



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

1 November 2008.

PART I

BOLOGNA PROCESS TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS: 2007-2009

Notes:

BFUG members are strongly encouraged to consult other stakeholders about the contents of their National Report.

Please complete your National Report in English using this template (shaded areas) and return it to the Secretariat by email. Where appropriate, please include precise web references to legislation or other documentation. Please add comments as appropriate under each question to describe the current situation. Please try to keep text brief, while aiming to answer all questions comprehensively.

National Reports will be posted on the Bologna website in their original form.

Information from National Reports will form the basis of the Stocktaking Report to be presented to Ministers when they meet in April 2009.

Details

Country	
Date	
BFUG member (one name only)	
Position	
Email address	
Contributors to the report	

1. Main developments since London 2007

Please describe the important developments relating to the Bologna Process, including legislative reforms and changes in institutional structures, since the London meeting in 2007.

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2. Partnership

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

a) Does your country have a national working group for Bologna follow-up ¹ Yes No

b) Does your national Bologna follow-up group include representatives of

Ministry	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Rectors' conference	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic staff	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Students	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Staff trade unions	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
National Quality Assurance Agency	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Employers	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify) _____

c) Does your country have a Bologna promoters' group² Yes No

d) Does your national Bologna promoters' group include representatives of

Ministry	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Rectors' conference	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic staff	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Students	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Staff trade unions	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
National Quality Assurance Agency	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Employers	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____		

Please add any additional comments if necessary:

¹ A group that develops policy proposals for implementing the Bologna Process
² A group that supports/advises HEIs on implementation of the Bologna Process

DEGREE SYSTEM

3. Stage of implementation of the first and second cycle

a) Please describe the progress made towards introducing the first and second cycles.

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b) Please give the percentage of the total number of all³ students below doctoral level enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09.

Total number of all students below doctoral level	Number enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09 ⁴	% of all students enrolled in the two cycle degree system in 2008/09

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

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4. Stage of implementation of the third cycle

Please describe the progress made towards implementing doctoral studies as the third Bologna cycle.

Please include:

- the percentage of doctoral candidates following structured doctoral programmes including both taught courses and independent research
- the normal length of full-time doctoral studies
- other elements⁵ apart from independent research that are included in doctoral study programmes
- the supervisory and assessment procedures for doctoral studies
- information on whether doctoral studies are included in your country's qualifications framework and linked to learning outcomes
- information on whether interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills are integrated in doctoral studies
- information on whether credit points are used in measuring workload in doctoral studies.
- Information on the status of the doctoral students (students, early stage researchers, both)

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³ "All" = all students who could be involved in 2-cycle system i.e. NOT those in doctoral programmes and NOT those in short HE programmes. *NB Students of ALL study fields are taken into account*

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

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

5. Relationship between higher education and research

a) Please describe the main trends in the role of higher education institutions in research in your country.

b) Please outline any measures to improve co-operation between higher education institutions and other private and public institutions that undertake research. Please include:

- percentage of GDP spent on research
 - from public funds
 - from private funds
- total annual national research expenditure (expressed in national currency)
 - from public funds
 - from private funds
- percentage of research carried out in higher education institutions (in terms of funding)
- details of the funding mechanisms for doctoral students in your country

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

6. Access⁶ and admission to the next cycle

Describe the arrangements for access between the first and second cycles and between the second and third cycles.

6.1 Access and admission between the first and second cycles

Please indicate:

a) the percentage of first cycle qualifications that give access to the second cycle

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

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

c) any special requirements for access to a second cycle programme in the same field of studies: *please tick whether graduates must:*

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| sit entrance exam | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |
| complete additional courses | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |
| have work experience | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |

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

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

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

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

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

- | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| entrance exam | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |
| additional courses | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |
| work experience | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | In some cases <input type="checkbox"/> |

6.2 Access and admission between the second and third cycles

Please indicate:

a) the percentage of second cycle qualifications that give access to the third cycle

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

c) any measures planned to remove obstacles between cycles

7. Employability of graduates/ cooperation with employers

a) What measures are being taken to enhance the employability of graduates with bachelor qualifications? Please include the most recent statistical data on the employment status of graduates of all cycles.

