

Response to Dr. Farrington's Comparative Study

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Have governments done their homework?

Yes, but...

1. They have done it largely with regard to legislative initiatives, with a few exceptions
2. Their responsibilities are not limited to providing the appropriate legal framework, the latter being only the beginning

What remains to be done in legislation?

- A majority of countries still have to deal with the issues of Joint Degrees (not only at Ma level), (transnational) quality assurance and LLL
- The countries that joined the BP in Berlin and will join in Bergen and after will have to amend or change their HE acts
- Ratify the Lisbon Convention

...but: there is more work to do

- Bologna to Berlin/Bergen: focus on legal framework
- The remaining years until 2010 will have to be dedicated to implementation (Ba/Ma programmes with defined learning outcomes, ECTS, DS, ...)
- *Trends IV* will highlight problems/good practice etc.
- The bulk of the work will have to be done by HEI, professors, non-academic staff, students
- This requires a sense of „ownership“ of the process by these players which is often difficult to foster

What governments can do in this phase of the process

Support their HEI by

- avoiding the impression that Bologna is imposed on HEI
- setting up adequate procedures for a consensual approach (nat. Bol. groups with HEI, students, etc.)
- providing the necessary autonomy (strong institutional leadership)
- not strangling them with overly detailed regulations
- providing sufficient funding (Bologna is not for free!)
- linking funding to reform objectives/ performance

But also legislation continues...

- HE evolves constantly, new situations calling for new solutions, e.g. LLL, AP(E)L
- QA, especially in cross-border provision (networks of European HEI, but also non-European or internet-based providers)
- Qualifications frameworks at national and European level

After the match is before the match*

- 2010 will not be the end but just the beginning of a new round of reforms, with challenges we may not even be aware of
- Bologna seems to have led in many countries to a new culture of dialogue between governments and HEI on the quality, respective responsibilities, quality of HE etc.
- Developing and intensifying this dialogue will be a good long term investment beyond 2010 because no side can do much without the other

* Quotation by a famous German football philosopher