study programmes, forms and levels, but to the possibilities for life-long education as well. The university thus meets one of the key requirements of important European declarations on education stating that life-long education is a necessary prerequisite for economy and knowledge-based European society.

Life-long education at SUA is provided in the following forms:

- University of the third age (UTV),
- complementary pedagogical study,
- specialized forms.

**University of the third age** is an institution for complementary education of older people (men older than 45 years and women older than 40 years), and disabled people without age limits. The study lasts 4 – 6 semesters. Lectures are offered by SUA pedagogical staff and by important experts from scientific institutes as well as from practice. Such study at the SUA is offered in the following fields:

- horticulture,
- decorative gardening,
- special gardening,
- floriculture,
- security and quality of Slovak products

- nutrition and health,
- agro tourism,
- information and management,
- accounting,
- economics and law,
- law and history of Slovakia,
- law, history and health.

**Complementary pedagogical study** is intended for master degree (“Ing.”) graduates who wish to gain a teaching qualification and a possibility to work as teachers of vocational agricultural subjects at secondary schools of agriculture. The study provides vocational pedagogical, psychological and methodological training for teaching vocational agricultural subjects at secondary vocational and technical schools of agriculture, or at other types of schools. A 4-semester long study is completed by the final exam and the defence of the final thesis.

**Specialized forms** are offered mostly by the SUA Institute for the Protection of Biodiversity Biological Security. They include, for example, the following courses:

- Agricultural plant seed production,
- Diagnostics of malted barley species,
- Differential equation and their application in biology,
- SAS – an effective instrument of the evaluation of biological experiments,
- Application of modern mathematical-statistical methods in experiment evaluation.

Courses are completed by a certificate.

In addition to contact teaching, part-time as well as further education study forms make more extensive use of e-learning. The most important activities in the development of

e-learning are offered in the SUA Institute for the Protection of Biodiversity and Biological Security and within bachelor part-time study forms offered at the Faculty of Economics and Management.