

TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL REPORTS 2004 – 2005

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1. Main achievements since Berlin***1.1. Give a brief description of important developments, including legislative reforms***

In October 22 , 2003 Assembly of Montenegro adopted the new Law on Higher Education, which was created in accordance with Bologna Declaration objectives.

The Government of Montenegro had entrusted the University of Montenegro with the realization of structural reforms in the field of higher education and the adoption of a primary reformed legislative framework was logically the first stage of this process.

After several versions and thanks to the help of Europe Council's expert analysis of the Draft Law on University of Montenegro (2000) by authors Prof. Dr Jurgen Kohler (Germany) and Denis Farrington (Great Britain), and Prof. Dr Vera Stastna and Prof. Dr Virgilio Meira Soares (2003) final version was adopted by the Government of Montenegro and submitted to the Assembly of Montenegro for adoption.

The overall goal of the Law is to enable to higher education institutions in Montenegro maximal autonomy in activities, particularly in academic field with minimal mediation of the state, except when so is requested for the purpose of protecting public interest. Also, the aim is to enable that the mission of the University becomes to educate young people to be qualified citizens in democratic society and qualified workforce in European labor market and that this is delivered in compliance with new European standards.

The Law also prescribed adoption of University Statute within maximum three months after adoption the Law, what was done in January 2004. The Statute, contrary to the Law, needs to clarify, specify more thoroughly organization of University, structure of Board, Senate, etc..

The new Statute and other by-law acts and regulations for implementation have already been approved. All these documents were made in line with Bologna process. The first generation of students have been enrolled in academic year 2004/2005 according to the new rules in accordance with the objectives of Bologna Declaration.

2. National organisation***2.1. Give a short description of the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their competencies***

(For example, do higher education institutions report to different ministries?)

Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro is responsible for overall education policy in Montenegro.

Higher Education Council shall be responsible for achieving high quality higher education in the Republic of Montenegro.

2.2. Give a short description of the institutional structure

(For example, number of public/private universities/other HE institutions or numbers/percentage of students in public/private sector. To what extent are private and State higher education institutions covered by the same regulations?)

Structure

University of Montenegro is the only university in Montenegro. It exists as public university. It was officially founded in 1974 to become an umbrella for what is now:

-14 Faculties, 1 polytechnics college , 4 scientific research institutes, 4 centers, 1 university library, Rectorate

Figures

Today, the University of Montenegro has 12 200 students, 914 teaching staff and 520 administrative staff. About 3000 people from Montenegro are studying outside Montenegro. There are 500 students from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina studying at the University of Montenegro. There are graduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies.

Higher education may be provided by the universities and higher education institutions, which are licensed and accredited in accordance with this law.

A university or some other institution is founded as a public or private institution and has the capacity of a legal person acquired after being entered into an adequate register.

Based on this fact, the first private Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management started from September in Bar, Montenegro, enrolling 50 students. For the time being, Bachelor studies (3 years) and Master studies (2 years).

Public and private HE institutions are covered by the same Law on Higher Education.

Ministry of Education and Science issues a license to an institution, changes it and divests an institution of it.

2.3. Give a brief description of the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country

(National Bologna group, thematic working groups, composition and activities, stakeholder involvement)

Ministry of Education and Science received Tempus-Socrates grant Project "Creation of Montenegro Team of Bologna Promoters" for 2004-2005. Partners are LaSapienza University of Rome and Finland Ministry of Education. One of the activities proposed is to help set up National Teams of Bologna Promoters.

National Teams of Bologna Promoters is already set-up and includes Senior Academics, (Vice-)Rectors, Ministry Representative and Student Representatives, who are successful in introducing the Bologna principles in their institutions. They will be invited to advise colleagues in their country and occasionally from abroad. Some of the Bologna Promoters will also function as ECTS/DS Counsellors. In the frame of the Team are set-up Working Groups aimed to provide counselling to higher education institutions on the three Bologna priorities as defined by Ministers in Berlin:

- Quality Assurance (Internal and External)
- The Three Cycle System (Curricular Reform, Qualification Frameworks, Tuning)
- Recognition (ECTS, Diploma Supplement, EUROPASS, Lisbon Recognition)

Convention)

In addition, the Promoters should be able to present and explain the other Bologna Action lines.

