



Education and Culture

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BeFlex

THE BOLOGNA PROCESS AND UNIVERSITY LIFELONG LEARNING: THE STATE OF PLAY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Final Report: BeFlex
Benchmarking Flexibility in the Bologna Reforms
<http://www.eucen.org/beflex.html>

The Bologna process and university lifelong learning. The state of play and future directions.

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Preface

«...Et les fruits passeront la promesse des fleurs» François de Malherbe (1605)

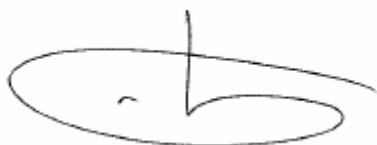
For our projects as for our children, you never imagine when you conceive them what their future will be. This project was no exception to the rule.

Convinced of the necessity to develop the lifelong learning perspective in our universities and to transform them into lifelong learning institutions, EUCEN's objective in the BEFLEX project was to verify and measure the impact of the Bologna process on ULLL policy and practice implemented by ULLL/UCE services in higher education institutions in recent years. Were the Bologna reforms used as an opportunity for new developments? Were they used to shift attention in favour of non traditional students? Were they used to install a ULLL perspective in the mainstream of universities?

The Lisbon Declaration that concluded the Spring Conference of the European University Association, stipulated "universities understand the urgent need to make lifelong learning a reality in the years to come, both with regard to continuing education and training for well qualified graduates and to initial education for disadvantaged groups. Experience shows that engaging in lifelong learning provides particular opportunities for strengthening local partnerships, diversifying funding and responding to the challenges of regional development". Current discussions between EUA and EUCEN show that things are slowly moving in this direction.

Beyond the concrete results of our survey work that you will find in part one of this report, in part two we have provided ideas and suggestions offering opportunities for readers to review and elaborate their own strategies and develop policies and practice in a new perspective.

EUCEN finds in these results encouragement to carry on its pioneering activities and to realise the necessary experimentation to develop these new perspectives through new projects that the European Commission has agreed to support. We hope that others will engage in these developments with us.



Michel Feutrie
President of EUCEN

Acknowledgements:

We wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to all those who contributed to the work of this project: the EUCEN staff, the partners and members of the management group, our external evaluators, the experts who conducted the visits, the institutions who gave case studies and who hosted our visits, all those who responded to the questionnaire, and all those who engaged with us in the consultation on drafts of our reports. It is impossible to name them all but without their input these results would not have been achieved. We hope that it has been interesting and useful, that the reports do justice to their efforts and that we will continue to work together to develop university lifelong learning.

The Bologna Process and University Lifelong Learning: the state of play and future directions

Full thematic report of the BeFlex project with recommendations for policy makers and managers

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Introduction

Rationale for the project

Attention to university lifelong learning (ULLL) in the Bologna process started in a rather weak fashion but has been growing in strength as the primary objectives are being achieved. The original Bologna declaration in 1999 had as one of its objectives: 'ECTS compatible systems also covering lifelong learning'; and 2 years later in Prague, Ministers emphasised that 'lifelong learning strategies are necessary to face the challenges of competitiveness and the use of new technologies and to improve social cohesion, equal opportunities and the quality of life.' However, there was no reference to ULLL in the action points and it remained somewhat secondary to the main concerns of implementing the BMD structure, quality issues and the EHE research area. The Trends report for the Berlin meeting in 2003 (Reichert and Tauch 2003), not surprisingly, reported very patchy development of LLL strategies at institutional level with significant differences between countries, identifying that the 'most salient problem is clearly the lack of integration of LLL provision in the general strategies, core processes and decision making of the institution'. In the communiqué following the Berlin meeting, Ministers called for the qualifications frameworks that were being developed to encompass a wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and techniques and to make appropriate use of ECTS credits. They also stressed the need to improve opportunities for all citizens to follow LLL paths into and within higher education. However, the Trends report prepared for the following meeting in Bergen in 2005 (Reichert and Tauch 2005) had no specific focus on LLL and the short section on 'the recognition of non-formal/non-academic qualifications' claimed that 'the topic is part of the wider theme of lifelong learning that has been much neglected so far in the Bologna discussion'.

The subsequent communiqué from the Bergen meeting seemed to be attempting to redress this imbalance and to be promoting greater attention to LLL: 'We see the development of national and European frameworks for qualifications as an opportunity to further embed lifelong learning in higher education. We will work with higher education institutions and others to improve recognition of prior learning, including where possible non-formal and informal learning for access to and as elements in, higher education programmes'. It stated that over the next 2 years to 2007, Ministers would look for progress in 'creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning.' However, the Trends V Report (Crosier et al 2007) stated that 'while the rhetoric on lifelong learning has been a constant feature of the policy discussion throughout the Bologna period, action has still to follow' (p64).

Although the emphasis on ULLL has been gradually increasing in the context of the Bologna reforms, as yet little systematic monitoring of the development of policy or the implementation of arrangements and practice at institutional level has taken place. The Trends Reports have collected some data but ULLL has not been a major part of their studies. Our experience as a network of universities committed to ULLL and our involvement both directly and through our members in a number of European projects and institutional initiatives all indicate that although developments are indeed 'patchy', the rate of implementation is increasing and there are many emerging examples of innovative practice and some examples of universities that are seeking more radical approach of making ULLL the organising principle of all their provision in the BMD structure.

This project was designed to address the problem that 'lifelong learning ... has been much neglected so far in the Bologna discussion', to assist the Ministers of the Bologna countries and the Bologna follow-up group by providing a review of the progress that they wished to see in the period up to 2007 and, through benchmarking, to provide HE institutions both with feedback on where they stand in relation to such developments Europe-wide and with models of best practice to stimulate further progress beyond 2007.

Partners and contributors

The project was led by EUCEN with the Universities of Aveiro, Helsinki, Lille I, Limerick, Louvain-la-Neuve, Lund, and Oldenburg as partners. Representatives of these institutions formed the Steering Group for the project (details are set out in Annexe 1). A large number of universities, actors and experts were involved in the collection of data and in the consultation on drafts and emerging results. A list of those who responded to the questionnaire, a list of the institutions who supplied case studies and a list of the universities visited with the name of the visitor, are all included in the relevant technical report.

Aims and objectives of the project

The aims of the project were:

- (i) To monitor the development of ULLL in the reformed structure of higher education qualifications (the Bologna process) and report on progress to the Bologna follow-up group in 2007
- (ii) To promote the development of policy and practice in ULLL in accordance with aims and objectives of the Bologna process

The objectives were:

- (i) To benchmark LLL policy and practice in European universities in relation to the Bologna objectives and reforms in at least 150 European universities
- (ii) To map the use of ECTS, learning outcomes, and flexible pathways through the BMD structure for ULL, arrangements for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, and support services for lifelong learners (e.g. advice and guidance) in European universities
- (iii) To collect 50 case studies of best practice in innovative delivery of ULLL in relation to the BMD structure (including ODL and assessment of learning outcomes)
- (iv) To visit 20 universities to elaborate the factors that favour the use of the Bologna reforms for the development of ULLL (e.g. political context, institutional strategy, use of resources etc)
- (v) To produce and publish a report on the state of play in ULLL for the Bologna follow-up group in 2007
- (vi) To disseminate the report widely among policy makers at European, national and institutional level in order to promote further development.

Activities and reports

A questionnaire was widely circulated and 150 responses obtained (the questionnaire is included as annex 1 to the Technical report on the questionnaire survey); 50 case studies were collected and 20 visits were undertaken. At European level consultation workshops were held in EUCEN conferences in FR and PL and a conference based on the emerging results of the projects was held in Ljubljana, SI; national dissemination seminars were held in each of the partner countries (BE, DE, FI, FR, IE, PT, SE) and final results have also been presented at various conferences by invitation.

Three technical reports are available that present the analysis of the data from our 3 sources: questionnaire survey, case studies and site visits. In addition, background papers on a number of themes - descriptors and indicators; models of organisation and management; BMD, ECTS and ULLL; validation of non-formal and informal learning; and new models of partnership - were prepared for the main consultation event in Ljubljana in March 2007, based on emerging findings. The background papers and the workshop reports for that event are included in Annex 2 to this report. All other details of activities, reports and supporting papers can be found on the project website: <http://www.eucen.org/BeFlex/index.html>

This report is in two parts: the first presents the state of play - an analysis and discussion of the features of ULLL and the issues raised during the various studies and activities of the project with recommendations for the future; the second presents the future directions - it sets the analysis in a wider context of the EUCEN vision and future plans for moving forward policy and practice in European University Lifelong Learning. An executive summary of this report is published separately.

Outline of themes

The first element of the '**state of play**' is the development of a lifelong learning policy in European universities – this is key feature that indicates the priority and importance given to LLL in the mission and strategy of universities at the present time. We have then identified 3 clear themes which emerge through all the data we have collected: **diversity, flexibility and separation/integration**.

The first is **diversity**. Here the evidence is strong. Diversity exists in the provision of ULLL, in its location and status within the institution, in its relationship with other courses and services, in its management and organisation and in the links and partnerships involved in its development. The precise nature of ULLL varies in time and space but the presence of diversity is a constant. It is at the same time ever present, permanent and dynamic, continuously changing in a time frame much shorter than the mainstream of higher education provision. This is a source of the strength of ULLL and also of its vulnerability since as our study shows it is always somewhat elusive in the search for clear definitions so beloved of policy makers and researchers. Benchmarking in the conventional sense is difficult and this project has turned out to be rather more 'benchmapping', to set out some basic data about what is happening so that in the future change and development can more easily be monitored and benchmarked.

The second theme is **flexibility** – set up as one of the key purposes of the Bologna reforms and one which will enable universities to deliver more and wider participation in initial higher education and more opportunities for continuing and lifelong learning. On this theme, our data shows that it is in general too early to assess the outcome. Certainly there is significant change in terms of exploiting the new Bologna masters diploma to create new programmes, delivered in new ways for new target groups, many of whom are adults with some professional experience. However, so far the Bologna process does not seem to have been exploited to any great extent to offer flexibility in other ways. Although there are examples of innovation using the bachelors diploma and one or two indications of discussion beginning to take place, in general this is rare. In general, the BMD structure is not fully implemented in all universities so that it is still rather early to expect more than the basic curriculum reform to be in place. There is some evidence that ULLL is growing but this is difficult to assess since there are no previous data for comparisons and no clear data collection arrangements for current activity (we hope that this study will help to improve this situation in the future).

The third theme is **separation/integration**: is ULLL a separate and discrete activity or is it integrated in the mainstream of university policy and practice? What are the benefits and disadvantages of these different arrangements? This theme is manifest in the provision of courses and services for learners, in the management and organisation of ULLL and in the local and regional partnerships that have developed. Here again there is great diversity and a number of different models are in place or are emerging. It is clear that there is review and reflection on all these structures and the situation is very fluid. We attempt to set out the situation as it is and to identify trends and the direction of movement in the system.

Following each theme we make recommendations based on our results.

Part 1 – The State of Play

I. Lifelong learning policy in universities

In the questionnaire responses, in answer to the question 'Does your university have a LLL policy/strategy?': 56% said yes, 19% said no, 23% said that one was in preparation, and 2% did not reply. In answer to the question 'What priority does LLL have at your university?': 15% reported that it had a very high priority, 46% that it was important along with other priorities, 30% that it was not yet a high priority but may become one, 10% that it was unlikely to become a high priority, and 2% did not reply.

As we have pointed out in the technical report on the questionnaire survey, this data should be treated with some caution because it is not based on a strictly representative sample of all European universities, indeed given university autonomy and the diversity of ULLL, even within and between universities in the same country, it would be difficult to construct such a sample. Since a majority of the respondents are members of EUCEN it may be that they are the most interested in ULLL and thus the data may be overestimating the development of and support for ULLL policy. However, the Trends V report (Crosier et al 2007) shows a similar response from a larger sample: LLL had a high priority in 16% of the responding institutions and only a few institutions were responding to LLL pro-actively and as central strategic priority.

It is thus clear that ULLL policy development remains patchy and the examples of best practice are in the minority and are interesting almost because of their rarity. Nevertheless, the case studies (see the technical report) show that in some universities there is a growing interest and debate around ULLL and there are examples of considerable movement in the system; there are examples that illustrate interesting activity in ULLL policy and practice in Europe and some grounds for optimism that further development is likely in the future.

ULLL policy largely tends to focus on local and regional needs and is an important part of universities' support for social, cultural and economic development in the region. Collaboration with regional actors – enterprises, professional bodies and associations, government and administrative agencies – is invariably a key element of this aspect of policy. However, as yet there is little evidence that the Bologna tools are being actively exploited to promote these relationships and to implement the institutional policies. It also has to be said that in most universities, ULLL policy is rather a reflection of what is already happening and what is possible in the short term rather than part of a strong commitment to and vision of a LLL university or of ULLL as a central plank of the university's mission for the future.

Nevertheless, staff development is a key factor in the implementation of innovation and flexibility and a key tool for the implementation of LLL policy. It is clear from our work that there is a huge need for staff development provision in universities for academics and administrative personnel on LLL related themes such as advice and guidance, RPL, learning outcomes, credits and LLL. It is also clear that most universities are providing training: 82% reported that they already provide staff development and a further 6% planned to do so within the next 2 years. Such programmes are organised in very diverse ways: by the ULLL department, by the faculties, by a specialised central unit and sometimes by a mixture of all these. So there is clearly an attempt by most universities to meet needs in different ways and, albeit to a lesser extent, to use the expertise of the ULLL staff to support that. Our survey did not seek to explore this topic in great detail but it is clear from other activities, consultation workshops and conferences that there is still an enormous unmet need for staff development, especially in some areas such as the recognition of prior learning, learning outcomes, and ECTS and ULLL.

Recommendations:

- 1. More work should be done at all levels to promote the development of ULLL policy and practice in all universities in Europe. This work should be supported by the European Commission and the European networks as well as the competent national agencies, networks and stakeholders.**
- 2. More attention should be given in the Bologna process to the place of ULLL in the mission of universities and to the use of the Bologna tools in promoting ULLL and facilitating regional development.**
- 3. Universities should clearly recognise, within their mission, policy and strategy, the potential of LLL to be a major source of continuous, internal and external innovation.**
- 4. Universities should pay more attention to the staff development needs of the whole institution particularly in the areas of learning outcomes and the recognition of prior learning, and make more use of the expertise that exists among ULLL staff in their own and other institutions.**
- 5. Examples of good practice and interesting cases of ULLL policy development and implementation should be disseminated and shared at national and European level.**

II. Diversity: benchmarking, 'benchmapping' and indicators

Diversity and definitions

The first and perhaps the strongest theme that emerges from our studies is diversity. There is undoubtedly enormous diversity in the range of learning opportunities offered by universities for adults and special target groups and what counts as ULLL differs within institutions from one department to another, from one institution to another and from one country to another. The table below, drawn from our questionnaire survey, gives some insight into this diversity (further data is available in the technical report on the questionnaire survey).

Table 1 - What counts as UCE/ULLL in your university?

	Some	All	None but planned for next 2 years	None in LLL and not planned	No Reply	Total
Special Bachelors programmes for specific groups	22%	14%	13%	42%	9%	100%
Special Masters programmes for specific groups	40%	22%	6%	28%	4%	100%
Mainstream Bachelors programmes but delivered differently (e.g. part-time, by ODL) or with special services	19%	14%	14%	44%	9%	100%
Mainstream Masters programmes but delivered differently (e.g. part-time, by ODL) or with special services	30%	18%	11%	33%	8%	100%
Modules of BMD programmes – with credits awarded	32%	20%	11%	28%	9%	100%
Modules of BMD programmes – with no credits awarded	20%	10%	7%	49%	14%	100%
Other courses with credits	27%	23%	10%	30%	10%	100%
ODL/e-learning courses	39%	21%	9%	21%	10%	100%
Non-accredited long courses (e.g. CPD) – at least 15 days	31%	29%	6%	25%	9%	100%
Non-accredited short courses (e.g. CPD) - less than 15 days	40%	29%	6%	18%	7%	100%

Thus we can see that, for example, 22% of our respondents said that some special bachelors programmes for specific target groups were counted as ULLL; 14% said that all such programmes counted as ULLL; 13% said there were none but some are planned in the next 2 years; and 42% said there are none and none planned. So for each item of provision that might be ULLL, there is a clear difference between institutions and no overall strong pattern. The strongest pattern is for the short or relatively short, non-accredited programmes which are most likely to be offered as ULLL but clearly some are also offered by departments and not headlined as ULLL by the institution.

What is labelled as ULLL if often related to administrative rules or regulations but these too are varied. This is best illustrated in relation to masters diploma courses. In some universities all masters programmes are simply masters programmes irrespective of the content, the objectives, the target groups, free or fee paying, subsidised or fully funded and so on. In other universities, professionally oriented masters or interdisciplinary masters, or part-time masters, or fee-paying masters may be counted as ULLL; sometimes there is a mix within one institution depending on the faculty or on the expertise currently available in the ULLL department. From the outside this may look chaotic but there is almost always a good institutional or administrative reason for the classification and often this is designed to get the best deal for the learners either in terms of the teaching expertise, the costs or the flexibility. It can be argued therefore that this is a reflection of the universities taking advantage of the new masters courses to innovate and to provide flexible opportunities best suited to meet the needs of new target groups or individual learners. However, it is raising issues in many countries about the definition of a masters (we return to this point later in this report). And in our work no-one has indicated that they would wish a definition of ULLL to be fixed too tightly since its diversity and its capacity to change and respond quickly to perceived local or national need is seen as its great strength. However, this does make it very difficult to compare universities LLL provision in any way certainly not, for example, by the budget of the ULLL department as budgets hardly ever, even in the same region or country, include the same activities.