If your higher education institutions also provide professional bachelor programmes, please provide employability data for both types of bachelors separately

b) To what extent there is a dialogue in your country between higher education institutions and employers on:

- curriculum design, work placements and international experience
Significant Some A little None
- accreditation/quality assurance
Significant Some A little None
- university governance
Significant Some A little None

c) Are first cycle graduates able to pursue careers in the public service on an equal footing with other graduates?

Yes No In some cases

d) Have you aligned recruitment procedures and career structures in the public service to take account of the Bologna changes?

Yes No In some cases

If no, or in some cases only, please explain the current situation:

8. Implementation of national qualifications framework

Please answer the questions below. Please add comments which accurately describe the current situation in your country.

a) Has the national qualifications framework been prepared⁷?

Yes No

Comment

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

Yes No

Comment

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

Yes No

Comment

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

Yes No

Comment

If the answer to d) is No, please answer question e):

e) has a timetable been agreed for consultations with all stakeholders?

Yes No

Comment

If the answer to d) is Yes, please answer the following questions:

f) Are all formal arrangements/decisions for implementing the framework in place and have the necessary formal decisions for establishing the framework been taken?

Yes No

Comment

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

g) How far has the implementation of the national qualifications framework progressed (***please tick one***)

- The framework is fully implemented. All qualifications have been added to the NQF through a QA procedure (e.g. accreditation)
- There is significant progress on implementing the framework
- The work of describing all qualifications in terms of learning outcomes and competencies has been completed
- There is a timetable for implementation and the work has started
- Work on implementing the framework has not yet started but a timetable for implementation has been agreed
- Work on implementing the framework has not yet started and there is no timetable for implementation

Comment

h) What is the stage of progress on the self-certification of compatibility with the EHEA framework ?

Completed Started, but not yet completed Not yet started

Comment

i) Has the self-certification report been published?

Yes No

Comment

Please add any additional comments if necessary:

Comment

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

9. Reviewing the QA system against the ESG⁹ and national support for implementation

a) Has your national QA system been reviewed against the ESG?

Yes No Not yet, but such a review is planned
(Please specify time) _____

b) If a review has been undertaken or is planned, please give further details of the review process.

c) If a review process has been undertaken, did it result in any of the following:

Stakeholder consultation on changes required to the national QA system?

Yes No

The introduction of specific financial or other incentives aimed at improving the internal quality assurance processes in institutions?

Yes No

If Yes, please give details of these incentives:

- Other measures

Yes No

If Yes, please outline these measures

d) If incentives and/or other measures have been introduced with the aim of improving the internal quality assurance processes in institutions, has any evidence of the impact of these changes been gathered?

Yes No

If Yes, please give details of how evidence of the impact of the changes was gathered, and of the main outcomes that it demonstrates

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

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

9.1. Internal quality assurance in higher education institutions

Describe the internal QA systems in place in your HEIs.

Please comment in particular on the following aspects, giving references to relevant websites:

a) How many HEIs have published a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

b) How many HEIs have arrangements in place for the internal approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

Please describe what kind of arrangements are in place

c) How many HEIs have described their programmes in terms of learning outcomes?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

d) Are student assessments at HEIs designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes (based on published criteria) applied in a consistent way?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

Please describe how the above is achieved.

e) How many HEIs publish up to date, impartial and objective information about the programmes and awards offered?

All HEIs Most HEIs Some HEIs No HEIs

Additional information if necessary

10. Stage of development of external quality assurance system

Describe the external quality assurance system operating in your country.

Please include:

a) the stage of implementation of your external quality assurance system

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

Yes No

If **No**, please specify:

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

Yes No

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

d) which of the following elements are included in your external quality assurance system:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| - self-assessment report | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - external review | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - publication of results | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| - follow-up procedures | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

e) has a peer review of the national agency(ies) according to the Standards and Guidelines for QA in the EHEA already taken place

Yes No

If **No** is there a date set for the review? Yes (please specify date _____) No

¹⁰ Higher education: all types of courses of study or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the post secondary level which are recognised by the relevant authorities as belonging to a country's higher education system.

