

MASTER THESIS



Comparative analysis of the educational policy of the Bologna process: complexity of implementation of the initial implications of the Bologna declaration in the European Union member – states.



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Preface

The Bologna Process represents an interesting and important process of internationalization in the sphere of the higher education. Stepping ahead the European Union, it became an international dimension for all countries understanding the necessity and vital importance of the higher education development.

The fact of higher education development remains a crucial one for Kazakhstan as well. There is a strong understanding of the higher education development to align the country to the 50 most competitive economies in the world. To contribute this idea, it is necessary to study the best practices of the countries that succeed in the Higher education development. Nowadays the Bologna process became a synonym of the higher education development and high standardization. Besides, it represents the most interesting dimension launched in the sphere of higher education.

The master thesis is elaborated with the considerable support of Frans K.M. van Nispen, who made a big contribution as a mentor to understanding the basics of the Europeanization organization and policy. With him, I would like to thank the second reader, Dr. Jacko van Ast for significant help and assistance.

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Abstract

Signing the Declaration supposing the unification of acceptability of the degrees obtained in the European universities, student mobility, quality assurance, and European cooperation in the higher education as general seeking for the establishment of the European Higher Education Area by 2010 seems very clear. However, even taking into account all the attainments in reformation, there are numerous differences in outcomes of the Bologna Process, which may be explained by the difference of 'starting points' and specifications of the administrative system of the nation-states. Thus, the Bologna process, to some extent, "is going to be a far more comprehensive project" for the nation-states involved in. (Tauch, 2004, p. 287)

Such ambiguous project requests specific attention from the side of the public administration. The main content of the public administration represents higher education administration changing, thus leading to deregulation of the whole system, bringing certain results. It is necessary to mention that there is a lot of work in the area of the PA should be done in order to bring the European Union Bologna process member-states to the results outlined in the Declaration on higher education. Thus, the master thesis is looking for explanation of the differentiation of the nation states reaction on the Bologna expectation and find out possible ways of more successful implementation of Bologna intentions.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter is looking for the provision of an insight into the background of the main concept of the master thesis. The primary position is given to the description of the research question – the central point of the master thesis. The topics of this part of the research represent the problem definition, its design, and organization. Besides, this chapter is constructed in a way to explain the purpose of investigation of the main questions and to give some insight to the aim of the entire work. This feature is going to be reached through the derivation of the sub-questions coming out the main question. Furthermore, the introduction chapter contains the overall valuation and intention of the thesis and gives a brief outline of the research.

1.1 Master Thesis Research Question Definitions

Problem Analysis

Signing the Bologna Declaration in 1999, the European Union states acknowledged a new turn in regional policy prioritization. Since that time the countries started paying a great attention to a wide range of transformations and reorganizations in the field of education policy on both national and international levels. Many states passed through changes in the higher education after the acceptance of the Bologna declaration. So, a lot of work was applied for realization of the ambiguous projects outlined in the Declaration. In most cases, the public administration faced with moving the authority from the nation – state level to the local one. The consequences resulted in structural changes of the higher education administration. Thus, the universities regulation that always has been the privilege of the nation states has become the responsibility of the universities themselves. This feature has brought market-oriented, market driven regulations provided by the university authorities, non – governmental organizations, and agencies.

The approval of the Lisbon agenda also gave a special priority to the ‘new’ education policy development in the EU in the light of becoming “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010” in the world, thus

giving the Bologna Process a new impulse for the further implementation of its intentions in the member – states.

(<http://www.euractiv.com/en/agenda2004/lisbon-agenda/article-117510>) The domain of public administration has become the main one in the questions of reforms provision aimed for realization of the Bologna process “action lines”. The entire higher education administration system moved towards changing. At this situation, it is necessary to mention the difference of the ‘starting points’ complicating the Bologna intentions implementation. The problem of the Bologna process is also concentrated on the difference of public administration structures of the member-states. The Declaration, being designed as a single document that could bring commonness into the academic degrees issue, accountability, student and teaching staff mobility, did not take into consideration the particularities of the member-states’ PA. Thus, every country followed its own way in applying the Bologna process statements. The consequences led to differences of ‘levels of implementation’, thus complicating the entire ‘project’ realization.