Benchmarking is designed to compare and contrast the effectiveness of management and organisation and the quality of products and services. The nature of ULLL, in particular its diversity and the enormous range in the stage of development in Europe, meant that conventional benchmarking of ULLL in relation to the Bologna process was not possible until some basic groundwork had been done. The main work of the project has therefore been 'benchmapping' the current state of play, and from that developing a definition that could be used to generate indicators and criteria which could later be used to monitor and measure change, development and innovation and become tools for benchmarking in the more conventional sense in the future.

Following the questionnaire survey, the fieldwork and various consultation workshops and a conference we propose a definition of ULLL which reflects the state of play in ULLL at the present:

ULLL is the provision by higher education institutions of learning opportunities, services and research for:

- ***the personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals – lifelong and lifewide***
- ***the social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region.***

It is at university level and research-based; it focuses primarily on the needs of the learners; and it is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors.

This definition is designed to reflect the state of play at present rather than any desired or desirable state. As such it received overwhelming endorsement in the consultation process of the project, because it is wide enough to encompass the diversity but clear enough to make explicit some key principles. Furthermore each word and phrase was carefully chosen so that it could be the source of one (or more) indicators and thus provide a way of mapping change and development in the future. Hence 'learning opportunities' may include not just courses in the traditional sense but a wide range of possibilities: open lectures, conferences, distance learning, work-based learning, project activities and

so on; 'services' may include recognition/validation of non-formal and informal learning, various forms of advice, guidance and counselling, coaching, mentoring, tutoring, academic and language support services and so on. It is also clear that for most institutions research is an important element of the work of ULLL, in particular research into the needs of specific target groups, specific professional communities or geographical area at different points in the life cycle – hence another feature is that ULLL is lifelong. It is also agreed that ULLL is often concerned with professional development but also personal development which is not necessarily directly linked to the world of work but for example to civic or artistic activities - hence it is lifewide. ULLL is also primarily focussed on individuals and groups and their needs rather than the demands of a discipline or a body of knowledge; and it is concerned with social and cultural life of these communities as well as their economic life. These features mean that it is frequently developed in some form of partnership with actors and agencies external to the university. The fact that it is university LLL rather than any other form also means that it is at a certain level, in EQF terms level 5, 6 or 7, and the learning outcomes that are associated with those levels and underpinned by research in the particular field or fields. Each of these features could generate an indicator and although not all ULLL in any given institution would have all these features it would have at least one of them. Thus the definition can facilitate the development and use of a range of indicators.

Before discussing indicators in more detail, we wish to point to elements of ULLL which are more contested. In particular the issue is whether bachelors or masters courses should be considered as ULLL – there is a wide variation of views on this point at present and such classifications are often related to financing for the institutions and/or for the learners. Since this is such a contested concept in terms of ULLL we have deliberately excluded such provision from the definition of the state of play at the current time but we take up the debate on this matter in part 2 of this report where we discuss future trends.

Indicators

If this work is to form the basis of monitoring developments in the future, indicators are required as tools for such monitoring. A definition is the first step in the development of indicators and as we have indicated above this definition is carefully phrased so that each term could form the basis of an indicator. The second step is to establish the principles that will govern the development of the indicators. Here we summarise some of the issues relating to indicators that have arisen in the course of this project; more detailed information is contained in the technical report on the questionnaire survey (especially in the open questions at the end of the report) and in the background papers, workshop reports and recommendations from the Ljubljana event (see annex 2).

Two broad approaches to indicators are possible: quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative indicators might include: the number and range of courses: discipline, multi/inter-disciplinary; the number and range of services: guidance and counselling, careers advice, skills courses; the number of applications/participants/starters/finishers; the profile of participants relative to target group: qualifications (or lack of them), type of qualifications (academic/professional) age, gender, socio-economic status, residence (rural etc), unemployed; financing: total income, % self financing, % from university budget, % paid by employers, municipalities, other external agencies; and so on.

More qualitative measures related to the Bologna objectives might include:

- 'openness', for example in entry, exit and re-entry to courses, links and bridges between different forms of provision, financial support;
- 'flexibility', for example customised programmes for specific groups, opportunities to build individualised pathways, credit accumulation and transfer arrangements, the use of distance, e-learning, blended learning;

- 'orientation to professional life', for example links, partnerships and collaboration with employers and professional associations, possibilities for work-based learning, courses with labour market orientation, updating and re-training for professional groups
- 'diversity and innovation', for example the range of target groups, range of pedagogical approaches and services, intergenerational learning, new developments.
- 'quality', for example the quality tools and systems used, evidence of learner and stakeholder satisfaction

Indicators serve a range of purposes so rather than a single set of indicators, and given the diversity of purposes and activities that count as ULLL, it is very clear that more appropriate is **a bank of indicators** from which a selection is made depending on purpose and focus, has more support than any single list. There is a need to distinguish between internal and external users of the indicators, between indicators at national, institutional and individual level, between indicators that focus on outputs (the results, the product and/or the system), and outcomes (the process and the learner). Consistent with the idea that ULLL, by definition, focuses primarily on learners, there is also clear support for indicators that reflect what learners should be able to expect from the university and that measure practice against the core values of ULLL that are humanistic as well as technical. It was also pointed out the indicators that focus on the outcomes for and impact on learners probably requires a different kind of methodology, such as life history studies or longitudinal studies, rather than short term indicators.

Evidence based policy making requires research and evidence and indicators can be part of that. In addition, the use of indicators can have a positive effect for example, demonstrate the need for resources, assist teachers, create or sustain public support. However, there are fields of tension: the use and operation of 'the market', choice and responsibility may detract from a critique of the concepts – many individuals do not have a choice to participate in ULLL (for example they are obliged to do so by their employers); choice in a free market is problematic. So, used unproblematically indicators may disadvantage the already disadvantaged and legitimate categories of inclusion and exclusion. The idea of public service in the mission of a university should not be lost and indicators should support rather than contradict this. In the ULLL community there is some scepticism and a degree of suspicion in some quarters about the use of indicators since they are never neutral but rather operate in a political and cultural context which may serve a range of social and political agendas. The key is the need for transparency in terms of purpose and use and a recognition that they may be necessary but are not sufficient; they can only complement and not substitute for other kinds and sources of evidence.

Recommendations:

- 6. A definition of the present characteristics of ULLL should be adopted, which is inclusive and encompasses diversity – the EUCEN definition is proposed***
- 7. The various stakeholders in ULLL should collaborate to develop a bank of indicators that are transparent and can be used flexibly and selectively, combining qualitative and quantitative indicators differently for different purposes at different levels: European, national, institutional, individual.***
- 8. Indicators for ULLL should be linked to appropriate professional standards, take account of the interests of stakeholders and of existing work at national and European level for higher education and other forms of LLL. They should also reflect the needs of learners.***

III. Flexibility

Flexibility in programmes and courses for university lifelong learning

Short courses

The most common courses to count as LLL are relatively short courses: non-accredited short courses (e.g. CPD) - less than or around 15 days in length and ODL/e-learning courses. These are offered widely by universities but there remain a significant minority of universities who do not offer such courses as part of ULLL and have no plans to do so (see table 1 above)

However, in the case studies there are interesting examples of innovative practice and a range of purposes for such provision. Short course may be used to supplement or complement mainstream programmes, to offer work-related skills and competences, or offered to learners who already have an academic degree to promote transition to the labour market, for example for musicians to develop skills to broaden their employment opportunities into management, festival promotion, and so on. Frequently they are aimed at people with difficulties in the labour market – unemployed, or in precarious employment – or targeted at a specific local need and in partnership with active professionals in the field who act as teachers and coaches to the learners alongside academic staff. Since short courses are often not accredited and carry no certificate or diploma they can be developed quickly and can change and develop quickly to meet changing needs. Frequently they are developed in partnership with local employers or local government structures. In general, many faculties work with professional groups associated with their discipline to offer updating and continuing professional development in that field. These courses might almost be called traditional continuing education or lifelong learning provision and in many universities have a well established track record. Nevertheless there are some universities who largely leave this provision to other institutions. Since we have no previous data on which to base estimates of development (indeed one of the purposes of this project was to establish a base line for measuring change), it is difficult to assess the extent to which there is a general movement towards growth in this area. However, it is clear that there is at present no great perceived need for accreditation (i.e. the formal award of credits or qualifications): 35% of our respondents said it was not needed or not demanded by learners or stakeholders and a further 30% said that it was only needed sometimes. Thus at present there is no evidence of any widespread use of the Bologna tools (ECTS, Diploma Supplement or BMD structure) in relation to this 'traditional' ULLL provision.

Using ECTS

In our questionnaire survey, 39% of respondents said that the Bologna process had had a positive impact on the development of ECTS and the use of the Diploma supplement in ULLL, although as indicated above there is no evidence of a widespread move to award credits or qualifications in short course provision except in specific cases where accreditation is relevant for the learners to obtain financial support. Since in most short courses of this sort there is no formal assessment of the individual's learning it is unlikely that credits could be awarded even if mechanisms were in place to award credits outside the framework of a diploma, unless some form of assessment was introduced. However, in most countries there is no legal framework that would allow universities to award credits outside a full programme leading to a diploma in the BMD structure. Ireland, the UK and more recently Belgium, are the main exceptions but even there such arrangements do not exist in all institutions. Nevertheless, in some institutions in other countries there is experimentation going on to 'credit rate' courses that is to indicate the equivalence to ECTS credits in terms of student workload even though credits are not awarded. This is an important area for future monitoring since the ECTS credit is also an external sign of quality and recognition by the university.

In addition 26% of respondents thought that the Bologna process had had a positive impact in ULLL in general and 24% that ULLL had also had a positive impact in the mainstream BMD courses in relation to the development of learning outcomes. However, again it is clear that this is at a very early stage of discussion rather than well developed at the present time: 56% said that ULLL courses were not expressed in terms of learning outcomes and there were no plans to do that in the near future.

Nevertheless, there is general support in the ULLL community for learning outcomes as a basis for designing and defining programmes of study throughout the university but a clear need for debate, discussion and staff development on the topic as the concept is not widely understood. ULLL departments tend to be more experienced with the concept since it is close to the model that they use in work with enterprises and external agencies, even if it is not always called 'learning outcomes', and this experience could be used to support the implementation of learning outcomes across university provision.

ECTS is now widely used for BMD programmes and links to ECTS for ULLL provision are being developed in various ways. Alongside this, the advent of ECVET from the vocational training sector is viewed with some apprehension. This concern is expressed by a minority of people and it is clear that the majority are totally unaware of these debates, but the fear is that this will undermine much of the work done so far, not least because it has taken so much time and energy to implement the major shift to ECTS based on student workload and the current work on learning outcomes represents further work. Nevertheless, there is also a recognition that if ECVET is established in the vocational training sector then universities and particularly ULLL will need to understand and take account of it. In consultation workshops therefore there was a strong call for work to bring about convergence of ECTS and ECVET.

Overall the use of ECTS in ULLL is beginning to develop but the use of learning outcomes is more patchy; and there is a general lack of understanding about the key issues around ECTS, ECVET and learning outcomes in general and more particularly as they affect ULLL. Nevertheless there is also considerable expertise in ULLL units of the language of skills and competences as organising principles for curriculum design. There is also interest in further discussion and development even if this is viewed with some apprehension.

Using the BMD structure- bachelors

The use of the BMD structure for ULLL is in a state of flux. In our survey 33% said that the Bologna process was having a positive impact in relation to the integration of ULLL into the BMD structure. However, in a different question 70% said that ULLL courses were not integrated and there were no plans to make them so. This partly reflects the fact that in many institutions the BMD structure is not yet fully implemented in all diplomas and many institutions are still operating with two systems and so the management of the provision is already complicated. Nevertheless, 36% of the respondents reported that they had developed bachelors programmes for special target groups, with a further 13% saying that they were planned in the next two years. So the new structure is beginning to be exploited to provide new kinds of courses, particularly courses with a closer link to the labour market.

Using the BMD structure – masters

Unlike at bachelors level, at masters level there seems to have been an explosion in the number and range of new courses developed. Among the respondents 62% indicated that they had put in place masters programmes for special target groups and a further 6% said that some were planned in the next 2 years. Most of these new masters are not the traditional research oriented programmes designed to prepare students for a PhD; on the contrary they are usually aimed at the application of knowledge in a professional field or conversion courses of some kind – a kind of professional masters aimed either at young people to prepare them for professional life or at experienced professionals to give them additional skills and competences. These masters may or may not be formally labelled as continuing education or lifelong learning but it is clear that many of them are designed in that way and often offered in a flexible way in terms of the timing of classes and/or the use of e-learning, distance learning, blended learning.

It is clear that the masters diploma is taking on a new role. The new masters is not only preparation for a doctoral programmes or further academic/research study; it is now becoming a transition to and from the labour market. For young people the new masters programmes often provide a more specialised or more applied programme linking the bachelors to the world of work and employment and for experienced professionals they often provide a link back into more theoretical research based study.

Thus the masters seems to be developing into a bridge between general academic study and professional life – a bridge where people move in both directions.

This growth in the diversity and flexibility in masters programmes while welcomed as a new form of LLL is also raising questions about the differential value and status of different kinds of masters for different target groups. There are 'old' masters offered before the BMD reforms (for example in Spain) which are now 'university masters' and 'new' masters developed within the BMD structures which are 'state masters'; there are professional and academic masters; there are full-time and part-time masters; 'LLL' masters and 'normal' masters; and masters that carry a wide range of different numbers of ECTS credit points. Such distinctions give rise to a concern that the value of a masters diploma may be called into question and there is a perceived need to take as yet undefined steps to ensure that all masters have equal value. However, the diversity of masters programmes and the flexibility in the delivery of different masters programmes means that at present there is little confidence that 'a masters is always a masters'.

Summary

- The traditional 'short course' provision of ULLL remains largely unaffected by the Bologna reforms
- There is at present very little evidence of a perceived need for the use of ECTS in ULLL short courses.
- The incentives and barriers to the further integration of ULLL into the BMD structure are not yet clear
- The BMD structure is not yet being used to any great extent for bachelors programmes targeted at adults and working professionals
- The BMD structure has been exploited for the development of new masters programmes aimed at new target groups, particularly addressing professional practice and the needs of the labour market
- There is considerable disquiet and uncertainty about the value of a masters course in the new diverse landscape of masters provision

Recommendations:

- 9. Policy makers at institutional, national and European level should promote further discussion and debate about the use of the Bologna tools to promote flexibility in ULLL; these debates should include the learners and external stakeholders - employers, social partners, professional bodies and regional authorities.***
- 10. EUCEN should carry out further work at European level on:***
 - ***Exploring the facilitating factors and the obstacles to the development of flexibility in new BMD programmes for ULLL***
 - ***Disseminating examples of best practice and innovative approaches to credit rating and accreditation of ULLL, exploiting the ECTS tools of Bologna***
 - ***Generating more discussion about the idea of individualised learning pathways***
 - ***Developing strategies to ensure the transparency and value of all masters diplomas***

Flexibility in services for learners

An overview

The Bologna process explicitly promotes the development of the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and implicitly promotes other services for learners, particularly advice and guidance. Recognition arrangements are seen as required for flexible entry and for increasing and widening participation. In a more flexible and diverse offer of courses and services and closer links to the world of work, a range of advice and guidance services is necessary to match entrants with learning opportunities, to match courses with learners' aspirations, to guide learners into and through more individualised learning pathways, and to support candidates for recognition of prior and experiential learning. Table 2 shows the results of our survey that relate to services offered to learners in responding universities and table 3 shows the services offered to other parts of the university.

Table 2 – Services offered to learners

	Offered by a separate LLL/UCE Unit	Offered in faculties	Offered in a central unit (not a LLL/UCE Unit)	No but planned in next 2 years	No and not planned in near future	No Reply	Total
Support courses – study skills	36%	22%	19%	6%	13%	4%	100%
Support courses – languages	33%	22%	28%	3%	12%	2%	100%
Courses for special target groups	45%	25%	7%	2%	18%	3%	100%
RPL/APEL – for entry to a course	23%	28%	6%	14%	22%	7%	100%
RPL/APEL – for part of a diploma	20%	24%	8%	14%	24%	10%	100%
Academic advice and guidance at entry	27%	27%	30%	5%	9%	2%	100%
Career/professional development advice	26%	18%	34%	9%	11%	2%	100%
Mentoring/tutoring during the courses	22%	46%	11%	8%	11%	2%	100%
ODL/e-learning services	32%	28%	18%	8%	10%	4%	100%

It is clear that most universities offer most of the services listed for learners, in some way and that ULLL departments often play a leading role in providing them, especially in special support courses and in ODL/e-learning. Perhaps not surprisingly mentoring and tutoring during a course is mostly provided by the faculties. While most services are already in place in some way or planned in the future but it is interesting that the two services least likely to be developed are RPL for entry and RPL for part of a diploma – precisely the services that the Bologna communiqués have mentioned most frequently. It is also evident that although most institutions offer advice and guidance and professional career guidance in some way there is no single clear pattern in the way such services are organised and delivered.

Advice, guidance and learning support

Nearly all universities that offer such services do so through a mix of central and faculty based arrangements. However, a significant minority of universities do not offer such support either centrally or in the faculties and have no plans to do so.