11. Level of student participation

From the following, please indicate all aspects of quality assurance in which students are involved:

- a) in governance of national agencies for QA. Yes No In some cases
- b) as full members in external review teams Yes No In some cases
- c) as observers in external review teams Yes No In some cases
- d) as part of the decision making process for external reviews Yes No In some cases
- e) in the consultation process during external reviews (eg arrangements for external reviewers to consult with students) Yes No In some cases
- f) in internal quality assurance (e.g. periodic review of programmes) Yes No In some cases
- g) in preparation of self-assessment reports. Yes No In some cases
- h) in follow-up procedures: Yes No In some cases

*Please add any additional comments, especially if students are **not** involved in any of the aspects:*

12. Level of international participation

In which of the following is there international participation in quality assurance

- a) the governance of national agencies for quality assurance Yes No In some cases
- b) the external evaluation of national quality assurance agencies Yes No In some cases
- c) teams for external review of institutions or programmes, either as members or observers Yes No In some cases
- d) membership of ENQA Yes No In some cases
- e) membership of any other international network Yes No If **Yes**, please specify:

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

RECOGNITION OF DEGREES AND STUDY PERIODS

13. Stage of implementation of Diploma Supplement

Describe the stage of implementation of the Diploma Supplement in your country. Please include the percentage of all students graduating in 2009 who will receive a Diploma Supplement (if less than 100%, please explain)

a) Is the Diploma Supplement issued to students graduating from:

- 1st cycle programmes Yes No
- 2nd cycle programmes Yes No
- 3rd cycle programmes Yes No
- remaining "old type" programmes Yes No Not applicable
- short higher education programmes Yes No Not applicable

b) which of the following apply to Diploma Supplements issued in your country:

- issued in a widely spoken European language Yes No
 - *please specify the language* _____
- issued free of charge for a fee
- issued automatically on request
- corresponds to the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format
- a national Diploma Supplement is used that is different from the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format

13.1. Use of Diploma Supplement for recognition of qualifications

Please describe the way in which the Diploma Supplement is used for the recognition of foreign qualifications (or studies). Please comment in particular on the following aspects, giving references to any relevant websites and documents:

a) The Diploma Supplement is used as the reference document when admitting holders of foreign qualifications to the second and third cycles.

Yes No

Comment

b) Holders of foreign qualifications who present a Diploma Supplement in a widely spoken language do not have to provide official translations of their qualifications.

Yes No

Comment

c) Holders of foreign qualifications who present a Diploma Supplement in a widely spoken language do not need to prove through other documents the validity of the qualifications in the awarding country (for further studies or employment in the non-regulated part of the labour market).

Yes No

Comment

d) Specific action has been taken at a National and Institutional level to enhance the use of the Diploma Supplement as a communication tool towards the labour market

Yes No

Comment

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

Describe the stage of implementation of the main principles and later supplementary documents¹¹ of the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

a) Does appropriate legislation comply with the Lisbon Convention?

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

b) Does appropriate legislation comply with the later Supplementary Documents:

i) Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

ii) Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

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

Yes No

If Yes, please demonstrate how it is achieved:

c) which of the following principles are applied in practice

i) applicants' right to fair assessment

Yes No

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

ii) recognition if no substantial differences can be proven

Yes No

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

¹¹ Recommendation on the Criteria and Procedures for Recognition (2001); Recommendation on the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2004); Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (2001)

lii) demonstration of substantial differences, where recognition is not granted
Yes No

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

iv) provision of information about your country's HE programmes and institutions
Yes No

If Yes, please describe how it is done in practice

v) do you have a fully operational ENIC
Yes No

If Yes, please describe the role of your ENIC in recognition and information provision a) nationally and b) internationally

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

15. Stage of implementation of ECTS¹²

Describe the implementation of ECTS in your country.

a) Please include the percentage of the total number of higher education programmes¹³ in which all programme components are linked with ECTS credits
100% 75-99% 50-75% <50%