National Bologna Committee was set-up, with the aim overseeing the implementation of the Bologna Process in Montenegro.

Montenegro Ministry of Education and Science already enabled involvement of stakeholder in the implementation of Bologna Process.

3. Quality assurance

The following questions have been included in the template at the request of the Working Group on Stocktaking.

3.1. National quality assurance systems should include a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.

Please specify the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.

The national body responsible for QA is Council for Higher Education.

Council for Higher Education is nominated by the Government.

The Council analyses the state and achievements in higher education, gives professional proposals to the Government for the improvement of higher education area, and in this regard has the following special authorities:

(a) to prepare the starting points for shaping the proposal of national higher education strategy; (b) to define the basic standards and norms for granting licenses and give opinion to the Ministry on awarding, altering or revoking of a license; (c) to give opinion for measures for appointment of academic staff; (d) to give opinion in the procedure for determining norms for higher education financing; (e) determines measures for the assessment of study programmes from the view of their international comparability and duration of studies; (f) undertakes periodical controls of licensed institutions quality and issues certificate on accreditation and reaccreditation; (g) undertakes periodical assessment of the quality of courses and programmes delivered by accredited institutions; (h) gives professional opinion and makes proposals to the Government depending on quality assessment, for financing of higher education institutions and assistance to students attending courses or programmes with institutions; (f) performs other activities prescribed by this law and foundation enactment.

The Council is particularly responsible for promotion of higher education quality in Montenegro.

Through the processes of licensing, quality assessment and accreditation, in accordance with professional and transparent methods, the Council assists higher education institutions in developing their possibilities and improving and maintaining the quality of their activities.

The Council shall form special commissions for evaluation and accreditation of institutions, and study programmes, and for certain fields of its activities, the Council may form the working entities, commissions and independent expert groups.

Foreign experts may be appointed as the members of the special commissions for evaluation and accreditation, and study programmes.

The Council comprises of 11 members appointed by the Government for a period of six years. The Council is made up of eight representatives who are prominent experts in the field of higher education, science and technology, proposed by the University and Academy of sciences and arts, and three representatives of economy and social activities, who are proposed by the Association of Employers of the Republic and the civil sector.

Organization and the manner of operation of the Council are more closely regulated by Rules of Procedure. Financial resources for the work of the Council are provided from the Budget

of the Republic.

3.2. National quality assurance systems should include a system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.

Describe the system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures, if any.

3.3. National quality assurance systems should include international participation, co-operation and networking.

Are international peers included in the governing board(s) of the quality assurance agency(ies)?

International experts may be included into Commissions for evaluation (prescribed by Law). Despite the existence of national systems for accreditation, Montenegro supports the networking of agencies and systems and believe that future is in intention of ENQA to set up a European Register for Quality Assurance Agencies, covering public, private and professional agencies, operating on regional and European level. Supportive of QA, the University of Montenegro has already been engaged into the TEMPUS project "Developing QA Standards at University of Montenegro". The University and international project consortium have already finished the self-evaluation stage of the project. In the third stage, this project will suggest remedial activities for improving quality standards and devise a fully-fledged QA system that will be maintained and improved in order to become a permanent quality control system. Montenegro ambition is to join ENQUA network. The activities thereof will soon be discussed with the consortium experts. The Open Society Institute Representative Office for Montenegro, the Government of Montenegro, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) are conducting a Capacity Development Program (CDP) for the Republic of Montenegro aimed to improve administrative decision-making in accordance with established European standards and standards recognized by democratic societies. Within this program, a decision was made to appoint an International Expert Consultant (ALOJZ KRALJ, Professor Emeritus Member of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Art) on a short-term contract, for Quality Assurance (QA) at the Ministry of Education and Science. The Government of Montenegro has foreseen fundamental reconstruction and is in the process of comprehensively restructuring the entire educational/training system according to the Strategic Plan for Education Reform for the Period between 2003/04 and in conformance with the new Law on Higher Education (HE) adopted in 2003. This consultancy was limited, it being primarily focused on the advancement of HE in Montenegro. The outcome and the results of this consultancy are provided in the report, they being the yield of a five-day intensive interactive work carried out at Podgorica, Montenegro, from 22-26 November 2004.