Objective of the research

The aim of the master thesis is to learn out the reasons that cause difficulties for implementation of the Bologna process in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. As those changes brought by the Bologna process are linked to the public administration domain, the research scrutinizes the changes made in the area of higher education. In such case, there is observed the chain of changes and reformations taking place in the area of education policy of those countries. Besides, it is considered to examine case study states with respect of adoption and implementation of the internationalization standards and developments in the sphere of the higher education. Besides, the work concentrates on the issues, problems, and challenges appeared in the post-Bologna public administration. The key objective of the thesis is concerned on observation of the Bologna expectations implementation through the theory of Europeanization. According to it, there are overviewed the ‘internationalization’ and ‘domestication’ factors – the first and the second image impact of the Process on the case study countries. In other words, the thesis is going to scrutinize the modifications made in the member-states under the pressure of internationalization of the higher education policy and to give the description of the

grounds that cause differences during the implementation of the common objectives of the Bologna in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Design of the Research, the Main Research Question, and Sub-Questions

The thesis is designed in a way to complete the puzzle of transformation in the area of the public administration going under the Bologna process “action lines” in the UK and the Netherlands, and to give explanations to the facts of complexity and difference occurring during its implementation.

The thesis is based on the explanatory case studies. Observing the situations regarding the proceeding of the Bologna process objectives in the selected countries we are going to follow their ‘cause – and – effect’ relationships through making a cross – case analysis, thus summarizing the findings from the explanatory case studies. (Yin, 2003, pp. 69; 109)

Due to the objectives settled, there was formulated the central question of the research, which is: ***How can the implementation of the Bologna process be improved?***

The central question indicated above is worked out in the following sub – questions:

1. What is the Bologna process? What are the expectations from the Bologna process in the EU states?
2. What is the affection of the Bologna process in the theoretical framework of Europeanization?
3. How is the European dimension in higher education designed in a way to affect on different implementation of the Bologna incentives?
4. How did the selected states respond to modifications brought by the Bologna process into the sphere of higher education?
5. What are the reasons of differences the UK and the Netherlands face during implementation of the Bologna ‘action lines’ that that affect the outcomes?
6. What causes the differences in Bologna process intentions implementation?
7. What recommendations may be made on the basis of the case study observations?

The sub-questions mentioned above are designed in a way to draw an image of fulfillment of the Bologna expectations in a limited period by the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The extra attention is paid at organization of British and Dutch policies in the area of higher education. Alongside, the research also seeks to provide the examination of particularity of political systems and administrative apparatuses of those countries and their changing abilities going under the pressure of dependent, independent, and intervening variables. This observation helps us to understand what kind of political and institutional changes the countries face during the way of the Bologna process implementation.

Now let us address to the questions of the scientific and social relevancies of the proceeding thesis, thus describing the necessity and importance of the topic of the research.

1.1.1 Scientific and social relevance of the thesis

The scientific relevance of the thesis is based on the comparative analysis of the higher education policy in two countries: the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Narrowing down the task, the research will contain the description of the differences in educational policy modernization and reformation affected by the common factor of internationalization. Besides, the master thesis scrutinizes the field of European Union policy-making processes' impact on the national policies in the case study states.

Becoming a key theme in the spotlight of the Lisbon agenda, the Bologna process represents a border – crossing incentive. From one side, it changes the basis of the national higher education policy and, from another- it brings new directives into the education process, thus moving EU states towards the “most competitive, knowledge based economy” by 2010. (Lisbon Agenda)

Studying the outcomes brought by the ‘action lines’ implementation in the sphere of higher education in the UK and the Netherlands by the end of the research there are going to be presented recommendations describing the way in which the desirable results of the Bologna process may take place. (Robson, 2002, pp. 6 – 7)

The matter of the higher education policy modernization in terms of the Bologna process carries out crucial consequences that already found their reflections on the higher education policy-making and institutionalization. Bologna process

transformed entire higher education administration system as the Bologna process has become more than the inter-ministerial agreement providing accessible education for the students within the EU. Being financed by the European Commission, the Process obtained the statute of supranational regulator, which can affect the area of higher education that has previously been considered as a domain of the nation-state. For better understanding of methods of impact and outcomes of the Bologna process, there is used the theory of Europeanization, according to which we can study dual and contradicted nature of the Bologna process, thus trying to answer the main question of why the results of the Process implementation differ from the initial expectations.