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

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

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

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

¹³ Except doctoral studies

¹⁴ Clarification: Learning outcomes in the form of knowledge, skills and competences are formulated for all programme components and credits are awarded only when the stipulated learning outcomes are actually acquired

i) is it compatible with ECTS? Yes No

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

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

Yes No

If Yes, please explain:

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

Yes No

If Yes, please explain:

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

Yes No

If Yes, please explain:

LIFELONG LEARNING

16. Recognition of prior learning

Describe the measures in place to recognise prior learning (RPL), including non-formal and informal learning (for example learning gained in the workplace or in the community).

a) Do you have nationally established procedures in place to assess RPL as a basis for access to HE programmes?

Yes No

If Yes, please specify:

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

Yes No

If Yes, please specify:

c) Do you have nationally established RPL procedures in place to allocate credits for exemption from some programme requirements?

Yes No

If Yes, please specify:

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

Comprehensively Some A little None

Please describe the current situation:

17. Flexible learning paths

Describe legislative and other measures taken by your country to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, to encourage participation by under-represented groups.

a) Are there specific measures in place to promote flexible learning paths within the national qualifications framework?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation

b) Are there any measures to support HE staff in establishing flexible learning paths?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation

c) Is there flexibility in entry requirements aimed at widening participation?

Yes No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between the three Bologna cycles

d) Are there any flexible delivery methods to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners

Yes No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between different Bologna cycle

e) Are there modular structures of programmes to facilitate greater participation?

Yes No

Please add comments to describe the current situation and, where appropriate, differences between different Bologna cycle

f) If possible, please provide any statistics on the results of measures taken to create opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, to encourage participation by under-represented groups,

JOINT DEGREES

18. Establishment and recognition of joint degrees¹⁵

a) Describe the legislative position on joint degrees in your country.

Are joint degrees specifically mentioned in legislation?

Yes No

Does the legislation fully allow:

i) establishing joint programmes?

Yes No

If No please explain what are the obstacles

ii) awarding joint degrees?

Yes No

If No please explain what are the obstacles

b) Please give an estimate of the percentage of institutions in your country which are involved in

i) joint degrees

75-100% 50-75% 25-50% 1-25% 0%

ii) joint programmes

75-100% 50-75% 25-50% 1-25% 0%

c) What is the level of joint degree/ programme cooperation in your country

In the first cycle? None Little Widespread

In the second cycle? None Little Widespread

In the third cycle? None Little Widespread

d) In which subject areas/disciplines is joint degree/programme co-operation most widespread (please list if possible)?

e) Estimate the number of joint programmes in your country

¹⁵ A *joint degree* is a single degree certificate awarded by two or more institutions, where the single degree certificate is valid without being supplemented by any additional national degree certificate.

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

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

MOBILITY

19. Removing obstacles to student and staff mobility

a) What measures have been taken by your country both at governmental and institutional level to enhance student and staff mobility and overcome main obstacles?

b) Have arrangements for visas, residence and work permits been amended to enhance student and staff mobility?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

c) Is there financial support for national and foreign mobile students and staff?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

d) Are study periods taken abroad recognised?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

e) Is there accommodation for mobile students and staff?

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

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

Yes No

Please add appropriate comments to describe the current situation:

20. Portability of loans and grants

a) Are portable grants available in your country?

Yes No

If No, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of grants.

b) Are portable loans available in your country?

Yes No

If No, describe any measures being taken to increase the portability of loans.

**THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE EHEA
AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD**

21. Implementation of strategy

a) Describe any measures being taken by your country to implement the strategy "European Higher Education in a Global Setting"

b) What has your country done to:

i) improve information on the EHEA outside Europe?

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

iii) strengthen cooperation based on partnership in higher education?

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

v) improve recognition of qualifications with other world regions?

c) What measures have been taken in your country to implement the *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*? Please describe.

d) Are the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education applied to

i) cross-border provision of your education programmes?

Yes No

If Yes please explain in what ways the guidelines are applied

ii) incoming higher education provision?