Please add any general comments, reflections and/or explanations to the material on quality assurance in the stocktaking report.

The Council of HE has already adopted rules, standards and criteria as procedure for initial accreditation for institutions and programs. Accreditations were completed for three programs and one private HE institution. Therefore, we conclude that some pilot experience exists in evaluation, in institutional and program evaluation. Some initial sets of criteria also exist because they have already been applied for accreditation. The conclusion is, what is most needed is a refinement and opening of these processes and criteria across the Montenegro borders.

Do not recommend the creation or establishment, for the time being, of a national agency

for ENQA accreditation, because it could be too costly, time consuming and of questionable benefits. We would rather recommend starting of negotiations with selected countries for obtaining agreed services for a reasonable price, or even better, of starting a joint agency, which could serve two or more countries.

4. The two-cycle degree system

The two-cycle degree system is covered by the stocktaking exercise. Please add any comments, reflections and/or explanations to the stocktaking report.

The two cycle degree-system was established long period ago and was based on 4+2 scheme. Actual two cycle degree system is based mostly on 3+2, a few faculties use scheme 4+1.

5. Recognition of degrees and periods of study

Recognition of degrees and periods of study is covered by the stocktaking exercise. Please add any comments, reflections and/or explanations to the stocktaking report.

Recognition of Diplomas and Foreign Qualifications is a very important issue in the overall process of higher education. SCG ratified Lisbon Strategy in March 2004, which obliges Montenegro to start the real implementation of Lisbon Strategy, since the recognition of foreign diplomas and qualifications is also set as a priority at the ministerial meeting in Berlin.

ENIC centre, as a major tool for Lisbon Strategy Implementation was established in the Ministry of Education and Science, and keeps constant contact with all the other ENIC/NARIC centres throughout Europe, and exchanges information on various education systems, as well as different problems in the process of recognition. Each country has its own rules and procedures related to the recognition of foreign diplomas and qualifications. There are also differences between academic and professional qualifications. Ministry of Education and Science prepared a project "Development of ENIC in Montenegro", with two EU partners (Ministry of Education and Sports of Slovenia /Recognition Office/ and ENIC/NARIC of the Netherlands). The project foresees the creation of rules and procedures for recognizing foreign diplomas and qualifications, so that the whole process could be facilitated. It also foresees the creation of ENIC web site with updated information on education system of Montenegro and also training of ENIC staff of Montenegro.

Ministry of Education and Science of Montenegro is also planning to conclude bilateral agreements with countries in the Region, to facilitate the recognition process in these countries and increase the mobility of students, as well as the graduates and teaching staff.

6. Doctoral studies and research

6.1. Give a short description of the organisation of third cycle studies

(For example, direct access from the bachelor level, balance between organised courses, independent study and thesis)

By Law on Higher Education (Oct 22, 2003) diploma of academic title of doctor of philosophy - after completing study programme lasting up to 3 years, after obtaining academic undergraduate studies diploma which last minimum five years and defending doctoral dissertation (system 3+2+3). For Bachelor and Master studies student needs to earn

180 and 120 ECTS credits respectively. For Ph.D program 180 ECTS points.
Taught courses are obligatory part of the doctoral phase.

A doctorate can be followed and awarded at two or more universities together (joint or double degree). This may include universities from other European countries (by Law on Higher Education this is enabled).

6.2. What are the links between HE and research in your country?

(For example, what percentage of publicly-funded research is conducted within HE institutions?)

HE institutions include research work. Research at HE institutions is publicly funded by Ministry of Education & Science, but scarcely - taking into account our economical state.