Study skills, language support courses and ODL support services are more likely to be offered in ULLL units. Academic advice and guidance at entry is likely to be offered by central units and/or at faculty level but careers or professional development advice is most likely to be offered by another central unit or by the faculties. Mentoring or tutorial advice is most likely to be offered by the faculties rather than centrally. In at least one university, careers guidance is provided by an external agency that sends a representative into the institution once or twice a week to offer sessions for students. In general all these services are patchy and arrangements are somewhat idiosyncratic having developed in an ad hoc fashion rather than in a systematically planned way. Of course this does not mean that it is necessarily ineffective; it may mean that it has been developed closest to the point of need. However, it does indicate that there is likely to be no overall university policy or strategy for most of these services and that it is not a high priority for institutions.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

We have used the term recognition of prior learning (RPL) in this report because that is the term used in the Bologna process communiqués but we acknowledge that various other terms are in common usage (recognition of non-formal and informal learning, accreditation or assessment of prior and/or experiential learning - APL, APEL; validation des acquis professionnels - VAP, validation des acquis d'expérience - VAE), often representing different practice. Where we refer to a specific form of practice, this is indicated, otherwise our use of 'RPL' is used in a general sense, intended to be inclusive of different policies and practices.

The pattern of response in relation to the provision of arrangements for RPL is quite different from other services. In the questionnaire survey a total of 57% of respondents stated that RPL was available for entry to a course, almost equally divided between a central service and a faculty based service – usually some kind of combination; and a further 14% said it would be available in the next 2 years. Similarly, a total of 52% stated that RPL was available for the award of part of a diploma, more likely to be based in the faculty, and a further 14% said it would be in the next two years. So there seems slightly more RPL activity for entry than for the award of a diploma. However, it is clear from the visits and the consultation activities that in some cases the recognition is being applied to formal training or qualifications that have taken place outside the fully accredited state universities or outside the normal routes into the university rather than to non-formal or informal learning; indeed in many cases this is all that is permitted by legislation. In addition, in those universities where RPL arrangements are in place they are very recent and often not fully established or operational. There remains a great deal of reluctance or resistance and in many places there are still legislative obstacles.

When we asked the extent to which changes were a result of the Bologna reforms, 43% said no impact on RPL for entry and 40% said no impact for part of a diploma with 19% not replying in both cases. However, it is clear that in some countries the law implementing the Bologna BMD structure also at least opened up the possibility, for the first time in some cases, for RPL to be developed, even if that legislation has yet to be exploited by the institutions. This is perhaps not surprising given that legislation is quite recent in some cases.

One point that does seem to be emerging from our data is that unlike in France and the UK where RPL was first developed some years ago for entry, and in particular for entry to bachelors programmes, those universities that are now developing RPL arrangements for the first time seem to be starting with entry to masters and/or for part of a masters diploma rather than at the lower end of the diploma range. It may be that this is because one of the trends following the Bologna reforms, as we have indicated above, is the development of new, professionally oriented, masters courses, and in particular masters targeted at adult with work/professional experience. Clearly it might be easier to fit RPL arrangements into such courses which are specifically designed for people with certain work experience. It would also

be easier where courses are defined in terms of learning outcomes rather than content and this is part of the strategy in some universities as shown in case studies. This is therefore an interesting parallel development: new courses with new RPL arrangements. However, our work also seems to suggest that in most universities the traditional courses, and in particular the bachelors courses, are being left untouched by RPL arrangements. It therefore remains to be seen whether this is a step on the road to the further extension of RPL arrangements as confidence in the tools and the results grow, or whether it acts as a protection for the traditional, 'academic' courses so that they can resist such changes.

One important issue that has arisen in relation to the Bologna tools is the problem of a Diploma Supplement (DS) for parts of a diploma awarded on the basis of RPL. Since the Supplement focuses largely on content and not (yet) on learning outcomes it is a major problem for learners who have not followed a course of study at the university concerned and it is not possible to give the relevant DS for learners awarded all or part of a diploma by RPL. Clearly if the Supplements were written in terms of learning outcomes it would be much easier to relate them to the skills and competences of RPL candidates. This would also support the further development of RPL.

It is also apparent that many universities are having some difficulty in costing and financing RPL arrangements, and in deciding on a pricing policy (who should pay and how much).

It seems therefore that, in general, the development of RPL is patchy and is growing around specific courses rather than as a part of a general university strategy or policy even if there are commitments to RPL at national level (most recently in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden). Nevertheless, it does seem that respondents see RPL as part of the future in universities even if it is not yet widely used or used only in specific courses. The case studies have also provided some interesting examples of innovative strategies and actions to implement RPL

Recommendations:

- 11. The Bologna Follow-Up Group should make the development of services for learners, especially RPL and advice and guidance, a more significant part of the workplan for the next period of the Bologna process**
- 12. EUCEN should promote and support further work on arrangements to promote flexibility in programmes and services of learners, especially advice, guidance and counselling and RPL services. This further work should include:**
 - collaborating with Bologna promoters to amend the Diploma Supplement to focus on learning outcomes rather than content of programmes**
 - training opportunities for policy makers, managers and practitioners**
 - consolidation of the networks of experts and activists, across all sectors and stakeholders, that have been established through various projects and activities so that these can be continued and exploited for further development**
 - an observatory where the vast range of documentation that is already available – articles, books, tools, project reports, quality arrangements, surveys and analyses – can be made accessible to a wider audience.**

IV. Separation and/or integration

The issue of separation or integration is a continuing and frequently posed question: is ULLL a discrete separate activity or is it integrated into the 'mainstream' of the university; is it central to the mission and strategy of the university or is it marginal? By extension this question becomes not just is it separated or integrated but should it be – what is best practice? What is the most effective and efficient way to manage and deliver it? We first examine the 'state of play' at the present time and in the second part of the report we discuss future trends and best practice. The separation/integration question relates to the management and organisation of ULLL and to teaching and learning, pedagogy, and services. We explore each of these in turn.

Models of the management and organisation of ULLL

As in the issue of what counts as ULLL, the management and organisation of ULLL is similarly diverse and may take a variety of forms. It may be:

- (i) separated internally with a central cross-university unit (called variously a service, a department, or a unit of ULLL)
- (ii) integrated into the faculty or department with each responsible for its own arrangements
- (iii) separated externally with all market oriented provision being handled through a foundation (not-for-profit organisation owned by the university with a board drawn from enterprises)
- (iv) separated externally with all market oriented provision being handled through a profit making company owned by the university
- (v) hybrid – a number of different combinations exist and one or two examples of all these arrangements in one university.

The most common form at present is the internal hybrid model (v above) with a central unit usually having a co-ordinating role and providing marketing and administration services, advice, quality support and so on with the curriculum development, teaching and learning taking place at faculty or department level. The survey showed that 60% of respondents have a separate UCE/ULLL unit but there is also a high level of involvement of the faculties in some disciplines (although there is no common pattern here). The relationships with regional authorities are more likely to be managed by the UCE/ULLL department; technology transfer is usually managed by a separate unit although in some universities the transfer of technology is closely linked to training programmes related to that new technology or research results and in such cases it is more likely to be the UCE/ULL department.

However, it is also clear that there are two quite different models that have developed in recent years – the external models (iii and iv above). The rationale for these models is that the needs of working professionals frequently require different sorts of provision from that permitted in university regulations. For example, legislation and/or university regulations often require that courses are taught by professors of the university and limit the input from external experts; they also often put limits on the fees that can be charged and/or the way in which the income from such provision can be used. However, courses that target working or aspiring professionals often gain credibility and legitimacy among the target learners and more widely in the labour market if they have significant input from leading professionals in the particular field. This increases the costs of delivery but also increases the fee that learners and employers are prepared to pay for such courses. In order to manage these demands from individuals and employers, to generate more income and to make best use of that income universities have created external or 'semi-detached' structures that are not constrained by the usual university regulations. Two versions of such external structures have been created: a 'foundation' and a 'company'. The foundation is most commonly found in Spain (la fundación); it is a private not-for-profit organisation, with a board usually chaired by the Rector of the university and consisting of representatives of industry, commerce and professional expertise outside the university. The second version of an external structure is the company with private, for-profit status, wholly owned by the university, still quite rare but it seems to exist to take in the most profitable and high status international programmes; it may therefore be attractive since it provides maximum flexibility for the institution. In at least one university all these different models co-exist (although the private company has been put in place very recently).

In terms of the learning experience, these external differentiated models of management also divide the provision and separate the learners into more clearly and narrowly defined groups. It can be argued that this is a more effective and efficient way of reaching and meeting the needs of specific groups or it can be seen as a fragmentation and an impoverishment of the learning experience. This wider impact of these different models is as yet unclear.

ULLL units or departments (model 1 above) are also key players in the provision of services internally to other faculties and departments within the institution, in particular in the provision of financial management, marketing, organisation and general administration of ULLL courses offered by the faculties as well as those offered by the ULLL department itself – see table 3 below. They also play a key role in regional collaboration with employers and especially with public authorities.

Table 3 – Management services offered to other parts of the university

	Offered by a separate LLL or UCE Unit	Offered in faculties	Offered in a central unit (not a LLL or UCE Unit)	No but planned in next 2 years	No/not planned in near future	No Reply	Total
Admin for LLL – financial management	48%	15%	14%	7%	10%	6%	100%
Admin for LLL - marketing	56%	14%	7%	9%	9%	5%	100%
Admin for LLL – organisation of courses	54%	24%	5%	6%	8%	3%	100%
Staff development for academic staff across the university	24%	19%	35%	10%	8%	4%	100%
Regional collaboration with employers	37%	24%	22%	5%	9%	3%	100%
Regional collaboration with public authorities	42%	17%	21%	3%	14%	3%	100%
Technology transfer	14%	18%	46%	7%	10%	5%	100%

An interesting point to note is that while there was evidence of some reflection on the way the management of ULL is organised, this was not a major issue for most universities at time of this study.

Models of curriculum – pedagogy and services to learners

The traditional model for university teaching separated young people, in academic (state) diploma programmes (now BMD) in full-time, day-time, uninterrupted years of study, on the one hand from adults in special courses, non-accredited, university diplomas, evenings or weekends, part time, on the other. This is a 'separatist' model and might be viewed as best practice, concentrating expertise and flexibility to meet the different needs of adults. Or it might be viewed as a conservative model which marginalises provision for non-traditional students and protects the traditional teaching and research mission of universities.

While the 'separatist' model is still very common, the BMD reforms have made possible new more integrated models of the relationship between the provision for young people and adults. There are two versions of this new more integrated arrangement of pedagogy and services. The first is what might be called a 'strong integration' or 'full integration' model: more professional orientation as well as academic orientation in all or most programmes, mixed groups of young people and adults in the same programmes taught together, the possibility for all learners to study selected units/credits and parts of a diploma, intermediate awards (certificates etc) available for all learners. In this model delivery and pedagogy are integrated: blended learning for all, flexible timing for all. The second version is what might be called a 'weak integration' or 'partly integrated' model: separate diplomas for different age groups and different professional groups, customised programmes for special (small) groups, new special masters (many are emerging), new special bachelors (only a few at present), the credit-rating of short courses. In this model all pedagogy is tending to more active and professionally oriented but traditional teaching methods are still more prevalent in 'mainstream' courses for young people. Here the BMD structure is used but the delivery is separate.

There is also a third model which is a hybrid of the other two combining both in different ways in different institutions and different models in different faculties and disciplines.

The predominant model at present seems to be the second – 'weak/part integration'; and in some universities the third, hybrid model, is emerging as experimentation develops at different rates in different parts of the institution and different faculties in response to perceived need, the interest of staff, and the desire to innovate. There is evidence of considerable interest in discussion and debate about moving towards more integrated arrangements but the major concern is the mixing of groups of learners - young people with experienced professionals - and the pedagogical issues that this raises. With one or two notable exceptions, it is not yet clear to what extent there are any clear intentions to move towards the first strong/full integration model and there is considerable evidence that many universities are still struggling to reform the traditional model of teaching and learning.

This question of separation or integration is also present in the LLL services offered to learners by universities although the services necessary to support greater flexibility and wider participation are developing much more slowly and more recently than the new courses as indicated in table 2 above. Nevertheless the debate is in progress although it is clear that services to learners are almost equally provided by a central service and the faculties or some combination of these (models i, ii and v above) and only very rarely by external agencies (models iii and iv above) except where the provision is externalised in these formats. Thus services might be provided internally but separately by the UCE/ULLL service/department or by another central unit (for example a careers guidance service) or they might be provided by an external agency (for example the external careers guidance service is brought in to the university to offer a service at fixed times), although this is rare. In the integrated model services are provided at faculty or departmental level. In general it seems that different services are handled in different ways. For example, the recognition of prior learning is often provided by a central co-ordinating unit with complementary activity at faculty or departmental level – the hybrid model; careers guidance is more usually a central unit inside the university or an external agency; study support is more commonly at department or faculty level but there is often also a central support unit; language training is usually a central service.

Interestingly, while there seems to be some considerable debate, at least in some countries, about the separation or integration of the curriculum, we have not picked up similar debates around the provision of services to learners.

Partnerships

A further element in the provision of courses and services is the range and type of external partnerships. First there are relationships with other education and training providers and here much is dependent on the structure of the education system in general: how and where higher level vocational

and professional training is delivered, how and where adult education is provided. The most obvious distinction is between countries with a binary system of universities and universities of applied sciences or higher professional schools and those countries where there is a more unified system with universities providing both/all kinds of education and training. But there are also countries where, for example, the University of the Third Age is closely linked to or even embedded in the main university while in others it is a completely separate organisation with few or no links into the main university. In some countries there are clear and formalised adult education sectors with a distinct role in relation to all adult learning and others where such provision is dispersed between different institutions and universities are more likely to be involved. This diversity of structural arrangements for vocational, professional and adult education means that the development of bridges and pathways between university provision and other kinds of education and training have taken different forms involving different patterns of partnerships and relationships between the institutions. For example, in some countries bridging courses for access or special entry into the university are offered by the university itself, in others they are provided by other institutions, in some by a joint arrangement. In general, it is clear that some universities function with very few links and others have a complex mix of different relationships with other education and training providers for different target groups at different levels and these may be managed by the university centrally or by the faculty or in some combination of the two.

Similarly, partnerships with enterprises and local or national government agencies for courses and professional development services may be handled in different ways. For a particular target group in a specialised area it may be the department or faculty; for interdisciplinary courses or if the target groups cut across faculty boundaries, then the partnerships may be handled centrally by the UCE/ULL department or they may be managed jointly by the faculty and the central unit. Sometimes, for example, the curriculum development or the delivery of the training may be carried out by faculty and the marketing, administration, the negotiation and general management of the contract may be done centrally. Overall, there certainly seems to be an increase in collaboration with enterprises: for more work based learning rather than simply work placement, in the design of courses and in the new masters diplomas as well as UCE/ULLL short courses. The effectiveness of these external partnerships has a tendency to be self-governing: if they are effective and meet the needs of the various learners, actors and stakeholders then they are likely to last longer and be more developmental for all parties; if they do not work to the satisfaction of the stakeholders then they cease.

Recommendations:

13. EUCEN, in collaboration with the national networks for ULLL should:

- ***monitor the development of different models of management and organisation and their impact on the overall provision of ULLL and the participation and experience of learners***
- ***lead the debates around the strengths and weaknesses of different models of pedagogy and the delivery of services***
- ***disseminate best practice in the management and organisation of ULLL***
- ***analyse different models of effective local and regional partnerships.***

Part 2 - Future directions

V. Concluding remarks

EUCEN has coordinated the work of this project and has presented the results above and in the technical reports and other project papers. EUCEN is also the largest European association for university lifelong learners with members in 43 countries. As a membership association of directors, managers and practitioners with enormous expertise and experience in the field, we also have a collective vision of ULLL for the future, underpinned by a set of principles and values. In this section we discuss the results of the project in the context of this vision and of the new or refined questions that have arisen in the work

What is ULLL at present in European universities?

In general there are four broad approaches to LLL in universities:

- a holistic approach in which all aspects of university teaching and learning are seen through the filter of lifelong learning with a different pathways for personal, social, academic and professional development;
- a labour market approach in which ULLL is largely a response to the needs of the economy and labour market in general and more particularly to the professional life of individuals;
- a social inclusion approach which focuses largely on widening participation and opening up university study to new target groups and 'non-traditional' learners;
- and finally those universities where LLL remains a slogan without a great deal of substance.

At present, it seems that in most institutions the labour market approach is dominant; second is the social inclusion approach; and finally (and still very rarely) is the holistic approach. Unfortunately, the 'slogan approach' is also evident rather more than we would wish.

The Shanghai and other similar world rankings of universities have, despite considerable criticism of their methodology, generated a strong concern at institutional, national and European level with 'international excellence', particularly research excellence and have detracted attention from other missions. We do not believe that international research excellence is incompatible with the idea of a LLLU or with a strong regional role for institutions. Indeed technology transfer and knowledge transfer are important elements of research excellence and can operate at regional, national and international levels; and strong LLL universities can be attractive to learners internationally as well as regionally. Thinking globally does not preclude acting locally and indeed the two can reinforce each other. However, at present this does not seem to be a widespread view even though these broad classifications mask an enormous diversity of policy and practice.

In the first part of this report we offered a definition of ULLL based in the present; we see this as a transitional state as the Bologna process and other global and national trends work their way through the university system and in particular through university lifelong learning. Since it reflects the current situation we continue to use the term ULLL in this report although a wider and deeper approach to lifelong learning for all learners in higher education is increasingly being discussed at least at the level of curriculum. This new approach is an increasingly widespread aspiration even if for the moment it is far from being realised and competes with the concepts of excellence based solely in research. Nevertheless, our understanding is that we are witnessing the beginning of an important shift to a holistic approach: from university lifelong learning – ULLL – to lifelong learning universities – LLLU.