So, in accordance with written above, the scientific relevance of the master thesis is objected on the observation and investigation of the higher education policy outcomes of the Bologna process in the selected countries. Besides, one of the most important parts is dedicated for scrutinizing the attempts to be done in order to reach the successful result of the ambiguous project held under the supranational aegis.

Furthermore, the social relevance of the master thesis is aimed to description of the factors classified as internationalization (Europeanization) and domestication and explanation of their affect on the basic outcomes of the Bologna Process. (Featherstone and Radaelli; 2003; pp. 5-6) That actually means observation of the degree of preparation of the case study states to adjust successfully the national policies in order to keep up with the directives of the Declaration. We can observe how the national higher education reforms were held, as well as what complications were met. Consequently, we may scrutinize the differentiation in outcomes, terms of implementation of the intentions, and the following success of the Bologna process.

1.1.2 Methods of inquire of the master thesis

This sub-chapter is devoted to observation of the methods of inquire that are used in the master thesis. The main document forming the basis for the research of the public administration reforms made in the sphere of the higher education is the Bologna Declaration. As a consequence, the big attention is paid to the work with primary sources of information as declarations, official reports on the realization of the Bologna process expectations, annual observations, published official documentation of the European Commission, OECD, and the Bologna process working groups. Furthermore, the primary sources contain the European Union

working papers and the relevant statistical data. The theoretical framework of the thesis is based on the theory of Europeanization designed by Featherstone and Radaelli, and contributed in the book of “The Politics of Europeanization”. The critical part consists of the analysis of the works of the scholars specialized on the specific field of higher education within the area of public administration, those as Van Der Wende, Luitjen – Lub, Keeling, Trondal, Barboza, Shattock, and Tauch. Thus, there are scrutinized and analyzed the views of academics regarding the changes brought by the Bologna process. Those observations are used to make prospective suggestions in respect of improvement of the Bologna process implementation. Thus, the master thesis tries to invoke all ways to follow the cause – consequence relation as well as the best practice and benchmarking application in the sphere of the public administration and propose the most effective ways of smoothening of the pan-European education development process.

1.2 The role of variables in the master thesis

This sub-chapter is dedicated to introduction of the dependent, independent, and intervening variables in order to describe the main question of the master thesis. Thus, we are going to follow the dependent variable of the Bologna expectations, which represent the Europeanization process; dependent variable of the nation state education policy change, which is the main subject of change; and the intervening variable – the institutionalization process going alongside with the education policy change.

1.2.1 Dependent and Independent Variables

This sub-chapter is designed to define the dependent and independent variables of the Bologna process. Following the Europeanization and internationalization theory, it becomes obvious that independent variable represents the process of internationalization and Europeanization going out of the Joint Declaration on higher education. Consequently, the dependent variable is the nation state higher education policy that became a subject of changes brought by the internationalization and Europeanization.

Observing inter-relation and reciprocity of dependent and independent variables we may learn out the reasons of complexity and difference of implementation of the expectations outlined in the Bologna declaration.

1.2.2 The Intervening Variables

The attempts towards explanation of the relationship of the dependent and independent variables are not complete without observation of the Europeanization process intervening variables.

