

The Bologna Process

In 1999 Europe started the Bologna Process, named after the university where it was proposed. The aim of this process was, and still is, to create an European Higher Education Area (EHEA) based on international cooperation and academic exchange that is attractive to students and staff from all over the world. It facilitates mobility of students, graduates and higher education staff. The EHEA prepares students for their future careers and most importantly, it offers broad access to high-quality higher education all over Europe.

What is the Bologna Process for?

The intention of the Bologna Process is to allow the diversity of the national systems (46 countries participated in the major reform) and universities to be maintained while the EHEA improves transparency between the higher education systems. The aim is to facilitate recognition of degrees and academic qualifications, mobility and exchanges between the institutions and the different countries. The participating countries have agreed on a comparable three cycle degree system for undergraduates (Bachelor degree) and graduates (Master and PhD degrees).

European Credit Transfer and accumulation System (ECTS)

The three cycle degree system is used with common tools. For example the European Credit Transfer and accumulation System (ECTS) which allows students to study abroad and get the full accreditation for the courses followed at another university. The recognition of qualifications is essential to allow student to study at different institutions in different countries. It also creates the opportunity for joint degrees; degree programmes where you study at multiple institutions.

To summarise, within the EHEA it became easy to move from one country to the other for the purpose of further study or employment, the attractiveness of European education has increased and people from non-European countries are coming to Europe to study and/or work. Europe has a broad, high quality advanced knowledge base to ensure that the community is benefitting from the European Research Area.

<http://www.mastersportal.eu/articles/451/the-european-higher-education-system.html>