There are however some problems with the holistic approach. Lifelong learning interpreted as 'cradle to grave', lifelong, lifewide, linking formal, non-formal, and informal learning – an all encompassing, comprehensive idea which is too wide a notion to be very helpful for concrete developments in the

context of universities, and probably in all education and training institutions. Alternatively and more concretely some definitions of ULLL are derived from relatively narrow sources: administrative (for example who pays and how much), target groups (adults, returners, working professionals, unemployed, and so on), types of course (state, national or university diplomas, long or short, accredited or non-accredited), delivery arrangements (ODL, e-learning, class lectures, work-based learning) and so on. It is also a concept heavy with a wide range of meanings, incorporating a number of shifts in thinking about the role of universities in relation to a wider public. It includes a shift of focus from the institution to the learner, from teaching to learning, from institutional towards individual responsibility, from the university as the sole context for higher learning to the idea that learning takes place everywhere. The concept of ULLL thus also gives learners a greater responsibility in the learning process, indeed some political leaders and employers would argue that it should be totally an individual responsibility. However, for the moment it is most frequently a shared financial responsibility with the university, employers, and stakeholders in the social, cultural and economic sphere, albeit with different shares in different circumstances and we would wish to argue for retaining different models for different target groups.

Individual universities cannot address the whole spectrum of 'cradle to grave' learning and need to focus on those elements that match their expertise, where they can make a contribution. It is important therefore to interpret the 'slogan' and to offer a set of principles to guide policy and practice. EUCEN proposes a key underlying principle: ULLL should primarily address the personal and professional, the social, cultural and economic needs of individuals, groups, communities and organisations rather than the demands of a discipline or a particular body of knowledge. This principle should underpin the content, delivery, administration, management and organisation of ULLL programmes and services. This does not necessarily imply an incompatibility between ULLL and national diplomas based in particular disciplines but it does imply a different way of selecting content and pedagogy for a programme of study and a shift from teaching to learning. Indeed we would want to support a greater emphasis on learning rather than teaching in all forms of university provision, not just that which is targeted at adults, working professionals or special groups.

EUCEN proposes not only that ULLL should be a policy priority and that provision of learning opportunities for adults should be a key feature of university practice but that the culture of lifelong learning should permeate all provision for all learners – young people as well as 'lifelong learners'. The idea that learning is a necessary, and hopefully desirable, activity for all individuals throughout their lifetime and lifewide across the various social, cultural and economic aspects of their lives, should be part of initial as well as continuing higher education.

We recognise that these issues constitute a huge debate and merit considerably more space than is available here but is nevertheless important to state as a context for and an introduction to the discussion that follows.

BMD and ULLL – more or less flexibility?

ULLL has generally not been constrained by the normal rules and regulations that govern national and state diplomas and 'mainstream' university provision. This has given universities considerable scope for innovation and responsiveness to new needs and demands from individuals, groups and organisations. It has also produced a capacity for flexibility since it enables a rapid, multi-faceted and expert response to needs and demands in the community, whether this is the local, regional, national or international community in a particular professional field or the social, cultural and economic life of the geographical community around the institution. It has thus given rise to the great diversity that is now apparent in the field and is the source of the strength and effectiveness of such provision.

The Bologna process and in particular the BMD reforms have opened up new possibilities for ULLL: bachelors and masters programmes for adults and specific professional groups, the award of ECTS credits to participants in ULLL, the recognition of prior learning and, maybe for the first time, formal

qualifications for 'lifelong learners'. Of course, such opportunities also involve more regulation, more assessment of learners and inevitably a slower and longer development time for the programme of learning. Thus the Bologna process is sometimes seen as a double-edged sword – on one side new opportunities and possibilities but on the other a danger that it will constrain responsiveness and innovation and diminish the capacity to meet individual and group needs. Furthermore if ULLL is everywhere, integrated into the mainstream structure completely, then it may be nowhere, the expertise in negotiating and delivering curricula in special ways for special groups may be dispersed so thinly that it will disappear, and the great strength of ULLL as previously conceived will be lost.

The current shift that is going on in the Bologna process concerning learning outcomes has as yet barely touched ULLL. However, the concept of learning outcomes is more familiar to ULLL practitioners than to those exclusively involved in the 'mainstream' provision. Even if the approach is often not called learning outcomes, the negotiation between ULLL providers and employers or professional groups normally starts from the skills and competences that the learners should have at the end of the course and the programme is built on that basis. Thus many ULLL practitioners are already used to working in this way and could therefore offer considerable experience and expertise to their colleagues.

EUCEN welcomes the shift to learning outcomes since it represents a focus on the learner and the learning rather than the content and the teacher. It will also make skills and competences acquired outside the university more easily compared to those acquired in a traditional course of study inside the institutions and therefore it will greatly facilitate the development of RPL for parts of a diploma. This will make the whole BMD structure more permeable and flexible, thus promoting social inclusion and easier access to a wider range of continuing personal and professional development opportunities. However, the shift is also problematic in a number of ways. There is a danger that a focus on outcomes will divert attention, and possibly resources, away the process of learning and the learners experience in the institution. In addition there may be a tendency to fragment learning rather than to integrate into a coherent whole. However, these are dangers not inevitable consequences and we wish to argue that support services, for example advice and guidance, and innovative assessment arrangements should be developed to ensure that all learners are able to construct a holistic, coherent and relevant body of knowledge skills and competences.

The relationship between ECTS and learning outcomes is also somewhat problematic. Currently ECTS credits are described in terms of the workload of the learner. If they are described in terms of learning outcome, why does the learner need credits based on the concept of time, even if it is notional time and workload? The great advantage of learning outcomes approach is that it is not important where or when the learning occurred or how long it took to acquire it – the key questions are what does the learner know and understand? And what can the learner do? Does the question - how long has the learner spent working on this or that topic - then become redundant? And of so, do we still need credits?

The answer to these questions is only just beginning to be discussed and whatever the result, credits may still be useful as a management tool for the organisation of curriculum and teaching and they may help to support a system of accumulation and transfer of learning between contexts and settings. However, it is clear that the use of learning outcomes raises new questions about the purpose and use of credits which have still to be resolved.

EUCEN supports the opening up of possibilities for formal qualifications in ULLL and for credit accumulation and transfer across different forms of learning inside and outside the university but we also support the provision of a wide range of different forms of learning opportunities that do not necessarily fit within a formal diploma structure. Our position is that in a LLLU the question is not: separation or integration? But rather: where should the balance between the two lie? How can credits and diplomas be made more accessible to those who want or need them while retaining the openness and responsiveness of short non-credit bearing courses? What is best practice in both types of provision? How can we best ensure links and bridges between both kinds of offer?

Best practice in management and organisation

As we have reported in part 1, various new arrangements are emerging in the structures for the management of ULLL. What is best practice inevitably depends on national structures and regulations, local conditions and the commitment of university managers to ULLL as part of their core mission? Just as ULLL is at its best when responsive to need, best practice in management and organisation is inevitably bound up with institutional culture, tradition and context. However, it seems that there are some potential contradictions between management and delivery that may develop. On the one hand, the Bologna reforms are tending to shift the courses and services which address the local and regional market towards a more integrated model of pedagogy and delivery and towards integration into the BMD structure of qualifications. But at the same time, financial pressures on university budgets coupled with the globalisation of the higher education market (including parts of the UCE/ULLL market) are tending to shift the management and organisation (and often the design and delivery of courses) of some parts of the provision, particularly high status and high price courses, towards a separated external model, in order to enable the universities to use the income in more flexible ways. It seems therefore that there may be a tension between the way in which the management is organised and the way in which the curriculum and learning outcomes are delivered. This tension has surfaced for example around the pre-Bologna masters that have been offered for some years by the university foundations in Spain and the new post-Bologna masters offered within faculties. Again, the question is not where and how should the management of ULLL be situated but is the management coherent with the delivery and does it change as the delivery changes? Our interpretation of the data we have collected so far is that universities are reflecting on management structures and looking for the 'right' solution. However, our view is that best practice will be a continuous review to ensure coherence rather than the implementation of a once-and-for-all 'right' answer.

Services: RPL and advice and guidance

In some countries, when passing new legislation to introduce the BMD structure, governments have at the same time taken the opportunity to include the possibility of RPL. However, our work shows that this possibility has yet to be exploited by many institutions and implementation is extremely patchy. It is also clear that even where countries have a national policy, at institutional level RPL arrangements tend to be growing around specific courses rather than as a part of a general university strategy or policy; and that the idea of prior learning is still interpreted in some countries as formal learning in non-university institutions rather than non-formal or informal learning.

One of the cries that is often heard is: 'we don't have the tools'. This is certainly not the case; there are many tools - national, sectoral and European tools - some of which have been developed by EUCEN members and through EUCEN projects (Transfine and Refine projects are clear examples) and there has also been a considerable dissemination activity around these tools. But we should not underestimate the revolutionary nature of RPL in terms of its challenge to the traditional role and function of university teaching. It is therefore clear that there is a continued need for training which gives time for reflection and discussion and concrete action planning as well as analysis and testing of tools. The issue is confidence rather than a lack of tools. Staff development is also important to ensure that the arrangements developed are 'user friendly' and do not create new forms of exclusion, especially for those who are unfamiliar with university systems and language. This is especially relevant at a time when individuals are being urged to take more responsibility for their own lifelong learning.

The implementation of learning outcomes in the definition of diplomas should in time make RPL easier to realise since it will facilitate a comparison between skills and competences acquired outside the institution with those acquired by university study for a diploma. Additionally, the development of qualifications frameworks at national and European level is seen as a mechanism that should in the longer term provide support for building RPL bridges between university learning and learning that takes place in non-formal and informal as well as other formal settings. However, both our work and the Trends V report show that there is as yet little knowledge or understanding in universities of the policy developments in this area. Thus there is still a very long way to go before until these developments begin to provide concrete and robust possibilities for RPL.

Although less revolutionary than RPL, more benign and less challenging to the core values of a traditional university, it is nevertheless clear that many universities are yet to be convinced that advice and guidance should be part of their role and function. Why should such services be offered by the university? One obvious answer is that as the offer of universities becomes more open, more complex and with more individual choice then it is clear that some advice is necessary to make the system effective. However, best practice is likely to reflect local conditions and partnerships as well as the location of the available expertise. Here again there is clearly a need for further staff training and development and the building of appropriate partnerships.

Impact of the Bologna process

While there is evidence that ECTS, the Diploma Supplement and the BMD structure has generated widespread change in the system of higher education, it is not yet clear that these tools have been fully exploited to offer new possibilities for LLL in the university context. In some places new legislation has provided an opportunity for reforms going beyond the basic requirement of the Bologna process and in many institutions it is clear that now the main BMD structure is in place, discussion is turning towards wider opportunities and possibilities opened up by the new curriculum framework. In some places too the Bologna tools have acted as a catalyst and to some extent promoted new developments and experimentation. In some universities too, the experience of the ULLL department has been used to support supplementary programmes, applied courses, orientation programmes and generally a more professionally oriented approach to learning in some reformed BMD diplomas. So there is evidence of a two-way effect.

Although somewhat limited and often embryonic, our work nevertheless shows that the general picture is one of change and flux and most personnel in most universities are responding to these 'top-down' reforms more or less positively. However, most have yet to exploit the full potential of those reforms for 'bottom-up' innovation. Partly this is just a question of time and there are some grounds for stating that this will happen in the next few years. And in UCE/ULLL departments with a strong culture of identifying current and future needs and developing new courses and services to meet them, there is also evidence of a willingness and an intention to do so as a permanent activity. But there is also in some places a resistance to more change and a belief that in a year or so once the Bologna process is fully implemented the system will settle back into a more stable pattern. This is rooted partly in a sort of innovation fatigue – implementing the Bologna process has been challenging and time consuming - but also because there is a desire in some parts of the university system to defend a traditional role of providing stability, continuity and a search for the fundamentals of knowledge rather than to constantly change in response to current, more temporary, demands. Such debates are unlikely to disappear indeed it could be argued that they constitute signs of a healthy higher education sector in a democratic society and thus should be welcomed. EUCEN is certainly keen to promote and engage in such debates.

A continuous state of change?

The period during which our project took place was one of transition and there is a clear overriding sense of that in all the data we collected and the activities reported. It is clear that the basic issues of the BMD structure have been addressed and the implementation phase is underway; in some places more advanced and in others less so, but in general well underway nevertheless. So there is a general sense that the basic work is almost done and it is time for embedding and reflection on other issues. In many institutions, although by no means all, there is therefore a review of LLL going on.

However, there also seems to be a perception in some places that all these questions constitute a transition phase and once the Bologna system has settled in then a 'right answer' will emerge which will form the basis of future arrangements. In the curriculum and the relationship between ULLL provision and BMD courses, as indicated above it is rather early to see a clear future pattern emerging. Similarly, in the institutional arrangements for the management and organisation of ULLL – a separate unit or department or dispersed to the faculties or some sort of hybrid model – it is clear that there are

significant debates underway. In some universities in some countries recent changes have already been put in place, for example the creation of companies or foundations to manage the main income strands from ULLL. However, these remain a minority and in most, even those with long standing well established arrangements there is a clear trend to review and reconsider the structures in the light of the new, emerging or potential curriculum structures. It is interesting that these organisational reviews are both following and leading the changes in the provision of ULLL. It is our view that such review, reflection and change will be a permanent feature of ULLL – ULLL by definition must be dynamic and innovative. But it will also be a permanent feature of the whole higher education system; there is no once and for all ‘right answer’ rather the management, organisation, pedagogy and delivery will have to constantly adapt to changing circumstances while at the same time providing the continuity and stability which distinguishes it from purely commercial activity.

As indicated in the opening sections of this report, there are no previous Europe-wide surveys of ULLL against which change and development can be measured – this is the first of its kind and is intended to provide a base-line for monitoring in the future. However, the diversity of ULLL and its specificity in relation to the local, regional and national context make that a very difficult task. Nevertheless, the themes we have identified here will provide a useful frame for identifying shifts in the patterns of diversity both within and between universities in the same and in other countries.

Lifelong learning universities – LLLU

We have indicated here some of the trends and developments that are underway at the moment and thus the agenda leading up to 2010 seems fairly clear. The challenge for the last couple of years of this period and for post-2010 is to move from university lifelong learning – ULLL - to lifelong learning universities – LLLU. For this we need to elaborate the characteristics of a LLLU and we propose a model here for discussion. A LLLU would:

- have the social and regional mission of the university at the heart of its policy and strategy as part of an aspiration to international excellence
- embed the idea of lifelong and lifewide learning in its provision for all learners whatever their age or experience
- embed learning and the needs of learners as an organising principle for all its provision
- offer flexible and permeable programmes of study at all levels in the BMD structure so that learners can enter at different points with different backgrounds, experience and qualifications and achieve whole or parts of the diploma according to their needs and aspirations
- offer flexible timing in the delivery of diplomas within the BMD structure in order to maximise access for those active in the labour market or with other constraints on their time
- have arrangements for blended learning for all learners but especially for those in rural areas or with other constraints on attendance
- use learning outcomes as a basis for the development of all programmes of study
- offer responsive and innovative short courses that can be accessed by learners who can demonstrate a capacity to benefit
- make the award of credits for short courses available to learners who want or need them
- provide robust and proactive services for learners to promote and support their access to and success in the wide range of learning opportunities offered and to ensure that their needs are met effectively, in particular advice and guidance and RPL
- ensure innovative and creative approaches to the development of new courses and services, including links to research and technology transfer
- have dynamic management structures that both lead and respond to new opportunities and possibilities for mobilising the resources and expertise of the university for lifelong learning
- have a vibrant programme of staff development for academic and administrative personnel to enable them to face and embrace the challenges of a LLLU

We see these features as the elements of the aim and the basis of a workplan for the next two years to 2010, and beyond, to move from university lifelong learning -ULLL- to lifelong learning universities -LLLU -.

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Relevant websites:

Bologna process: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/>

EUCEN: www.eucen.org

Benchmarking Flexibility in the Bologna Process – BeFlex: <http://www.eucen.org/beflex.html>

Transfer of Informal and Non-formal Education – Transfine: <http://www.transfine.net/>

Recognising Formal, Informal and Non-formal Education – Refine: <http://www.eucen.org/refine.html>

European Commission - Higher Education in Europe:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/higher/higher_en.html

European University Association: <http://www.eua.be//index.php>

Trends Reports: <http://www.eua.be/index.php?id=347>

Tuning Educational Structures in Europe – Tuning project:

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/tuning/tuning_en.html

Partners and representatives

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University of Science and Technology of Lille, represented by Professor Michel Feutrie

University of Oldenburg, Germany, represented by Professor Ina Grieb

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Annexe 2

Ljubljana conference: background papers and workshop reports and recommendations

Note:

The data presented in these background papers was preliminary and the recommendations were draft. All were subsequently amended and revised before the final reports. For accurate final data and recommendations see the main body of this report and the three technical reports.

- Background paper for Workshop 1 – ULLL in Europe: descriptors, indicators and benchmarks
- Report from Workshop 1
- Background paper for Workshop 2 - Impact of the Bologna process on models of organisation and management of ULLL
- Report from Workshop 2
- Background paper for Workshop 4 – BMD – ECTS- ULLL
- Report from Workshop 4
- Background paper for Workshop 5 - The Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning
- Report from Workshop 5
- Background paper for Workshop 6 - New models of partnerships in ULLL
- Report from Workshop 6



Background paper
Pat Davies, EUCEN

What is ULLL? How can we measure it?