To answer the question regarding the divergent outcomes of the Bologna process in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, we should take into consideration the intervening variables of “domestic ‘institutional’ conditions” brought by the Europeanization process (Featherstone, 2005, pp. 2-3)

The factor of institutional adaptation of higher education institutions of the domestic level to the European is a very important one in the realization of the ambiguous higher education intention. There are certain different consequences affecting the overall results of the Bologna expectations. The diversity of the outcomes and failures in some cases are explained by the difference in political system, economic situation, and “institutional cultures”. It goes without saying that the intervening variables of the political system and economic condition of the countries are playing a crucial role. Nevertheless, the current master thesis is going to scrutinize the factor of the institutional adaptation as the primary intervening variable in Bologna expectations implementation process. Regarding the issue of institutional adaptation, Radaelli proposes the idea explaining the importance of the intervening variable, according to which the result of the Europeanization process “is that the impact of Europeanization is contingent on institutional factors. A corollary is that Europeanization will produce diversity rather than convergence because domestic institutions differ widely”. (Radaelli, 2000, <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-008.htm#Contents>) The subject of intervening variable – the case of institutionalization – may be described as “intentional and unintentional” matter of Europeanization resulting from the adaptation factor to the European Union legitimacy system. To study this variable, there is given a special emphasis to the description of the institutional structure of the selected states that cause difference in applying of the Bologna implications. Thus, the master thesis

observes the intervening variable through the following aspects as (Featherstone, 2003):

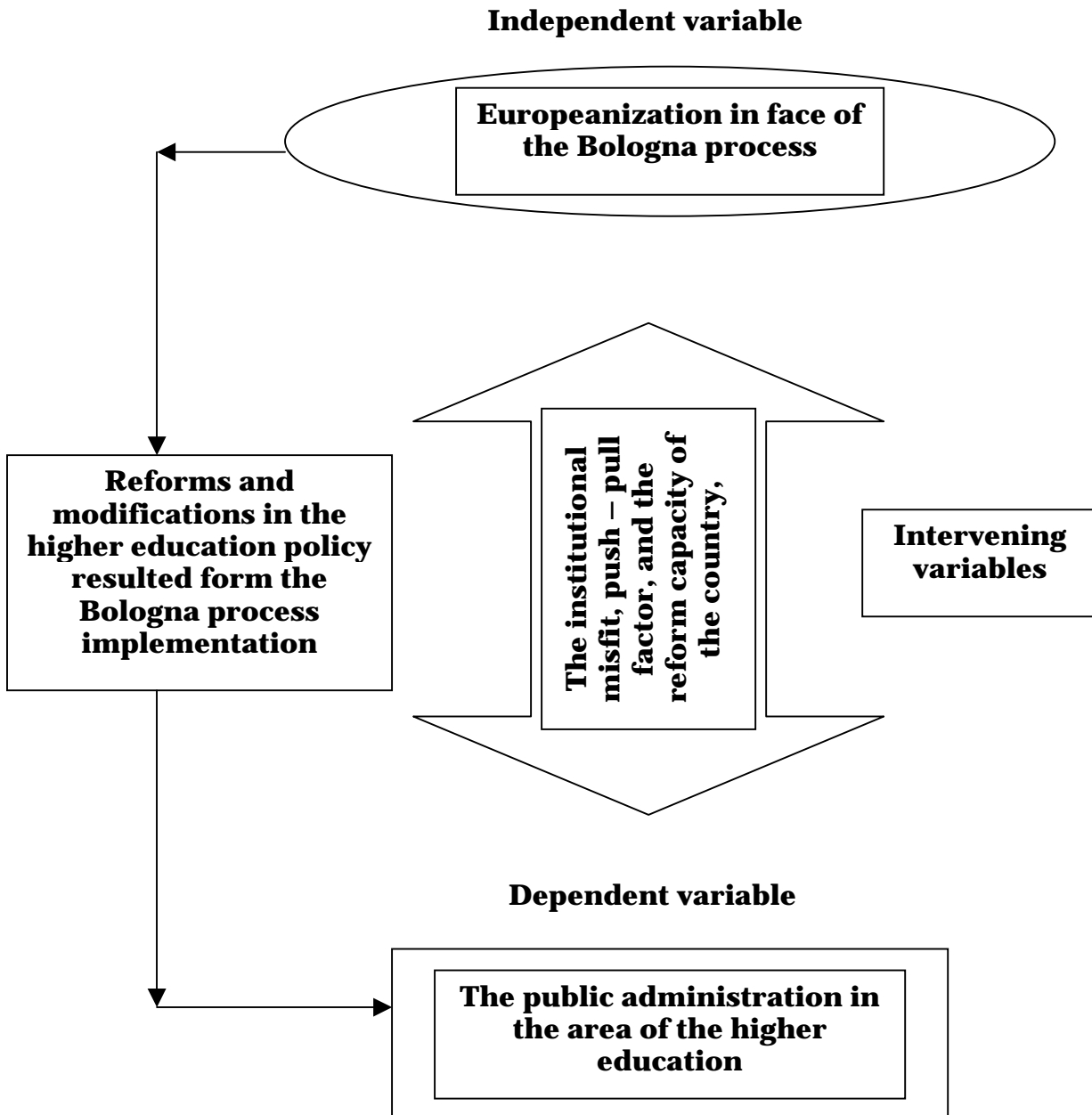
- *The ‘Misfit’ between EU and domestic factors. The reflection of the adaptation most likely when European Union does not challenge core structures and practices.*
- *The ‘Push-pull’ factor is being caused by the adaptation process during which there is an institutional misfit and mobilisation of domestic actors in support.*
- *The ‘Reform capacity’: a typology of domestic conditions producing high or low capacity for change.*