Yes No

If Yes please explain in what ways the guidelines are applied

FUTURE CHALLENGES

22. Main challenges for higher education

Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for higher education and the Bologna Process in your country in the short and long term.

PART II

TEMPLATE for NATIONAL STRATEGIES on THE SOCIAL DIMENSION of THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

Practical instruction

The answers to this questionnaire will be included in the general national report on the implementation of the Bologna Process and reach the Bologna Secretariat (e-mail: secr@bologna2009benelux.org) by November 1, 2008. **Please do not exceed the length of 10 pages for the national strategy on social dimension.**

The questions in Annex C are not included in the questionnaire itself but are to be considered as reference material which could facilitate the drafting of the information on the national strategy.

I. Definition of the Social Dimension in the London Communiqué

“We strive for the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations. We therefore pledge to take action to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity.”

II. AS IS SITUATION (Current state of affairs)

1. Which groups in society are still underrepresented in your national higher education system? What are the main obstacles to participative equity in terms of access and successful completion of studies?

2. Please describe what measures your Government is taking to increase the representation of the groups identified in the question above. Please refer to the possible actions listed in the Bologna Working Group report on the Social Dimension and Mobility (see Annexes A and B to this document).

3. Describe what measures are being taken by the Government to help students complete their studies without obstacles related to their social or economic background. Again, please refer to the possible actions listed in the Bologna Working Group report on the Social Dimension and Mobility (see Annexes A and B to this document). Please indicate whether the measures apply to all students or only to certain levels or types of higher education institutions.

4. Does your country have statistical and/or other research evidence at disposal to underpin the identification of underrepresented groups and the main obstacles to participative equity (see Q 1) ? If yes, please specify. Or are regular student survey organised with the aim to provide data concerning the social dimension?

III. PROCESS TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM (strategy for the future)

5. How do you plan to tackle the challenges identified under Q 1 in the near future (2008-2010)?

(a) Which concrete goals do you want to achieve?

(b) What actions are planned for the different target group identified above to overcome the obstacles in access, participation and completion of studies by students? Please refer to Annex B and to the suggested approach outlined in the 2007 report from the Bologna Process Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility (Annex C to this document).

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

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

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

IV. INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PREPARATION, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGIES

Please indicate which authority or other actor is responsible for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the national strategy and describe the way in which the various stakeholders are involved. Did your country designate (a) contact point(s) for the national strategy? If so, please add the coordinates of the national contact point(s).

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ANNEX A

Actions mentioned by the Bologna countries in the 2007 national reports

Financial

- scholarships - means tested
- scholarships - merit based
- research grants
- grants for studying abroad
- grants or loans for (nearly) every student
- unspecified social support system
- free education (at least 1st cycle)
- reimbursement of tuition fees for certain groups
- financial assistance for certain groups/areas
- improved funding systems

Structural

- new /expanded routes of access
- broader teaching or learning strategies
- information and preparation at secondary schools
- increase student places
- indirect aid schemes (tax relief, family allowance)
- subsidised residences/meals/transport/books
- provision of student welfare services (health care, day care centres)
- counselling/guidance services

Certain groups

- measures for ethnic minorities (not financial)
- measures for disabled (not financial)
- measures for disadvantaged groups (not financial)
- allocation of study places to certain groups
- promote access from all national areas

Policy and practice

- explicit widening access policy (devoted funds/units/laws)
- carry out surveys (study & work, disabled students,...)
- evaluations/research of policies and practices
- monitoring access (and retention) by students

ANNEX B

Possible actions and tools identified by the 2007 Bologna Working Group on the Social Dimension and Mobility

Measures to promote equal opportunities for access, participation and completion

- Anti-discrimination legislation covering higher education
- Admission rules that are simple, fair and transparent

Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education

- Outreach programs for underrepresented groups as defined nationally
- Flexible delivery of higher education
- Flexible learning paths into and within higher education
- Transparency of qualifications and recognition of prior learning
- Incentives for higher education institutions to take action to widen access and participation

Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience

A, Provision of academic services

- Guidance (academic and careers) and tutoring
- Retention measures (modification of curricula, flexibility of delivery, tracking academic success etc.)
- Working tools and environment (well functioning libraries, lecture halls and seminar rooms, internet access, access to scientific data bases etc.)