ULLL can be described in a number of different ways:

- By target group – usually LLL course are targeted at a specific group of learners with specific needs or purposes.
- By delivery and pedagogy: LLL often includes blended/distance/e-learning; the length varies from the ‘norm’ (often short or shorter); it is often based on competences and/or learning outcomes rather than content, it starts from needs of learner and/or employer rather than the discipline or the diploma
- By finance and payments: CE/LLL has different (usually higher) fees, fees are often paid by employer or municipality for specific groups
- By the actors involved: teachers, but also external professionals, advisors, assessors, employers, professional associations
- By the type of qualification at end of course: none/unaccredited courses; intermediate awards (certificates, diplomas); fewer credits; a university rather than a state diploma; professional rather than academic/general
- Services as well as teaching: research for the community; advice and guidance, careers advice, validation of non-formal and informal learning,

Some data from the questionnaire survey:

We asked questions about how ULLL is defined:

Q3a) Which courses count as LLL and/or CE in your university?

	Some	All	None but planned for next 2 years	None in LLL and not planned	No answer	Total
Special Bachelors programmes for specific groups	22%	15%	14%	42%	7%	100%
Special Masters programmes for specific groups	42%	22%	7%	26%	3%	100%
Mainstream Bachelors programmes but delivered differently (e.g. part-time, by ODL) or with special services	21%	14%	16%	43%	7%	100%
Mainstream Masters programmes but delivered differently (e.g. part-time, by ODL) or with special services	32%	19%	11%	32%	7%	100%
Modules of BMD programmes – with credits awarded	33%	21%	12%	28%	7%	100%
Modules of BMD programmes – with no credits awarded	21%	11%	8%	50%	9%	100%
Other courses with credits	29%	24%	12%	31%	4%	100%
ODL/e-learning courses	41%	23%	7%	21%	7%	100%
Non-accredited long courses (e.g. CPD) – at least 15 days	30%	30%	6%	27%	7%	100%
Non-accredited short courses (e.g. CPD) - less than 15 days	39%	30%	6%	20%	6%	100%

The most common courses to be counted as LLL are:

- Non-accredited short courses (e.g. CPD) - less than 15 days
- Non-accredited long courses (e.g. CPD) – at least 15 days
- ODL/e-learning courses
- Special Masters programmes for specific groups

40 to 50% of the responses indicate that the following are not counted as LLL and not planned for the next two years:

- Modules of BMD programmes – with no credits awarded
- Mainstream Bachelors programmes but delivered differently (e.g. part-time, by ODL) or with special services
- Special Bachelors programmes for specific groups

It is interesting to see that Universities are considering more special masters as counting as LLL (22% for all and 42% for some) than special bachelors (15% for all and 22% for some). The BMD structure seems therefore to be being exploited for LLL more at masters level than at Bachelors level and there is little planned for Bachelors.

From the case studies and visits it is also clear that the range is enormous. It includes:

- Part-time courses (e.g. Paisley, Warsaw)
- Out-reach activities (e.g. Salford)
- CPD for teachers (Island, Malta,) and other professionals for example in the health professions (e.g. Strathclyde, Zagreb)
- Post-graduate updating programmes for alumni
- General interest programmes open to the general public or children (e.g. TUV)
- Some universities offer intermediate certificates/diplomas (e.g. Liverpool, Limerick, Louvain)
- Sometimes the 'Third Age University' is a completely separate organisation but sometimes it is part of the University, albeit with a slightly different status from other departments (e.g. Brno, Warsaw)
- Research is less commonly associated with the ULLL centre but it is a strong part in some (for example in Finland) where research to support regional development and/or interdisciplinary research are often under the auspices of the ULLL centre since it cuts across the faculty/disciplinary structures.
- Preparation courses for entrants without the usual qualifications (e.g. UPMC, TUV, Goldsmiths)
- New masters programmes: professional masters (e.g. TUV), interdisciplinary masters (Turku), international masters (e.g. METU, Middlesex)
- Skills programmes for graduates to support their labour market activity (Oldenburg)
- Distance/e-learning/blended programmes (e.g. Lund, Tartu)

The University of Turku states that what counts as CE/LLL may vary between faculties; the University of Salamanca classifies its ULL provision as complementary, continuing and open; others use classifications such as interdisciplinary (Helsinki); some say that everything that is part-time or at a distance is adult learning (Tartu). This diversity clearly presents a difficulty in terms of classification; indeed one could argue that it defies classification.

In terms of services, it is clear that there is a wide range of services offered by universities and that frequently the UCE/ULLL is a key actor for cross university services both internally and externally. It is also clear from the comments that such services are often offered both internally by a combination (or a separation) of a central unit, often the UDCE/ULL unit or service, and by the faculties and this variation is mirrored in the external services. Some data from the questionnaire illustrates this

Q3b. What other LLL services and activities are offered in your university? How are they organised?

	Offered by a separate LLL/UCE Unit (Service, Department Faculty, Foundation)	Offered in faculties	Offered in a central unit but not a LLL/UCE Unit	Not offered but planned in next 2 years	Not offered and not planned in near future	No Answer	Total
Support courses – study skills	38%	21%	19%	5%	15%	3%	100%
Support courses – languages	31%	24%	26%	3%	14%	2%	100%
Courses for special target groups	45%	26%	5%	2%	18%	4%	100%
APEL/RPL – for entry to a course	24%	28%	6%	13%	23%	7%	100%
APEL/RPL – for part of a diploma	21%	24%	7%	14%	25%	10%	100%
Academic advice and guidance at entry	28%	27%	29%	5%	9%	1%	100%
Career/professional development advice	25%	18%	33%	8%	12%	3%	100%
Mentoring/tutoring during the courses	21%	48%	11%	7%	10%	3%	100%
ODL/e-learning services	34%	27%	18%	8%	10%	3%	100%
Admin for LLL – financial management	50%	15%	13%	8%	9%	5%	100%
Admin for LLL - marketing	58%	14%	7%	8%	8%	5%	100%
Admin for LLL – organisation of courses	54%	25%	5%	5%	8%	4%	100%
Staff development for academic staff across the university	21%	21%	35%	10%	8%	5%	100%
Regional collaboration with employers	36%	24%	22%	6%	10%	3%	100%
Regional collaboration with public authorities	42%	18%	18%	3%	16%	4%	100%
Technology transfer	13%	20%	45%	5%	13%	4%	100%

Again, the range of services is wide and likely to become wider as the plans for the next few years are implemented.

So how can we measure this diversity? What kind of indicators are appropriate?

Indicators:

The respondents to the questionnaire had a lot of ideas about indicators and we present here just a summary of some of these for discussion. In our final report there will be more detail

Two different approaches are possible:

1. Quantitative

- Number and range of courses: discipline, multi/inter-disciplinary,
- Number and range of services: guidance and counselling, careers advice, skills courses
- Number of applications/participants/starters/finishers
- Profile of participants relative to target group: qualifications (or lack of them), type of qualifications (academic/professional) age, gender, socio-economic status, residence (rural etc), unemployed,
- Number of participants from University alumni
- Financing: total income, % self financing, % from university budget
- Number of companies paying for learners
- Number/% of learners paid for by employers, municipalities, other external agencies

2. More qualitative measures related to the Bologna objectives:

- Openness:
 - Admissions services: guidance, validation of non-formal and informal learning, special entry arrangements, preparation courses for those without the necessary qualifications,
 - Possibilities to opt in and opt out of courses
 - Range of unaccredited courses
 - Provision of links and bridges between different kinds of learning
 - Availability of grants and financial support
- Flexibility:
 - Customised programmes for specific groups
 - Opportunities to build individualised pathways
 - Credit accumulation and transfer arrangements – internally and with other external organisations and institutions
 - Use of distance,-e-learning, blended learning
 - Amount of choice available within programmes
- Orientation to professional life of learners:
 - Links, partnerships and collaboration with employers and professional associations
 - Possibilities for work-based learning
 - Courses with labour market orientation – skills for employment, work competences
 - Updating for professional groups
 - Re-training for professional groups
 - Professional bachelors, masters
- Diversity and innovation:
 - range of target groups
 - range of methods of delivery and pedagogy
 - new approaches to courses and services
 - intergenerational learning
- Quality indicators (see also background paper on Quality in ULLL)
In addition to the university standard quality arrangements ULLL should take on:
 - the quality tools and systems used
 - evidence of learner and stakeholder satisfaction

Draft Recommendations:

1. EUCEN should establish a working group to devise quantitative and qualitative indicators for ULLL
The working group should include:
 - representatives from EUCEN member institutions
 - the sub-group from the Equipe Plus the EUCEN Grundtvig 4 Network that is working on indicators of quality in ULLL
 - representatives of external stakeholders (employers, regional actors, municipalities),
 - representatives of the learners – ESIB
 - representatives of other European associations: EUA, ENQA
 2. EUCEN should seek funding from the European Commission to support this work
-

Report from Workshop 1 – ULLL in Europe: descriptors indicators and benchmarks Pat Davies, EUCEN

The workshop took the following topics:

- The background paper
- An extract from the BeFlex questionnaire – an account of the responses to the open questions about descriptors and indicators (see annex 1)
- A short presentation from Kari Seppala on the work being done in the Equipe Plus project on indicators (annex 2)
- A discussion about a definition of ULLL
- A general discussion about indicators: purpose, uses and abuses
- A return to the question of a definition from which indicators could be derived.

1. Key points from the discussion:

- Indicators serve a range of purposes so we should not be trying to define a single set of indicators but **a bank of indicators** from which a selection could be made depending on purpose, focus etc
- If we support evidence based policy making then we need to have research and evidence – indicators can be part of that.
- Need to distinguish between internal and external users of the indicators (internal and external to the institution), and between indicators at national, institutional and individual level.
- Beware of league tables that are based (crudely) on indicators.
- The use of indicators can have a positive effect e.g. demonstrate the need for resources, assist teachers, create or sustain public support.
- There are fields of tension: the use and operation of ‘the market’ – choice and responsibility – the rhetoric can detract from a critique of the concepts – many individuals do not have a choice to participate in ULLL (for example they are obliged to do so by their employers) – choice in a free market is problematic and may disadvantage the disadvantaged – remember the public service mission of a university.
- Beware of the legitimating of categories of inclusion and exclusion
- Need to distinguish between indicators that focus on outputs – which focus on the product and/or the system, and outcomes – which focus on the process and the learner. Need to recognise that focussing on the outcomes for the learner requires a different kind of methodology (life history type studies or longitudinal studies).
- Need to find indicators that measure practice against core values
- Need to find indicators that are humanistic.
- Indicators are similar to standards
- There is tendency towards a convergence of indicators of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

- Indicators should be based on what a learner should be able to expect from a LLL university.
- A key indicator of quality is consistency – but beware quality can be a discourse of legitimation e.g. LLL that is accredited to quality standards is legitimate and LLL that has not gone through such a process is not.
- Existing policy documents were noted in particular:
 - (i) Brussels 21.2.2007
COM (2007) 61 final
Communication from the Commission:
A coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training
 - (ii) Brussels, June 2002
European Report on Quality Indicators of LLL.
Fifteen Quality Indicators.
Report based on the work of the Working Group on Quality Indicators
 - (iii) Dublin descriptors

2. Definitions of ULLL that could form the basis of indicators

Two definitions of ULLL were proposed:

(i) A definition of ULL (CE, AE)

ULLL is the provision by higher education institutions of *learning opportunities, services and research* for:

- ❖ the personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals – *lifelong and lifewide*
- ❖ the social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region

In *collaboration* with stakeholders and external actors on level

At *University level* and *underpinned by research*

Includes B-M-D?

Includes preparation for university level?

Notes:

- *Learning opportunities* means here not just ‘courses’ but work based learning, projects, supervision etc
- *Services* include for example: validation of non-formal and informal learning, advice and guidance, mentoring etc
- *Research* includes research into lifelong learning, learning needs, social and economic regional needs etc
- *Lifelong* is the time dimension – at any point in an individual’s life
- *Lifewide* means the different domains of life: social, cultural, domestic, employment, civic activity, voluntary work etc of an individual or group
- *Collaboration* may involve employers, trade unions, professional bodies, community groups, municipalities, NGOs, student groups, learner groups etc
- *University level* means above university entry level
- *Underpinned by research* means that the content of the teaching and the teaching and learning methodology should be informed by research

The intention is that there should be indicators that could measure all these dimensions of ULLL focussing on the institution.

There was a lack of consensus around whether B-M-D diploma course and university preparation courses (below the level of entry to university) should be included in ULLL or not – some countries have clear rules that they should; others have clear rules that they should not.

(ii) A Lifelong Learning institution is one that is committed to providing learning opportunities in a manner that will meet the needs of those who may benefit from those opportunities. This will mean that it should:

- take account of the learner's prior learning
- meet the aspirations of the learner
- be delivered in a way that supports the learner
- take account of the study/life balance of the learner

This was a first attempt at an alternative definition that focuses on the perspective of the learner: what the learner should be able to expect from a lifelong learning university. There was no time to work on this definition in more detail but a clear view that this should be explored further.

3. Revised Recommendations:

1. The stakeholders in ULLL should collaborate to develop a bank of indicators:

- **At 4 levels:**

- Europe
- National
- Institutions
- Individual

Mismatch between levels should be analysed and congruence should be the aim
Different methodologies at different levels

- **3 kinds of indicators:**

- Quantitative – ‘number crunching’
- Qualitative – descriptors
- Of quality

- They should be connected to appropriate standards and benchmarks

- **Indicators are not enough**

- they only measure the past
- Indicators are never neutral
- they only complement other research for evidence based policy
- they must be set in a theoretical framework

2. Indicators should always be used flexibly and selectively depending on:

- **The political and cultural context:**

- from whose point of view?
- ideological and theoretical underpinning of practice
- social and political agendas
- legitimisation of inclusion and exclusion

- **The focus – what is the indicator measuring?**

- systems,
- services,
- programmes,
- policies,
- impact on regional development
- impact on individual careers

- **The purpose – what is the indicator to be used for?**

- monitoring - evaluating
- accountability – improvement
- efficiency – effectiveness

3. Indicators should take account of current EC and Bologna policy documents:

- Indicators of LLL
- Indicators of quality in higher education
- Dublin descriptors

Workshop 2 Impact of the Bologna process on models of organisation and management of ULLL

Background paper Pat Davies, EUCEN

It is clear that many universities are reviewing the way in which ULLL is managed and organised. It is also clear that the Bologna process is only one factor, albeit a very important one, which is provoking this review.

The overarching theme is globalisation and in particular of course the globalisation of higher education. Increasingly European universities are forging links with other universities farther afield in particular in Asia and China. These global trends create opportunities but also challenges to the way in which universities organise themselves to lead change and respond to it. ULLL is part of these processes.

How universities respond to the challenges of the wider changes is a function of a number of actors: the opportunities and constraints of their regulatory and legal framework, of the financing arrangements for the university in general and for ULLL in particular, of their history and culture – institutional regional and national, the vision and competences of the actors involved and the economic and social needs in their environment.

The Bologna reforms and in particular the BMD structure can act as facilitating factors in this national and cultural context - they do not invent change but encourage and facilitate institutional evolution: flexibility, individualisation, the shift from teaching to learning and so on.

The changes brought about by these global trends and the Bologna reforms generate the need for:

- new roles and competences for existing staff
- new ways of working together
- staff training and development
- new services
- new financial models
- new structures and organisations
- new strategies and planning models

It is clear from our BeFlex project that the importance of ULLL is increasing. For example 14% of our respondents said that ULL is already a very high priority, 46% said it is important along with other priorities and 30% said that it is not yet a high priority but may become one in the near future. It is also clear that the Bologna process is impacting on services and relationships – see table below.

	Bologna has had positive impact on LLL	Our experience in LLL has had a positive impact on the way the Bologna process is being/has been implemented	No significant impact either way	No answer	Total
Collaboration with external partners in the design of course	28%	15%	41%	16%	100%
Encouraging new ways of working among staff	27%	20%	38%	15%	100%
Promoting new kinds of services	24%	20%	40%	16%	100%
Quality assurance arrangements for ULLL	36%	17%	32%	15%	100%

The way in which the provision of these services and activities is organised is changing. As financial models of the university are put under pressure and as new opportunities for ULL appear then clearly the location and management of the ULLL provision and the way in which the income is managed becomes a key issue for the universities.

The dominant model of management of ULLL in Europe has always been some kind of mix or hybrid between a centralised service and a dispersal of responsibilities to the faculties and departments. Most often the central unit provides support for the marketing, organisation, administration and financial accounting of the ULLL provision with the responsibility for teaching and delivery located in the faculties (although often the actual teaching is done by staff of the universities and external professionals). However, there is considerable evidence from debates within EUCEN and within the national networks for UCE/ULLL that the balance and precise roles of the central unit and the faculties is under review – not that it is changing dramatically at present but that it is being considered.

What is also clear from our data is that as new services are developed (e.g. validation of non-formal and informal learning, advice and guidance) new central units are emerging that have specialist expertise in these areas. These new central units are often linked to the UCE/ULLL unit but may also have a semi-independent cross university role because they provide similar services to the traditional students as well as the 'lifelong learners'.

It is also clear from debates within EUCEN and from the BeFlex case studies that new forms of external management structures are emerging. In some countries (e.g. Spain) the dominant model has been a 'Fundación', separate from the University but in some way managed by it (for example the President of the University is often the Chair of the Board); this has permitted a different funding and a different teaching model for 'lifelong learning'. There is often also a Postgraduate Study Centre within the University management structure. In the past Masters programmes were offered only in the 'Fundación' since they were not available within the traditional diploma structure. However, with the advent of the Bologna reforms, master programmes are now available within the universities. There are therefore debates about the difference between the two kinds of masters degrees (evident in several of our case studies from Spain). It seems that this has not yet called into serious question the management and organisational models developed before Bologna but it seems likely that it will do so in the future.