Summarizing the written above, it is necessary to notice that dependent, independent, and intervening variables are used in the research for explanation of the diversified outcomes of the Bologna process, that are studied on the examples of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Furthermore, based on the theory of Featherstone and Radaelli on internationalization, the research tries to examine the higher education policy transformation that is going under the permanent impact of the factor of Europeanization.

For better understanding of the relation of dependent, independent, and intervening variables within the context of the Bologna process, let us present the following flow-chart. This flow-chart gives us an opportunity to scrutinize all variables at once: the pressures coming from the Europeanization factor causing inevitable changes in the nation state domain thus emerging the public workers to introduce the reforms working out the entire Bologna project.

Figure 1

The flowchart of the dependent, independent, and intervening variables affecting the higher education within the context of the Bologna process



**Based the classification of Yin, R.K. (2003) "Applications of Case Study Research", second edition, Sage Publications, Inc., pp. 71 – 75*

CHAPTER II

Theoretical Framework

This chapter is devoted to description of the theoretical framework of the master thesis. The observation is concentrated on the theory of Europeanization and internationalization of the European space by Featherstone and Radaelli. According to this theory, the research scrutinizes the factors of internationalization (Europeanization) and domestication of the changes brought into the higher education administration by the Joint Declaration. Besides, it is necessary to mention that the chapter alongside with internationalization and domestication observes the matter of centralization of the processes launched to accomplish the Bologna expectations. Thus, this chapter reviews the theoretical basis of the Process from these quite contradicting sides.

Before starting the main discussion on the theoretical part, let us distinguish the definition of Europeanization in terms of internationalization and domestication. According to Featherstone and Radaelli theory, the Europeanization represents the processes of “structural change, variously affecting actors and institutions, ideas and interests”. (Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003, p. 3) The Bologna process in the context of Europeanization is aimed for applying new standards, thus transforming the nation state higher education policy within the ‘new structural conditions’. (Featherstone and Radaelli, 2003, p. 174)

The internationalization at the context of the master thesis is “more broadly defined” concept than the Europeanization. (Risse, Cowles, and Caporaso, 2001, pp. 3 – 4) Thus, the internationalization may be defined as a process beyond the scope of Europeanization, thus affecting the political and structural transformations on the global area. The Bologna process implies the internationalization as a the whole of “integration of international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery” of the higher education. (Knight, 2003, pp. 1)

On the opposite side, the process of domestication represents the policy transfer of policy from one European country to several other countries”, thus affecting on the European decision making process. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 27)