B, Provision of social services

- Counselling
- Targeted support for students with special needs and students with children
- Appropriate housing conditions for all students
- Provision of healthcare
- Provision of transportation, student canteens etc.

Student participation in the governance and organisation of higher education

- Legislation or other measures to ensure student participation in higher education governance
- Provisions for the existence of and exercise of influence by student organisations
- Student evaluations of courses, programmes and institutions, including action plans and follow-up of actions taken

Finances in order to start and complete studies

- Financial and legal advice for students
- Appropriate and coordinated national financial support systems that are transparent
- Targeted support for disadvantaged groups as defined nationally
- Support measures for students with children

ANNEX C

Suggested approach of the work on national strategies on the social dimension

In time for the next ministerial meeting in 2009 the Working Group suggests that the countries should report to the BFUG on their national strategies for the social dimension, including action plans and measures to show their impact. All stakeholders concerned should actively participate in and support this work at the national level.

The development of a strategy should be followed by a national action plan that includes monitoring mechanisms. Ideally, the strategy and action plan will be based on a national debate on the social dimension and the future priorities of that country depending on the current situation. In order to facilitate a national debate on the social dimension the Working Group proposes the following structure and topics for such a debate:

- Measures to promote equal opportunities

What obstacles are there to equal opportunities within higher education? What protection is there if a student is discriminated when applying for, being admitted to or carrying out studies? Is there a framework for appeal? What action would be the most effective to achieve equal opportunities in higher education?

- Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education for underrepresented groups (gender, ethnic origin, immigration, socio-economic status and background, disability, geography etc.)

What groups are under represented in your national higher education system today? Is there data to show access to higher education by gender, socio-economic background, disabilities, prior immigration, region etc? What obstacles to widened access and participation are there within your higher education system? At other education levels? What actions would be appropriate for the different groups to achieve widened access? Are targeted outreach activities needed?

- Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience

A, Provision of academic services

B, Provision of social services

What kind of academic or career guidance is provided for the students in your country? What is the student – staff ratio? Are there retention measures adapted to different groups or individuals with different needs? Is the academic success of student tracked? What would be/has proven to be the most efficient retention measures? What kind of study environment is there at the higher education institutions? Do student have access to information, electronically or by other means? What is the condition of libraries, lecture halls and seminar rooms? How do students in your country live? Is housing available, of acceptable standard and affordable? Is targeted support provided or needed for specific student groups? Is counselling available if students run in to personal difficulties?

- Measures to increase formal and actual student influence on and participation in higher education governance and other higher education issues

Are there formal provisions for student influence and participation at all governance levels, in consultative as well as decision-making bodies? Are there formal provisions for student evaluation of the education? Are the formal regulations followed-up with actual practices? Are there informal ways of student influence and participation as well? Do students have an influence on all issues related to higher education? Are students aware of their rights? Do students have organisations that

can organise elections to fill elective posts? Is it possible to find enough candidates to fill the posts available? If not – how could this be improved?

- Finances in order to start and complete studies

What kind of information and guidance is provided for students regarding financial issues? How does the average student make his or her living during studies? What kind of state support is provided? Is it appropriate for all groups and individuals? Do certain groups run the risk of being excluded from, or not able to finish their studies, due to financial reasons? Which are these groups or individuals? What could be done to help them? Are students informed about possible employment possibilities after finishing their studies? How is the labour-market relevance of the studies secured? Are former graduates tracked to follow-up their employment rates?

- Monitoring: The participating countries should establish national measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of the national strategy and action plan.

What monitoring mechanisms would be the most appropriate? How could success in strengthening the social dimension be measured short-term and long-term? What quantitative and qualitative data are needed? How is the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation allocated and divided? Are there student surveys carried out to measure the impact of a social dimension strategy? How can student surveys be used in this work?

- Stakeholder involvement

Which stakeholders should be involved in the development of a strategy and an action plan? What should be the responsibility of the different stakeholders when carrying out the agreed strategy and plan?