At least one university that we know of has also recently created a separate company with private sector status to more effectively manage the finances generated by some ULLL activities and to develop a certain kind of brand image in relation to major companies and potential learners. It has done so alongside a UCE/ULLL centre within the university that continues to be responsible for part of the ULLL provision.

The Bologna reforms and other global processes are clearly therefore calling into question the financial models that should be in place for ULLL and the way in which it should be managed and organised. On the face of it this could be seen as a management of technical question but it is also a fundamental question about the mission of the university: to what extent should it behave like a commercial enterprise and to what extent should it behave like a public service? EUCEN believes that these two functions are not incompatible but that there should be a balance between the two and that ULLL should not merely be seen as a source of income but that its public service function should be maintained and supported.

Draft Recommendations:

EUCEN should:

- Continue to monitor the change and development of new forms of organisation and management of ULLL provision and services.
- Support reflection on the balance between the public service and profit making function of ULLL
- Provide opportunities for debate discussion and training on the different models, their strengths, weaknesses, and implications for learners and the regional community as well as for the University.

Policy makers at institutional, national and European level should promote this debate and provide funds for meetings and workshops where these issues can be explored.

Report of Workshop 2. Impact of the Bologna process on models of organisation and management of ULLL

Debate on best practice and discussions

Danièle Pouliquen, EUCEN

Opportunities

Bologna challenges and opportunities are:

1. Be flexible and responsive in volatile environment
2. Keep quality when providing flexibility
3. Offer services quickly

What is Bologna context?

The changes to consider in order to confront the challenges developed by the Bologna process and its context are:

1. Create a vision
2. From the vision, define what is teaching and learning
3. Define the change to make (course for private companies in external units, degrees in faculties, project temporary organisation...)
4. Adapt staff management to new vision: Motivate staff for change (today staff motivation is research)
5. Use support of external bodies

A common management model does not make sense

1. The right management model depends on each university context (history, regulation, culture..)
2. The organisational models are ways to adapt to fit regulations
3. It depends on the autonomy of a university (process to create new course, financing...)

Decentralised, centralised or integrated? Why?

1. Create a Company is a way to provide flexibility and to be able to employ staff
2. An association can be a way to build new course easily and reduce staff cost (Austria)
3. The structure can be chosen according to the service provided:
 - a. Faculties for degree
 - b. External units for courses to private companies
 - c. Temporary organisation for project...

What is Bologna impact?

Other key issues

1. Universities need to focus on what the learner wants to learn
2. Staff development is important for staff to accept the change

Second conclusions

Revised Recommendations from the Workshop

1. Have a project to IDENTIFY, DESCRIBE and DEVELOP different models of LLL Management
2. This project would result in SEMINARS for LLL managers and would generate an income stream for EUCEN
3. This project would result in a PRESENTATION at the European Rectors' Conference on LLL models and how Universities would match models to ambitions.

Workshop 4: BMD-ECTS-ULLL

Background paper

Pat Davies, EUCEN

The Bologna reforms – Bachelors-Masters-Doctorate (BMD), the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and University Lifelong Learning (ULLL) – what are the issues, the challenges, the opportunities?

The Bologna reforms provide a number of possibilities for ULLL which are facilitating factors in the movement of change that is going on in universities in Europe:

- The accreditation of short courses – credit rating or the award of credits to learners
- New kinds of professionally oriented Bachelors and Masters, new kinds of University diplomas with credits for new target groups
- ECTS can promote new flexible ways of delivering Bachelors and Masters programmes to reach new target groups: at a different pace over a different time frame – no longer linked to the academic year, more blended learning, more independent learning, more work-based learning and so on.
- ECTS also provides the possibility for lifelong learners to create their own individual programme of study
- The switch to learning outcomes and competences enables the development of links to professional and labour market requirements; it also facilitates the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

In some countries such possibilities existed before the Bologna reforms but in most the reforms have stimulated new debates about how new target groups and in particular adult learners can be encouraged to continue and/or return to learning.

The Bologna reforms are clearly promoting the development of new professional, conversion and interdisciplinary masters programmes particularly targeted at adults with experience in the labour market. Among the respondents to the questionnaire, 64% indicated that there were masters programmes for special target groups and a further 7% said that some were planned in the next 2 years. However, a much lower percentage indicated that they had developed bachelors programmes for special target groups (37%) with a further 14% saying that they were planned in the next two years. It is clear therefore that most development so far has been in new masters programmes and new bachelors programmes are following behind but not yet catching up. This is borne out also by some case studies (e.g. TUV) indicating that innovation seems to be somewhat easier to achieve than new bachelors.

It is clear from our questionnaire responses that the way in which the Bologna process is viewed in relation to the possibilities for ULLL development is seen as positive by the majority (59%) but there is a very significant minority for whom it is either seen as a negative effect (9%) or not relevant (14%) or not discussed in relation to ULLL (16%). Part of this is undoubtedly due to the fact that 29% said that they were in the process of implementing the BMD structure and/or would be doing so over the next two years so they are probably fully occupied with the mechanics of the change to BMD at the moment. It is also clear from informal feedback that we have received about the questionnaire – ‘it is not relevant to us’ – ‘we are not doing these things’ that many universities have not yet begun to discuss these possibilities. It is clear therefore that there is considerable work still to do in this regard.

However, our survey work has not provided any evidence of the development of individualised learning pathways for lifelong learners or indeed for traditional students. There still seems to be an attachment

to the concept of a standard course, albeit with some options, followed by a group of students. A more flexible system credit accumulation and/or transfer system does not yet seem to be emerging.

Nevertheless, it appears from our questionnaire respondents that it appears that the Bologna process has had an impact:

	Bologna has had positive impact on LLL	Our experience in LLL has had a positive impact on the way the Bologna process is being/has been implemented	No significant impact either way	No answer	Total
Integration of LLL into BMD	37%	12%	36%	14%	100%
More flexibility in curriculum and timing e.g.Part-time, discontinuous, individualised pathways	29%	21%	37%	12%	100%
ECTS and Diploma Supplements for LL learners	46%	18%	25%	11%	100%
Defining learning outcomes and levels in LLL courses	32%	27%	28%	13%	100%

There are also issues around the accreditation of ULLL. While the majority clearly think that the Bologna process is not creating barriers and obstacles, there is a significant majority that think it is or is expected to be. In particular for the purpose of this paper, the table below shows that there seem to be mixed feelings about accreditation of ULLL:

Q: Is the Bologna process putting up any barriers, obstacles or difficulties for the delivery of LLL in your university?

	No	Sometimes	Yes or expected	No answer	Total
Creating more rigidity for LLL	56%	22%	18%	4%	100%
We are being forced to accredit all our LLL courses	53%	18%	22%	7%	100%
Accreditation of courses is not needed/demanded by stakeholders/learners	35%	30%	28%	7%	100%

In another question about current and planned changes the responses were as follows:

	Yes – all courses	Some courses	More planned	None and none planned	No answer	Total
Do your ULLL courses carry ECTS credits?	27%	42%	14%	16%	0	100%
Are your LLL courses expressed in terms of learning outcomes?	11%	8%	5%	70%	7%	100%
Are you LLL courses integrated into the BMD structure	7%	9%	6%	70%	8%	100%

It seems therefore that ECTS is being used quite considerably to accredit ULLL courses but there is still a long way to go in the implementation of learning outcomes even in ULLL where it might be expected to be easier than in the traditional degree programmes. However, we are also aware that many universities have not yet started to address a shift to learning outcomes so it may be too early to detect any real change in this regard.

The question is therefore not whether all ULLL should be accredited - clearly that would not be appropriate but rather in what circumstances would it be an advantage for learners to obtain ECTS credits for ULLL and what are the implications for the courses? Is it possible to have courses where the award of credit is optional? Can we have the award of credit without losing the flexibility and openness of ULLL? Since the award of credit implies assessment, can we devise innovative forms of assessment that would be relevant to the learners and be acceptable to the universities? Could we devise ways of 'credit rating' ULLL courses in a way that would enable bridges and links to the mainstream BMD courses? In the case studies we have collected there are some examples of ways in which universities are developing such strategies (e.g. University of Graz, University of Liverpool) and from our EUCEN network we are also aware of innovative approaches to this question.

Draft Recommendations:

EUCEN should:

- Explore the facilitating factors and the obstacles to the development of new masters and new bachelors programmes for ULLL
- Disseminate examples of best practice and innovative approaches to credit rating and accreditation of ULLL exploiting the ECTS tools of Bologna
- Generate more discussion about the idea of individualised learning pathways

Policy makers at institutional, national and European level should:

- promote discussion and debate about such innovations
 - include the learners and external stakeholders, such as employers, social partners and professional bodies, in these debates.
-

Workshop 4: B-M-D, ECTS AND ULLL

Workshop presentation to start discussion

Estela Pereira, University of Aveiro, Portugal and Ina Grieb, University of Oldenburg, Germany

3 Topics:

- BMD
- Integration of LLL in BMD
- ECTS credits

For all topics: Recommendations; Good practices; Indicators

(i) BMD

- Shift from teaching to learning
- Implementation of student centred approaches
- Staff development programs
- Definition of learning outcomes
- Stakeholders involvement
- Influence of CPD experience

(ii) Integration of ULLL in BMD

- More flexibility in degree structure
 - A reality
 - Causes for more rigidity
- Part time students
 - Part of a cohort
 - Special classes
 - E-learning
- Preferred cycles to implement
- Recognition of prior learning

(iii) ECTS credits

- ECTS definition
 - A successful full time academic year has 60 credits
 - Credits allocated in function of the workload of each course
- Questions
 - How to measure student workload
 - What is the workload (in hours) of an academic year
 - Range acceptable
- Use in U LLL
 - assessment
- Advantages
 - Gives an indication of the time spent to obtain the qualification
 - Facilitates accumulation and transfer
 - Only relevant credits are transferable
 - Must be accompanied by a Diploma Supplement

Report of Workshop 4: B-M-D, ECTS AND ULLL

Key points from the discussion:

Estela Pereira, University of Aveiro, Portugal

From the initial discussion it was decided that the issue of defining learning outcomes, the models of integration of ULLL in the BMD structure and the use of credits both in traditional programs and LLL programs were the most important.

In the topic of definition of learning outcomes there was agreement that most teaching staff have difficulties in defining them, and also do not easily ask for support. The group felt that ULLL experts can offer a valuable help.

Concerning the integration of ULLL in regular master programmes it was felt that it can only be done if the learning outcomes are defined and also teaching methods centred on the student are used.

There was a consensus that credits can only be allocated when the learning is assessed.

The importance of issuing a Diploma supplement was well accepted.

Even if the problems are somehow different in different countries, ranging from not a clear definition of the Bachelor and Master duration, to a difficult evaluation of student workload or legal restrictions in the number of Master that can be offered by an Institution, a set of recommendations have been found to be accepted by all present.

Notes of discussion

Marina Ocko, Ministrstvo za Visokošolstvo, Znanost in Tehnologijo, Slovenia.

Main topics:

- student centred approach
- staff development
- definition of learning outcomes
- flexibility in degree structure
- part-time students: special classes? E-learning?
- preferred cycles
- recognition of prior learning

Debate revolved around these issues:

- how to measure a student workload?
 - gives indication of the time spent
 - only 'relevant' credits are transferable
 - must be accompanied by a diploma supplement
- learning outcomes are essential
 - different scales of evaluation among countries
 - higher education institutions (HEIs) are concentrated on structural level – not on outcomes
 - how to decide on the amount of professor's work (some countries have the form of their duties prescribed in details)
 - teachers have to learn to define them
- teacher could benefit from interacting but refuse to connect
- should a common standard of 25-30 hours per credit be used for shorter programmes?
- what is the connection between ECVET and ULLL? Or between ECTS and ULLL? Which one is more appropriate?
- in LLL more personal approach is desirable – request for more practical information
- could 'normal' students benefit from LLL programmes (this kind of teaching)?
- professors have to know who they are teaching
- professors should be trained for this kind of teaching
- problem with (students) evaluating teachers is no consequences in practice
- due to Bologna reform HEIs are more rigid than supposed to be
 - students have more workload
 - students are in need of counselling (psychological help) – e.g. choosing subjects
 - content of studies has not changed – but the organisational view is more complicated
 - more classes are compulsory
- collecting modules from different countries can be a problem – countries have diverse programmes with similar modules.
- It's a question of recognizing: can some HEI accept different certificates and award a diploma? Is this still its diploma?
- countries vary in setting the frame for programmes:
 - some have the number of e.g. Master programmes limited,
 - some have to choose the formula 4+1
 - continuity to Master is limited (other have to find a job) (a states decision to save money)
- why do same subjects at different HEIs vary in number of credits?
 - who decides on the number of credits? – somewhere only professor, somewhere they have a student input
 - surveys show that students actually work less
- should take into account that in LLL you need less credits for a Master
- should/could someone with a 'professional' masters continue to a PhD?
- how to use credits in LLL when not all programmes have an assessment

- there are different ways of applying credits in LLL than in 'normal' programmes; however, it has to be transparent
- have to realize that not everything needs credits (special courses, exams)
- state HEIs have also social obligations – LLL has to be a part of a (political?) system (guarantee of equal opportunities)

Revised Recommendations:

- that ECVET should converge to all academic education to be considered as LLL has to be designed in terms in a learning outcome oriented approach
- EUCEN should provide information to Universities on experiences in developing the presentation of learning outcomes for LLL programs, to be used in all University study programs.
- Policy makers have to ensure equal opportunities in all countries to develop professional masters to special target groups.
- EUCEN must recommend that all master programs, irrespective of target groups or the way of delivery have to present equal level.
- Policy makers must ensure the continuing diversity of LLL offer, including programs at post master level.
- Student feedback has to be taken into account on ECTS credit allocation. This applies also in LLL programs that carry credits.
- Irrespective of the form of delivery, programs with the same learning outcomes have to carry the same amount of credits. Some of these credits can be given as recognition of prior learning.
- AS ECTS is now being widely used for regular programs and in increase use for U LLL, it will be confusing the use of a different credit system (ECVET) for training. Therefore it is strongly recommended ECTS.

Some general recommendations:

- To be more competitive in the world and to realise wider mobility, flexibility and transparency in BMD are the most important conditions.
- The social responsibility of Universities must be taken into consideration in all programs, including LLL.
- In order that Universities will not be totally market oriented, incentives must be given to the Universities to include the social dimension.

Workshop 5: The Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning

Background paper

Françoise de Viron, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

Terminology

Each country, sometimes each institution, has its legal, technical or preferred nomenclature

In the Beflex project questionnaire we used 'APEL' as shorthand, aware that this acronym means very different policy, practice, purposes and target groups in different countries, but we refer to "recognition and validation" of non-formal and informal learning"

This presentation is based on some results from Beflex (for the time being: questionnaire and 3 case studies (NL-UK-B) – but main results of several European surveys

Ref: C. Corradi, N. Evans, A. Valk (eds) (2006) : Recognising experiential learning. Practices in European universities

European Context

- Bologna declaration: « Encouraging a common frame of reference, aimed at improving external recognition and facilitating student mobility as well as employability »
- Trends IV report May 2005 Trends IV report May 2005
« The recognition of non-formal/non-academic qualifications is part of the wider theme of LLL that has been much neglected so far in the Bologna discussion ... except for a minority of countries »
« The issue is not clearly understood ... limited awareness ... »
- Bergen communiqué 2005 :
in London 2007, Ministers would look at the extent to which universities were « creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for the recognition of prior learning »

Diversity - Validation of Non-formal & Informal learning

- Existence of regulatory frameworks
 - from intentions, projects or recommendations to laws (e.g. emerging arrangements in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Iceland, Italy and Spain)
- Top down or bottom up initiatives
 - General framework
 - Or long tradition, General principles but dispersed initiatives and practices (e.g. the Netherlands, Ireland and UK)
- Level of implementation:
 - from limited experimentations (Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein)
 - to global system (Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Luxemburg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden)
- Level of impact and development: from sectoral approaches to implication of all stakeholders, from few institutions involved to all institutions concerned

Extract from Communication of Michel Feutrie (USTL – EUCEN) in Copenhagen 2007

Validation: emerging common process

- The process 'how to assess?' –emerging common process
 - Information and counselling
 - Guidance and preparation for assessment
 - portfolio, dossier, ...
 - with assistance (tutor) or not

- (Check on completeness ... additional assignments)
- Assessment
- Running follow up

Beflex Results: some figures

- APEL is available
 - For admission : 52% now – 13% in the next 2 years
 - For part of diploma: 52% now – 14% in the next 2 years
- Impact of Bologna process on APEL
 - For entry: 43% no impact – 38% impact – 19% no answer
 - For dispensation: 40% no impact – 41% impact – 19% no answer
- Legislation –Bologna process
 - in some countries, the law implementing the Bologna BMD structure also opens up the possibility
 - Recent legislation – Bologna tools are not having a major impact on APEL development ... or at least not yet

Beflex: diversity and observed trends (1)

Objectives of Validation: ‘for what?’

- Admission (to 1st or 2nd degree ?): to enable applicants to gain entry to university programme
- Dispensation (for 1st, 2nd or 3rd degree ?): to award exemption for some lectures within a university programme
- Access to exams
- Adapted complementary programmes
- Full diploma (1st or 2nd degree)

Observed:

1. Universities starting with APEL: focus on Masters

Explanation?