2.1 General information on the process of Europeanization

Before starting our discussion, first, let us define the term of Europeanization. Being such a widely – spread formulation, the term of Europeanization has become a point of disagreement and trade among scholars. Mostly it is applied to explain a new trend of various changes in the political, social, economic, international relations, and social life throughout the European area. Especially it is worthy of mentioning the fact restoring to which the “Europeanization” term is understood like “a synonym for European regional integration or even convergence”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 3-4) Viewing the term through the prism of Social Sciences, we can define that Europeanization may diverse in meaning starting from history and culture, ending with politics, society, and economics. For better understanding let us set the term of Europeanization in the context of it’s using during the work on the master thesis research. From the context of Featherstone and Radaelli description we can define the Europeanization as a: “process of structural change, variously affecting actors and institutions, ideas and interests”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 3-4)

The concept of Europeanization has gained its popularity in view of continuing process of international, European in particular, integration. Being defined in a ‘wide’ – meaning way by Featherstone and Radaelli, there is number of other definitions of the concept of Europeanization observing it from different angles. Thus, according to the definition applied by Börzel and Risse, the process of Europeanization as a matter of a domestic change going under the top – down “Europeanization” affection, thus becoming “a subject to European policy making”. (Börzel, Risse 2000, pp. 3 – 4; Vink, 2002, pp. 4) In accordance with Börzel and Risse, the process of Europeanization is directly linked to European institution building and its reflection on the changes going on the domestic level. Thus, they tend to describe the Europeanization factor as: “both the processes by which European integration affects domestic change and the outcome of this change”. (Börzel, Risse, 2000, pp. 4 – 5) Hix and Goetz formulate the other one concept regarding the process of Europeanization. Thus, according to their theory, it was describes as: “a process of change in national institutional and policy practices that can be attributed to European integration”. (Vink, 2002, pp. 4; see also Hix and Goetz, 2000, pp. 27) The distinctive point of difference between those two approaches for the description of the Europeanization process is the fact that Börzel and Risse in their studies

concentrated more on a territorial politics, thus narrowing down in descriptions the entire concept to changes occurred as a top-down effect in policy practices. (Vink, 2002, pp. 5)

The process of Europeanization may be related on all the aspects of social and public life. At this case, we may switch from specification of the term to generalization. Thus, for example, as Olsen, who does not apply any concepts for the process of the Europeanization, considering that this term may be transformed and applied to every field of public administration area. Olsen formulates his opinion on the matter of Europeanization as the one that: “has no single precise or stable meaning, it has been argued that the term is so unwieldy that it is futile to use it as an organizing concept” (Olsen, 2001, p.1;

http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/wp02_2.htm; Kassim, Peters, and Wright, 2000, pp. 238)

Taking a glance on a range of definitions given by the scholars listed above, it is necessary to mention that the master thesis adheres to the one given by Featherstone and Radaelli. Besides, it is worthy of noticing the possibility of so named “conceptual stretching” of the term of Europeanization. (Vink, 2002, pp.5 – 6) At this case, Radaelli outlines the necessity of separation of what is Europeanization and what is not. Thus, according to Radaelli, “Europeanization should not be confused with convergence, neither with harmonization, nor with political integration. (Vink, 2002, pp. 5; Radaelli, 2000, pp. 5) In current case of working on the issue of implementation of the Bologna process, the concept of Europeanization should be understood as following: “convergence can be a consequence of European integration, but it must not be used synonymously with Europeanization because there is a difference between a process and its consequences”. (Vink, 2002, pp. 5 – 6; Radaelli, 2000, pp. 5)

2.2 The classification of the Europeanization process and its affect on the higher education policy formation

Certain conclusions might be made in respect of the case of Bologna process continuation, taking place in the area of the European Union. Uniting the states under the aegis of one common idea of establishment of one ‘knowledge- based

economy' the European community moves towards creation of the higher education area. This approach is objected the EU to be a competitive alternative to the American economy and to consolidate the public administration processes taking place at this region. The subject of higher education administration became a key element of changes the Bologna declaration brought into the EU. This influence of the Bologna process on the nation state higher education policy changing shows us a good example of supranational second image impact. At this situation, the state should 'download' the (higher education) policy coming from the European level to the nation state one with minimum threats. In other words, the Bologna intentions should be applied in a most effective way. At the same moment politicians on both levels of single – state and European think about minimization of the changes brought into the higher education with implication of the Bologna intentions.