7. Mobility of students and staff

7.1. Describe the main factors influencing mobility of students from as well as to your country *(For instance funds devoted to mobility schemes, portability of student loans and grants, visa problems)*

Our students are very motivated to use some mobility schemes, scholarships to continue study abroad, especially in developed western countries. Government offers limited number of grants for this purpose. Fortunately enough, TEMPUS office and CEEPUS office are opened in the Ministry, so that Tempus Individual Mobility Grants are being used to increase mobility of teaching staff, students, as well as the mobility of students through CEEPUS grants. There is also World University Service (WUS-Austria) at the University of Montenegro for increasing students mobility.
Visa problems are the main discouraging factors and are obstacles which prevent desirable level of students mobility.

7.2. Describe any special measures taken in your country to improve mobility of students from as well as to your country

Ministry and University of Montenegro is trying to sign contracts with foreign partners to facilitate mobility of students from as well as to our country. The main problem is lack of funds allocated for this purpose.

7.3. Describe the main factors influencing mobility of teachers and staff from as well as to your country *(For instance tenure of appointment, grant schemes, social security, visa problems)*

First, visa problems concerning the mobility of our teachers and staff. Secondly, inaccessibility of grant schemes (Socrates, etc) for our country.

7.4. Describe any special measures taken in your country to improve mobility of academic teachers and staff from as well as to your country

The Ministry and University of Montenegro are trying to sign contracts with foreign partners to facilitate mobility of teachers and staff from as well as to our country. The main problem is lack of funds allocated to this purpose.

8. Higher education institutions and students

8.1. Describe aspects of autonomy of higher education institutions

Is autonomy determined/defined by law? To what extent can higher education institutions decide on internal organisation, staffing, new study programmes and financing?

Autonomy is prescribed by the Law.

According to the Law, an institution has the following rights:

- (a) to innovate higher education within its license;
- (b) to provide a study program of any educational level for obtaining the necessary or adequate knowledge in view of accomplishing higher education aims;
- (c) to develop independently and apply curricula and research projects;
- (d) determines curricula to be realized and subjects to be studied;
- (e) determines conditions for student admission and methods of teaching and assessment of students' knowledge;
- (f) elects management and governing bodies and determines their composition, scope of activities and mandate;
- (g) elects academic and other staff;
- (h) awards honorary titles.

The manner in which freedoms for academic staff and students are exercised is determined by the statute of the institution, in the manner prescribed by this law.

According to Law, an institution is autonomous in performing its activities :

- (a) shall have property rights in accordance with this law
- (b) employ academic and other staff
- (c) conclude contracts for purchase of goods and services
- (d) establish legal relations with students
- (e) found special profit making organizational forms for educational and research purposes
- (f) conclude contracts with other institutions in Montenegro
- (g) conclude contracts also with institutions at international level
- (h) have other authorities needed for performing its activities successfully.

8.2. Describe actions taken to ensure active participation from all partners in the process

Active participation from all partners in the process - government, ministry, higher education institutions, students, teachers, staff, stakeholders is prescribed by the Law. Academic staff, students, non-academic staff and independent members are present in the Managing Board, which is accountable for the overall operation of an institution (defined by University Statute).

8.3. How do students participate in and influence the organisation and content of education at universities and other higher education institutions and at the national level?

(For example, participation in University Governing Bodies, Academic Councils etc)

The Law has stipulated that students take part in decision-making through their representatives at Managing Board of the university and faculties as well as in evaluation of the programs of university. Also, students participate in Academic Council. Five members elected among students, of which four undergraduate students and one representative of postgraduate students are members of Council. They make 20% of Council's members.

9. The social dimension of the Bologna Process

9.1. Describe measures which promote equality of access to higher education

Higher education is accessible to all persons under conditions prescribed by the Law and the Statute of an institution. By the Law it is prescribed: "In exercising the right to higher education no discrimination is allowed on any grounds such as sex, race, marital status, colour of skin, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national, ethnic or other origin, belonging to a national community, material status, disability, birth, or on similar grounds, position or circumstances".