- One trend of Bologna Reform: development of new Masters more professionally oriented or targeted at adult with professional experience? Link with background paper on ECTS?
- Easier to fit an APEL arrangement into courses specifically designed for people with certain work experience
 - Link with university strategy
 - Link with legal framework and university strategies to implement APEL (e.g. Belgium)
 - Easier where courses are defined in terms of learning outcomes (<-> content)
 - Example?

2. Bachelors ‘untouched’ by APEL arrangements - Exception: UK and France: long tradition including bachelor degree

Explanation?

- Normal evolution?
- Protection for the traditional ‘academic’ courses’?

3. Development of APEL is growing around specific courses rather than as a part of university strategy or policy

Explanation?

- Normal evolution: progressive implementation?
- Depends on evolution of the legal framework or on university strategies

Beflex: diversity and observed trends (2)

Formalisation of process: ‘by which way?’

- Recognition
- Assessment
- Accreditation or Giving credit: award credits, units, modules, award of full qualification
- for the admission, to award credit for part of university programme for whole diploma, ...

Observed

- Recognition (e.g. the Netherlands): - no credit -
 - E.g. in (Fr) Belgium: access for one person to one specific programme in one specific university for a specific academic year – fully individualised
- Credit (e.g. UK, France)
 - Credit system with minimum and maximum (e.g. London MET)
 - Other examples?

BeFlex: diversity and observed trends (3)

Scope: “What is assessed?”

- Prior learning
- Prior experiential learning (knowledge gained through experience) or Skills (personnel experience)
- Global capacities

References and standards: “on which basis or in comparison with what?”

- Based on future capacity: ability to follow a university programme (references could be the learning outcomes)
- Based on acquired performance (references could be the professional profiles or (European or National) qualification framework)

Observed

- Bridges between university learning and learning that takes place outside
 - Example: Open University of the Netherlands (academic computer science programme)

Questions?

- European or National Qualification Framework (EQF) would/should help?
- Learning outcomes would/should help?

Beflex: diversity and observed trends (4)

Actors within University: ‘who?’

- Pedagogical responsible, academics responsible of a programme
- Dedicated committee: designated staff within every department/faculty/...
- Central coordination within institution
- National or regional authority

Observed

- Central coordination: e.g. London MET central unit in charge of the monitoring the process ... objective: last data available: 15% of students claim credit through APEL
 - E.g. London Met case study: Departmental APEL coordinator AND APEL Board
- Dedicated committee: e.g. in France – counselling and guidance
- Combination of local autonomy (academics responsibility) and regional coordination: e.g. Fr-Belgium

Beflex: diversity and observed trends (5)

Tools: ‘which support?’ - For whom? To do what?

Convergent tools for the assessment

- Portfolio as accumulation of evidences
- Dossier presenting organised experience in reference to qualification’s requirements
- Observation at work or simulations
- Traditional tests or examinations

Observed

- “We need tools ...” but a lot of different tools exist (see for example Transfine or Refine)
 - Needs of Training?
- Quality process - Global process monitoring
 - e.g. London MET: academic regulations to ensure consistency and equity of decision-taking
 - Quality code e.g. Quality Code of the Dutch RPL Knowledge Centre

Report of workshop 5 - The Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning Françoise de Viron, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

Workshop's Agenda and method

- Presentation of the observation and BeFlex results – Fri 11h30-12h30
- Discuss and complete the 'survey' – Fri 14h30-16h
 - Share experiences or practices
 - Identify the diversity
- Identify the enablers – Fri 16h30-18h
 - How to reduce diversity in this context: Bologna & APEL
 - How to have a more convergent approach of APPEL within Bologna
- Write recommendations – Sat 10h-11h

Workshop discussion

The workshop was focused on the question: “Does Bologna process enable Validation or not?”

Potential enabling elements

- Credits
 - Award credits for the 'assessment process' – e.g. London Met case study
 - Award credits for the 'assessment results'
- Diploma supplement
 - How?
- Learning outcomes
 - ??
- Collaboration with professional/regional/social partners
 - ??
- Quality standards
 - ??

During the workshop, many discussions concern practices sharing and other questions emerged on

- Financing of validation process
- Value of validation
- Distinction between Learning and Knowledge?

Key Questions

- What should EUCEN be doing about APEL?
- What should the Bologna follow-up group be doing to promote further development?

Workshop participation

- 16 people for the 2 first sessions - 8 people for the third one - 12 for the last one
- Diversity of experience (in operation of validation or in research – long tradition or quite new in the field) – major resources people
- 5 from UK, 5 from France, 3 from Slovenia, 1 from Latvia, 1 from Finland, 1 from Switzerland, 2 from Belgium

Workshop discussion and conclusions:

- ◆ Observation of the diversity and analysis of the rationale behind
- ◆ Sharing practices amongst the 16 participants with quite different level of expertise in the field
 - 5 persons from UK and Ireland, 5 from France, 3 from Slovenia, 1 from Latvia, 1 from Finland, 1 from Switzerland, 2 from Belgium
- ◆ Agreement on the conclusion: Bologna process does enable validation process on different ways
- ◆ Recommendations for EUCEN and Bologna Follow-up Group at two levels
 - 5 recommendations concern 'Methods' : in order to improve the Validation of Non-formal and Informal learning process, its dissemination and its consistency
 - 2 recommendations concern 'Actions' : they are requirement for the Validation of Non-formal and Informal learning development

Diversity in validation of non-formal and informal learning:

Factors influencing the observed diversity

- ◆ Existence of regulatory frameworks
 - from intentions, projects or recommendations to laws
 - (f.i. emerging arrangement in Latvia, Slovenia and Switzerland)
- ◆ Top down or bottom up initiatives
 - General framework
 - Or long tradition, General principles but dispersed initiatives and practices (f.i. the Netherlands, Ireland and UK)
- ◆ Level of implementation:
 - from limited experimentations
 - to global system (f.i. France (since many years), Finland, Belgium (quite recently))
- ◆ Level of impact and development: from sectoral approaches to implication of all stakeholders, from few institutions involved to all institutions concerned

Conclusion on influence of the Bologna Process:

- ◆ Despite the diversity, Bologna process could and should enable validation process by different ways, by the use of:
 - Credits and Credits Transfer System
 - Learning outcomes
 - Importance of Learning outcomes in validation "what is expected"
 - Diploma supplement
 - Collaboration with professional/regional/social partners
 - Quality standards
- ◆ The group has made recommendations on these aspects

Revised recommendations

Recommendations for EUCEN (methods):

1. Offer training and communication opportunities at different levels, for
 - Policy makers
 - Managers of Universities
 - Practitioners: academics, assessment boards (juries) and other people in charge of guidance, counselling, tutoring,...
 - Applicants
 - Other stakeholders : social partners, employers, ...
- ◆ Communicate the validation objectives at all levels (Increasing and Widening the learner participation, Increasing the stakeholders involvement, ...)
- ◆ Explanation on how to use the existing tools and how to improve or adapt them
- ◆ Training for a methodology to write learning outcomes: assistance to universities in order to have a common comprehensive approach and to improve the consistency
 - Common methodology (top down approach and common part concerning the Bachelor or Master level)
 - but specific content (bottom up approach and disciplines dependent)

2. Consolidate the networks of experts and activists in Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning: Share practices and elaborate new strategies

- ◆ Creating new groups or using existing disciplinary groups
 - Share practices and compare situations in evaluation of learning outcomes in the same disciplines
- ◆ Agreeing on common terminology
- ◆ Formalising guidance, preparation or assistance to candidates, in order that :
 - assistance is recognised as mainstream activity for the University
 - assessment is recognized as a formative process for the candidate
 - For instance, the 'preparation phase' could be organised as a module, following institutional decision (including collective teaching/mentoring combined with individual tutoring, carrying credits, ...)

3. Propose Quality indicators

- For practitioners : for starting or exchanging best practices
- For candidates: for ensuring consistency and equity
- For institutions or national Authority: for improving the global system
- ◆ Collaboration with national Quality Agencies
- ◆ Using already existing Validation Quality codes in different countries

4. Provide an observatory

- Define the objectives of this observatory and design the indicators: quantitative and qualitative

5. Seek funding to support this work

Recommendations for EUCEN (actions):

1. Diploma Supplement

- ◆ to be changed
 - In terms of learning outcome and not the way by which the learning outcomes have been acquired
 - Same academic judgement _ same diploma
- Main advantages: no discrimination – employer recognition

2. Funding the Validation process is a major question

"The university should not do the validation for free"

Example of France:

Candidate for validation = registered students _corresponding funding

Recommendation for Bologna Follow-up Group:

- ◆ Make APEL a more significant part of the workplan for the next period of the Bologna process
 - See proposed actions concerning use of credits, writing of learning outcomes, quality assurance, diploma supplement

Workshop 6: New models of partnerships in ULLL

Background paper Pat Davies, EUCEN

It is clear that universities are increasingly working with external organisations in the design and delivery of ULLL as part of the third mission of universities.

The BeFlex questionnaire shows that 82% of universities have some form of regional collaboration with employers; a further 6% say that they will be developing this in the next 2 years but 10% say that it is not yet in place and not likely to be in the near future (and 3% did not answer). Interestingly a slightly higher proportion - 88% - said that they had regional collaboration with public authorities, with a further 3% saying they would have this in the next 2 years but 16% saying that there were no plans (4% no answer).

In another question, 28% said that the Bologna process has had a positive impact on collaboration with external partners in the design of courses and 15% said that the ULLL experience has had a positive impact on the implementation of the Bologna reforms in this respect. However, 41 % said that the Bologna process had had o impact and 16% did not answer this question.

Although the Bologna process does not (yet) seem to be having a major impact on the partnerships between the universities and other agencies/institutions, when we asked for suggestion about indicators of ULLL the proposals included:

- the number of companies using the university for the training of staff
- the number of employers supporting students in ULLL financially
- the level of co-operation between the university and employers
- feedback from employers on the courses and the participants performance
- evaluation through external agencies

So it is clear that universities see external agencies, in particular employers, as important actors in ULLL.

Different models exist in the collaboration arrangements:

- academic staff go into the company to teach
- professionals from the company go into the university to teach
- students go into companies for work experience
- university-company collaboration for 'real' work-based learning

Different models also exist in terms of financial collaboration:

- the company pays the fees for all learners
 - a company pays fees for individual learners
 - the local/regional/national state pays for learners
 - a mixed mode of individual, state and employer pays in varying proportions
- Rarely do external agencies pay the development costs unless it is part of a project.

Different models of relationship with other education providers (e.g. adult education, vocational training institutions, and universities of applied sciences)

- competition
- collaboration in courses
- collaboration in the development of bridges, links and pathways
- collaboration in the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning
- ULL linked to technology transfer and consultancy

Some key questions arise in the collaboration with employers and other external agencies in the design of courses. If courses are designed to meet the specific needs of a group of employees, who should have the final control of the content and delivery? Does it make a difference if it is a non-accredited course, a university diploma, or a state diploma such as a bachelor masters?

Should courses that are designed for specific groups be opened to others straight away (suggesting that flexibility and reforms are in place)? Or established for the specific group first and then opened later (suggesting an evolutionary opening up of provision)? Or confined to the original target group (suggesting a certain conservatism)?

What role do these kinds of partnerships have in regional development? How do the different forms of co-operation and collaboration fit into models of learning cities and learning regions?

What should be the role of EUCEN in this area?

Draft Recommendations:

EUCEN should:

- provide more opportunities for dialogue between universities, employers and social partners
- develop project ideas and proposals for promoting innovative models and examples of best practice in collaboration

The Bologna Follow-Up Group should give more attention to this aspect of LLL in its communiqués and workplan

Report from Workshop 6 - New Models of Partnership for University Lifelong Learning: University – Enterprise Collaboration

**Peter v. Mitschke-Collande, Leibniz University Hanover, Germany and Manuel Assunção,
University of Aveiro, Portugal**

Participants: Jerome Banuls, Maria José Gonçalves, Grietje Goris, Antti Kauppi, Esko Paakkola, Máchal Pavel, Tanja Pibernik, Fortunato Pigni, Agusti Ten, Mirko Treu, Michel Włodarczyk.

Summary and revised recommendations

There are 3 priorities of the University Continuing Education (UCE) Mission:

1. UCE is supporting individual LLL careers (considering APL, CP, ECTS, etc.)
2. UCE is changing the partnership focus of 3rd Mission. University may be:
 - Coordinating partner of the learning network
 - Catalyst for Innovation and regional development
 - Integrator of CR & TKT & CS through learning
3. UCE is promoting innovation and staff development within University
There is need for more awareness of university 3rd Mission in the Bologna process and for UCE funding programmes in the EU

Interests of Workshop Participants

The concept of 'partnership in LLL was reflected by the participants as follows:

- refers to Research and Development as well as Teaching and Learning
- includes fieldwork
- requires a common strategy
- may refer to LLL foundations, corporate universities, contract teaching, etc.
- associates lack of recognition and pay of staff at present
- requires analysis of changes and needs in the employment sectors
- includes cooperation in programme development
- will include Summer schools
- helps to integrate theory and practice
- includes UCE centre and departments
- exchanges services between partners
- may be based on international cooperation
- LLL requires „innovative formats of partnership“
- Will have an impact on „consortium programmes, part-time Bachelors / Masters etc
- requires definition of „the role of UCE in the University 3rd mission

UCE Partnership: A network of multilateral Interests

Partnership in UCE should not be restricted to a bilateral relationship. Students, employers, university and state are seen as the 4 mayor actors within the UCE network:

- The **individual student** has certain LLL needs concerning competence development, personal growth, upgrading and career development
- The **employers** of private and public sectors are expecting efficient Knowledge transfer from universities. Due to outsourcing of central industrial departments there is a growing market for university services such as UCE, research and development, consultancy etc. Performance standards are „employability, excellent practice and return on Investment“.
- The **state is acting on behalf of society** reducing public control of universities without neglecting „objective quality standards“: implementation of the Bologna process is the political commitment of all EU member states.
- The **University** is acting as the coordinator of the UCE network:
 - providing independent curricula
 - securing academic excellence
 - coaching students
 - counselling LLL
 - accreditation of all institutions of the education sector.

Coordination of LLL by the university is seen as most relevant part of „3rd Mission“.

However, the leading role of university will be only justified as long as she succeeds to organise 'research based self-innovation'

UCE Contributions to the Students LLL Careers

Individuals life cycle: LLL Needs	University Contributions: LLL Supply
- retirement	- liberal adult education, senior UCE
- unemployment, change of job: updating	- Further studies, recycling programmes
- entrepreneurship: innovation	- professional short courses - in-house programmes
- employment: Specialisation, interdisciplinary	- Corporate universities - Part-time Masters - Certificate Professional Development - Summer schools

- Doctor: R&D based academic excellence	- full-time research
- Masters: Profession related	- full-time Masters
- Bachelors: Employability	- full-time Bachelors
- Professional Training	- Company based professional development
- Vocational Training	- work based learning
- Primary / Secondary Education	- UCE for teachers
- Kindergarten	- Bachelor and UCE for nursing
- Family	- Further studies for parents

Innovative Competences and Products of the UCE Centre

- **Traditional UCE** is covering products below 60 CP:
 - certificate courses for professions: specialisation of employees or entrepreneurs
 - short programmes tailor made for: managers of SME, re-qualification of unemployed, etc

Liberal adult education: opening 1st / 2nd cycle modules for interested or senior citizens
- **New UCE Products are:** part-time degree courses or modular parts of Bachelors or Masters
- **Core UCE Product: University Staff Development (USD)** has to maintain and upgrade all staff strata who are working in the LLL supply system. The LLL Strategy of a university has to consider UCE and USD as a mayor source of continuous (internal and external) innovation. Hence, USD has to develop '**Managers of learning processes**' according to the following **competence profile**:
 - communicates with customers and clients
 - operates research based (needs analysis)
 - considers the change focus
 - integrates learning, acting, reflecting
 - supports innovation
 - involves other disciplines
 - plans new learning solutions
 - provides sufficient resources
 - moderates learning processes
 - evaluates customer satisfaction, success of learning and impact of knowledge transfer

Dissemination Seminars

National dissemination seminars were hosted by each of the partner institutions, where the BeFlex project results were presented and discussed.

All the presentations are available on the BeFlex website. A sample of the presentations is given here:

Pat Davies, EUCEN, at the seminar in Krems, Austria

Michel Feutrie, EUCEN, at the seminar in Aveiro, Portugal

David Crosier, EUA, at the seminar in Lille, France



University Lifelong Learning and the Bologna Process: Continuity and Change

Pat Davies
EUCEN
www.eucen.org



Bologna Process

- ❖ ULLL a low priority
- ❖ ECTS and BMD to provide the flexibility for the development of ULLL
- ❖ Focus on quality, B-M-D and research

Progress



- ❖ Trends III for Berlin in 2003: patchy development - 'the most salient problem is clearly the lack of integration of LLL provision in the general strategies, core processes and decision making of the institution'



- ❖ Trends IV for Bergen in 2005: 'the recognition of non-formal/non-academic qualifications is part of the wider theme of lifelong learning that has been much neglected so far in the Bologna discussion'.

- ❖ Ministers counting on: B-M-D, ECTS and the emerging qualifications frameworks to 'encompass a wide range of flexible learning paths' and to 'improve opportunities for all citizens to follow LLL paths into and through HE'

State of play in 2006-7

Trends V report for London 2007:

- ❖ LLL a high priority in institutions: 16%
- ❖ few institutions responding to LLL proactively and as central strategic priority
- ❖ Institutions don't (yet) understand well the purpose or the practical value of qualifications frameworks
- ❖ Many institutions do not know whether there is an NQF in their country



BeFlex report

BeFlex: Benchmarking Flexibility in the Bologna reforms*

- ❖ 150 questionnaires, 50 case studies, 20 visits
- ❖ state of play in ULLL, impact of Bologna, future trends and plans

www.eucen.org/BeFlex/Index.html

* Project financed by  
Socrates



Does your university have a LLL policy / strategy?

The good news

- 54% said yes
- 25 % said 'in preparation'

The bad news – 19% said no

- ❖ What priority does LLL have in your university?
- ❖ The good news: 14% - 'very high' and 46% 'important along with other priorities'
- ❖ The bad news: 'not yet' – 30% and 'unlikely' – 9%

The 'big themes' in ULLL

- ❖ Diversity
- ❖ Separation - Integration



Diversity

❖ What do we call 'it'?

- UCE
- ULLL
- AE/AL
- PGS



Diversity

What is 'it'?

Most commonly:

- ❖ Non-accredited: short courses (less than 15 days); longer courses (more than 15 days)
- ❖ ODL/e-learning
- ❖ Special masters programmes for specific groups

Not commonly:

Modules of BMD programmes

Bachelors programmes delivered differently

Special Bachelors programmes for specific groups

Sometimes:

- ❖ All P/T programmes
- ❖ All e-learning courses
- ❖ Out-reach activities
- ❖ Updating for alumni
- ❖ University of the Third Age
- ❖ Preparation courses

Definitions:

- ❖ Everything that is complementary, continuing and open
- ❖ Everything that is interdisciplinary
- ❖ Everything that is P/T or at a distance

Cross-university services

- ❖ Validation of non-formal and informal learning
- ❖ Advice and guidance
- ❖ Careers orientation
- ❖ Mentoring/tutoring
- ❖ Support programmes
- ❖ Management and Administration
- ❖ Regional collaboration
- ❖ Technology transfer



A definition

ULLL is the provision by higher education institutions of learning opportunities, services and research for:

- ❖ the personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals – lifelong and lifewide
- ❖ the social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region.

It is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors. It is at university level and underpinned by research



Indicators

A **bank** of indicators:

- ❖ a range of purposes: monitoring, evaluating, accountability, improvement, efficiency, effectiveness
- ❖ a range of focuses: systems, services, programmes, policies, impact on regional development, impact on individual careers

Separation-Integration



Traditional model for teaching:

- ❖ Young in academic (state) diploma programmes (now BMD), uninterrupted, full-time, day-time
- ❖ Adults in special courses, non-accredited, university diplomas, evenings or weekends, part time



Separatist model

Best practice to meet needs?

Or

Conservative, protecting traditional mission?



New models

Integrated – version 1: BMD reform

- more professional orientation as well as academic in all/most programmes
- mixed groups – adults, young
- possibility to study selected units/credits, part of a diploma
- Intermediate awards (certificates etc)



Delivery and pedagogy integrated:

- blended learning for all
- timing flexible for all

A strong integration model

Integrated - version 2: BMD reform

Separate diplomas:

- Customised for special (small) groups
- new special masters (lots of them)
- New special bachelors (a few at present)
- Credit-rating of short courses

❖ Pedagogy more active and professionally oriented

A weak integration model

Integrated model 3: combines 1 and 2
Different models in different faculties
and disciplines

Current position:

- mostly model 2
- Discussions about stronger model of integration spreading

New services

Services developing more slowly and
more recently

- ❖ Validation of non-formal and informal learning, Advice and Guidance, Career orientation
- ❖ Bologna tools: Diploma Supplement, Learning Outcomes, ECTS credits

❖ Separated:

➤ Internally:

- by UCE/ULL Unit
- By other central unit

➤ External: specialists brought in

❖ Integrated: internal – in faculties/departments

Management and organisation

❖ Separated internally:

- A separate UCE/ULL Unit

❖ Integrated internally

- in faculties/departments

❖ Separated externally:

- A foundation
- A private company

❖ Mixed models

- ❖ Increasingly dispersed: everywhere and nowhere?
- ❖ Part of the mission?
- ❖ Does it mirror the delivery of courses?
- ❖ Flexible and dynamic?
- ❖ Static and bureaucratic?

External partnerships

- ❖ With other educational providers:
 - Universities of Applied Sciences
 - Specialist colleges/institutions
 - Adult education organisations
 - Vocational/professional training organisations
 - Own external structures: foundation, company

- ❖ To embrace change or to avoid it?
- ❖ To protect the research status of the university?
- ❖ To best fulfil the public service mission?

- ❖ With employers and regional authorities:
Predominantly mixed model
 - 60% have a a separate unit
 - More likely to be UCE/ULLL for regional authorities
 - Also high level of involvement of faculties
 - Technology transfer usually separated differently

- For more work based learning not just work placement
- More collaboration in design of courses
- More collaboration in B and M courses
- Not a major impact of Bologna – other aspects more significant

The future?

- ❖ Increasing use of the Masters for ULLL
- ❖ Increasing diversity in the nature of the Masters
- ❖ Modules of the Masters as ULLL
- ❖ Development of Bachelors for ULLL
- ❖ Continuity of short course provision – rapid response, innovation
- ❖ Development of new services and new ways of delivering them

- ❖ Review of management and organisation of ULLL → new structures and forms
- ❖ Growing recognition of potential of ULLL to serve needs of community and individuals
- ❖ Growing recognition of importance of ULLL to university as an institution.

ULLL and Bologna Process

Beflex Seminar
Aveiro 5/11/2007
Michel Feutrie
President of EUCEN



Some results from the Beflex project

A contribution for further
developments

The context

- Globalisation of Higher Education
 - Financial pressure on HEIs
 - Role of the European Commission – the principle of subsidiarity?
-

-
- Bologna process :
 - An initiative from ministries of Education
 - Supported by EC
 - Autonomy of Universities
 - A catalyst
 - A facilitator
 - An opportunity
-

What is BeFlex?

- A EUCEN project granted by the EC
 - We started from the following observations:
 - Although the emphasis on ULLL has been gradually increasing in the context of the Bologna reforms, this issue is rather neglected in the Bologna discussions
 - And few analysis of the development of policy or of the implementation of arrangements and practice have taken place until now.
-

What were the aims of the project?

- To monitor the development of ULLL in the reformed structure of HE qualifications and report on progress to the BFUG by the end of 2007
 - To promote the development of policy and practice in ULLL in accordance with aims and objectives of the Bologna process
-

Data collected

- A questionnaire was widely circulated and 150 responses obtained
 - 50 case studies collected
 - 20 visits undertaken
 - Workshops in two EUCEN conferences (in France and Poland)
 - Emerging results discussed in a EUCEN conference on this issue in Slovenia
 - National seminars on these results in 7 countries
-

Three key elements are emerging

- A Diversity
 - B Flexibility
 - C Separation/integration
-

1 Diversity (1)

□ Diversity exists :

- In the definition of ULLL by an institution
 - In the provision of ULLL
 - In its location and status within an institution
 - In its organisation and management
 - And in partnerships involved in its development (Regions, companies,...)
-

Diversity (2)

What is called LLL by Universities ?

- University continuing education
 - Continuing education
 - Adult education
-

Diversity (3)

Which programmes are considered as LLL?

Most frequently :

- Programmes not leading to a qualification
 - Distance learning/e-learning programmes
 - Masters for specific populations
-

Less frequently :

- Modules included in a BMD programme
 - Bachelors provided in a different way
 - Bachelors for specific populations
-

Sometimes :

- All part time programmes
 - All e-learning programmes
 - Out-reach activities
 - Updating for alumni
 - Third age programmes
 - Preparatory courses
-

Common definition:

- All what is considered as complementary, continue and open
 - All what is interdisciplinary
 - All part time and e-learning programmes
-

Diversity in strategy (4)

Has your university a LLL policy/strategy ?

Good news :

- 54% say yes
- 25% says "in preparation"

Bad news :

- 19% say no
-

Importance of LLL at institutional level (5)

With the same question than EUA, we obtain comparable results:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| - No answer | 2% |
| - Unlikely to become a high priority | 9% |
| - Not yet a high priority | 30% |
| - Important along with other priorities | 46% |
| - Very high priority | 14% |
-

2 Flexibility (1)

- Flexibility is the basis of a ULLL policy
 - This means:
 - Flexibility in courses and pathways
 - Validation of non formal and informal learning procedures
 - Services for ULLL
-

Flexibility in courses and pathways (2)

- This means:
 - To provide a wide range of provisions which offer answers to problems met by individuals for access and participation
 - To generalise the use of credits, ECTS and the new BMD structure are designed to provide flexibility in the curriculum and timing of provision
-

Validation of non formal and informal learning (3)

- ❑ Validation is a key element of a LLL strategy, it guarantees fluid transition between work and study periods, it recognises and values what has been learnt outside a classroom
 - ❑ According our survey, Validation is available for entry in 58% of respondents
 - ❑ 52% for the award of part of a diploma
 - ❑ But it is in most of cases applied to formal learning that has taken place outside the normal university routes
-

Services for ULLL (4)

Services developed more recently and more slowly

- ❑ Advice and guidance
 - ❑ Bologna instruments: Diploma supplement, Learning Outcomes, ECTS
-

Services for ULLL (4)

- A range of advice and guidance services :
 - To match entrants with learning opportunities
 - To match courses with learner's aspirations
 - To guide learners into and through more individualised learning pathways
 - To support candidates for validation of non formal and informal learning

This means new staff or new competences for staff

-
- Mentoring/tutoring
 - Support programmes
 - Management and administration
 - Regional collaboration
 - Technological transfer
-

3 Separation or integration (1)

- ❑ The traditional model in universities separates young people from « adults »
 - ❑ But different elements call for a more integrated model:
 - ❑ The BMD structure makes possible more integrated models
 - ❑ The evolution of our societies, of our economies needs regular returns from workplace to university
-

The traditional model (2)

In the traditional model we have :

- ❑ Young people registered in (national) programmes, leading to degrees (now in BMD), participating in continuity, full time, during the day
 - ❑ Adults in specific courses, not leading to degrees or leading to University degrees, delivered part time, on evening or on week end
-

The "separatist" model :

Is it the best solution to meet the needs of individuals, of companies,...?

or

Is it a conservative attitude willing to protect the traditional mission of the university ?

Management and organisation

- Internally separated :
 - An independent Unit or service in charge of CE/LLL
 - Integrated in the university
 - in faculties/departments/units
 - Externally separated :
 - A foundation
 - A branch
 - Mixed models
-

Two versions of new more integrated models

- A “strong” integration or “full” integration model : more professional orientation as well as academic in all programmes, mixed groups, the possibility to study selected units/credits, intermediate awards
 - A “weak” integration or partly integrated models: separates diplomas for different age groups, customised programmes for special groups, new special masters or bachelors
 - Currently the predominant model is the second and there is clear intention in most universities to move to the first one. But services in charge of continuing education are no more ready to move towards a more integrated model.
-

The next step

-
- Accept to change or resist ?
 - Protect the traditional mission of the university ?
 - Develop a mission of public service ?
-

A definition emerging

- On the basis of the questionnaire survey, and case studies analysis, of various consultation workshops and of discussion during the Slovenian conference, a common definition of ULLL as emerged:

ULLL is the provision by HEIs of learning opportunities, services and research for :

- **The personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals, lifelong and lifewide**
- **The social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region**

It is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors.

It is at university level and underpinned by research

-
- This basic definition is a first step to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators for monitoring change and development in policy, arrangements and provisions
 - The second step will be to establish the principles that will govern the development of policy.
-

Indicators

EUCEN insists on the creation of a bank of indicators used differently depending of :

- The objectives (control, evaluation, responsibility, improvement, efficiency, effectiveness)
 - The targets (system, services, programmes, policies, impact on regional development, impact on individual pathways,...)
-

In conclusion

- « When developments in qualification frameworks, cycles, learning outcomes, quality assurance, credits, recognition and lifelong learning are put together something new and powerful will be created »

S. Adam



BeFlex: Benchmarking Flexibility in the Bologna Reforms

www.eucen.org/BeFlex/index.html

Funded by Socrates as a project contributing to a European Higher Education Area (Agreement: 2006-0073)

TRENDS V: résultats et questions

Séminaire Formation Continue à la
Formation tout au long de la vie, 5 Octobre 2007
David Crosier, EUA

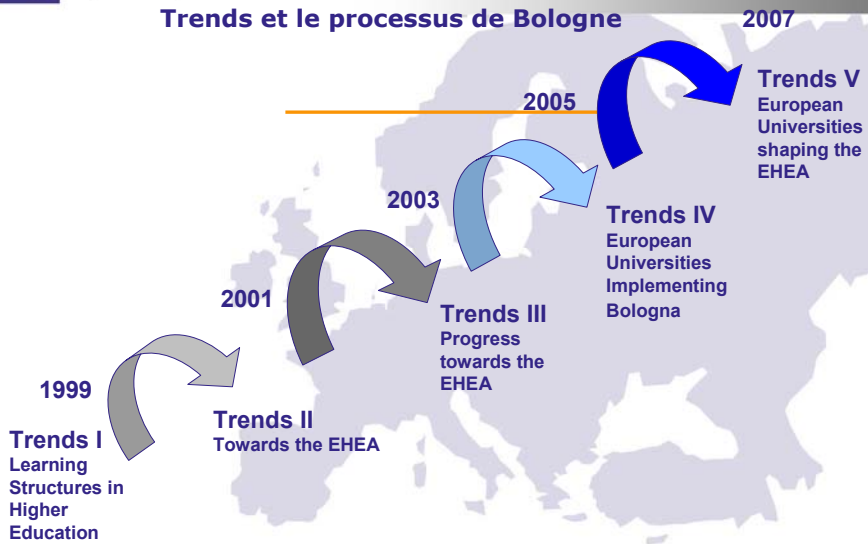
...1...

European University Association (EUA): Mission

- **EUA:** Association des universités (780) et des Conférences des Présidents d'universités (34) dans 46 pays de l'Europe
- **Mission:** promouvoir la cohérence dans l'espace Européen **de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche**
- **Action et dialogue avec membres**
 - ✓ Politique de l'enseignement supérieur
 - ✓ Soutien aux membres: projets et services

...2...

Trends et le processus de Bologne

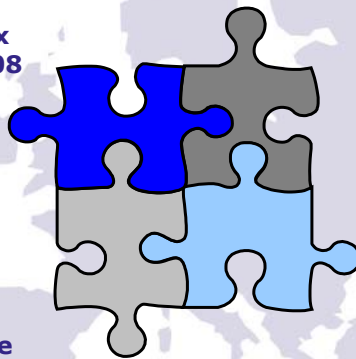


...3...

Trends V : Méthodologie

Questionnaire aux établissements: 908

15 visites sur site



Conférences nationales des Présidents d'universités

Nouveaux pays membres

...4...

Trends V : thèmes principaux

- Structures des programmes et cursus
- Systèmes de crédit et reconnaissance des diplômes et de l'apprentissage
- Mobilité
- Qualité
- **Apprentissage tout au long de la vie**
- Dimension sociale
- Dimension internationale

...5...

Pourquoi LLL maintenant?

- LLL prévu depuis longtemps – au cœur de la politique européenne depuis 2000 (au moins au niveau rhétorique)...
- Les raisons sont évidentes:
 - Transformation économique: société industrielle vers société de connaissance
 - Démographie: populations vieillissantes et jeunes générations en déclin
- > Défi pour l'enseignement supérieur (et la société): accès et réussite pour un plus grand nombre issus de toute couche sociale
- > implique une offre plus diversifiée

...6...

Concept(s) de LLL

« Instrumentalisation économique » :

- formation pour diplômés
- formation pour non diplômés

« Epanouissement personnel » :

- Soutien à chaque individu pour se former tout au long de la vie

...7...

Résultats de Trends V

- Concept de LLL encore "déroutant"
- Pas encore une priorité pour les établissements : 17% seulement le considèrent prioritaire
- Grande diversité des pratiques institutionnelles
- La réforme des structures est passée avant la mise en œuvre de stratégies pour l'apprentissage tout au long de la vie
- Possibilité de développer les outils de Bologne pour mettre en œuvre un apprentissage flexible...

...8...

Dimension sociale

- Tous les établissements (98%) considèrent qu'un accès plus démocratique est (très) important
- 40% pensent qu'ils doivent agir pour améliorer l'accès
- 50% ne pensent pas qu'ils ont besoin d'agir
- 8% ne considèrent pas que c'est de leur responsabilité

Visites sur site : confirmation que les actions en faveur de l'accès restent marginales dans les établissements. Peu d'action attendue sans motivations externes...

...9...

Orientation et Conseil

- Responsabilité pour services très dispersés en ce moment, et difficile de comparer un pays avec un autre
- Evident qu'on est loin d'être équipé pour conseiller une grande diversité d'étudiants à différents moments de la vie

...10...

Mais soyons optimistes...

- Communiqué de Londres a mis l'accent sur la dimension sociale, en la définissant comme le processus qui mène vers l'objectif que les étudiants « *entering, participating and completing higher education will reflect the diversity of our populations* »
- Plans d'action nationaux prévus pour 2009
- LLL devrait prendre une place plus centrale dans les discussions de la politique de l'enseignement supérieur..

...11...

Défis à venir

- Renforcer dialogue entre établissements et avec le gouvernement et la société
- Corriger la compréhension et l'utilisation des instruments de Bologne, et les développer dans une perspective de l'apprentissage tout au long de vie
- Travailler sur les attitudes: égalité des chances pas en contradiction avec la qualité
- Viser l'avenir au-delà de 2010

...12...