10. Developments in lifelong learning

10.1. What measures have been taken by your country to encourage higher education institutions in developing lifelong learning paths?

Sincerely, not serious measures have been taken to encourage higher education institutions in developing lifelong learning paths. This objective is still in phase of academic contemplations.

10.2. Describe any procedures at the national level for recognition of prior learning/flexible learning paths

Diploma and Diploma Supplement are submitted to the University of Montenegro aiming to compare the higher education systems. The nominated commission at the University makes a decision on recognition of the diploma or part of the education level. In the process of recognition i.e. equivalence procedure, educational system of the country in which the foreign diploma was obtained, educational programme, conditions of admission to the educational programme, rights provided by that diploma in the country in which it was obtained and other circumstances important for recognition i.e. equivalence are considered.

In case a certificate of a foreign higher education institution is submitted for assessment, such an institution must be recognized by the European Universities Association or accredited by a national or nationally recognized body.

11. Contribution to the European dimension in higher education

11.1 Describe any legal obstacles identified by your country and any progress made in removing legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees and/or joint study programmes

By Law are defined joint degrees/ joint study programmes. Yet, joint degrees are closely connected to mobility issues; at this point mobility is closely connected with funds especially allocated for this purpose (what is our weakest point).

11.1.1. Describe the extent of integrated study programmes leading to joint degrees or double degrees

Integrated study programmes leading to joint and double degrees are in the process of preparation.

11.1.2. How have these programmes been organised? (joint admissions, mobility of students, joint exams, etc.)

Integrated study programmes leading to joint and double degrees are in the process of preparation.

11.2. Describe any transnational co-operation that contributes to the European dimension in higher education

Cooperation with LaSapienza University -Rome and Bolton Institute -UK in the frame of two Tempus projects really helped us to become acquainted and to introduce European dimension at University of Montenegro.

11.3. Describe how curriculum development reflects the European dimension (For instance foreign language courses, European themes, orientation towards the European labour market)

Certain study programmes, especially economics, law and engineering studies, are in the development phase, working on establishment of partnerships with the EU universities, through various international projects and bilateral agreements. The new curricula at those faculties include the subjects leading to the quicker integration in EHA. The whole process is still at the very beginning.

12. Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

12.1. Describe actions taken by your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA

Ministry of Education and Science were organizers of numerous activities oriented towards the promotion of European dimension of higher education in last four years. There were also several international conferences supported by Tempus program ("On the Road to the Implementation of ECTS in SEE", "Bologna Process - Challenges and Requirements"), as well as many regional conferences supported by Stability Pact and Adriatic Ionian Initiative.

13. Concluding comments

13.1. Give a description of your national Bologna strategies

Generally speaking, commitment and national Bologna strategies of Montenegro towards reforming higher education system in compliance with the pledges declared in Bologna Declaration is very strong and it will remain such in future. The state has already endorsed that concept as it fully corresponds to the needs related to the joining European integration processes.

Needless to say, higher education leaders have already endorsed all ongoing activities focused on creating of common European higher education space. National strategy is based on development and implementation of Bologna Action lines: Quality Assurance (Internal and External), The Three Cycle System (Curricular Reform, Qualification Frameworks, Tuning), Recognition (ECTS, Diploma Supplement, EUROPASS, Lisbon Recognition Convention), Promotion of mobility, Promotion of the European dimension in higher education, Lifelong learning, Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area, European Higher Education Area and European Research Area – two pillars of the knowledge based society. Strategy is to foster the Process towards reaching concrete goal – to be a part the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) until 2010.

13.2. Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for your country

The factors that can affect not only implementation of the Bologna Strategies, development of Higher Education in Montenegro in general may be divided into two groups: a) internal readiness of the academic community to accept changes and b) external factors.

a)Regardless of it being conditioned by purely conformist reasons (loss of previously attained undeserved privileges) or deficiency of information, the internal readiness of the some part of academic community to accept changes is unpredictable and may affect the reform.

b)The main external factor is the insecurity of the funding realised by University, particularly in relation to the Republic budget crisis