Thus, the theory on Europeanization can help us to scrutinize theoretically the process of Bologna expectations implementation within the framework of the higher education administration in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Furthermore, there are going to be overviewed the public administration flows going under the pressures of the Europeanization and European integration.

Before scrutinizing ourselves on the Europeanization and European integration processes, let us distinct those terms. First of all, there is going to be paid attention to the subject of the European integration. The European Integration represents the obvious development of the economic and political integration processes taking place in the area of the European Union and relates to the matter of history and international relations (Gillingham, 2003, pp. viii). Thus, the term of 'European Integration' indicates the political, economical, social, and cultural integration of the EU member – states.

At the other side, there is a phenomenon of the Europeanization – the term, which is still raising discourses and debates. Nowadays the term of Europeanization appears to be the one to describe the trends and processes undergoing in the European Union. Most of scholars even tend to discuss on the Europeanization process of the nation state as "a growing laboratory for studying conditions for institutional and policy transformation". (Trondal, 2002, p. 333) The complexity of this process is in permanent changes, affecting all the object and subjects involved into it, as well as "ideas and interests". (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 3 - 4) Vink also notices that the Europeanization process may be overviewed

as the process of 'domestic change' resulted from the impact of the European supranational governance and European integration. (Vink, 2002, pp. 1 – 2)

The current master thesis is going to be based on both two processes of European integration and the Europeanization. Therefore, it is necessary outline that the Bologna process in terms of higher education public administration is going to be scrutinized in accordance to the Europeanization theory rather than the theory of European integration.

Coming up to the theory of Featherstone and Radaelli it is necessary to point out the complicated nature of the entire process of Europeanization. For its better understanding, it is necessary to scrutinize the theory of Europeanization from two different angles: the minimalist and maximalist. In a minimal sense, the Europeanization is understood as: "a response to the policies of the European Union". The maximalist view is look on the Europeanization process as a development towards a "structural change that it entails fundamentally be of a phenomenon exhibiting similar attributes to those that predominate in, or closely identified with, 'Europe'". (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 3 – 4) Both those minimalist and maximalist classifications are perfectly fit to the Bologna process. In accordance to this classification, we can discuss on the minimal 'response' as the matter of implication of the Bologna incentives by all the Process member states. In other words, it is fair to notice that after the signing the common declaration, the counties accorded on implication of all the statements of the document. Thus, the declaration member states chose the matter of changing the domestic public affairs in the area of higher education, introducing more authority to the universities, for instance. The maximalist point is related to the institutionalization processes going alongside the implementation of the Bologna incentives, following the common idea of creation of the European Higher Education Area, and enforcing the development of the single European identity. For the better understanding the minimalist and maximalist approaches, let us follow the figure 2 presented on the following page.

Figure 2

Illustration of the Minimalist and Maximalist views on the process of Europeanization from the position of the Bologna process

<i>Europeanization going under the Bologna process</i>	
<i>Minimalist view</i>	<i>Represents the domestic ‘response’ to the Bologna process policies developed and accepted by the supranational bodies and implemented by the member nation – states</i>
<i>Maximalist view</i>	<i>Represents more ‘global’ vision of the Europeanization process related to the concept of ‘Europe’ closely identified with creation of the single European identity through enabling the Bologna incentives.</i>

**Source: Featherstone and Radaelli classification, Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 4 – 5*

The development and integration processes going in the world providing conditions for the usage of specific term able to describe the full range of changes in policy, politics, society, and economy brought by the Bologna declaration. Thus, taking a deeper overview on the maximalist and minimalist descriptive points, we get to an oversight of typology of Europeanization process.

The typology of the process of Europeanization may partly answer the question regarding the differentiation in Bologna declaration implementation progress. According to Featherstone and Radaelli classification, we are going to distinguish the Europeanization process in four main categories, such as “historical process; as a matter of cultural diffusion; as a process of institutional adaptation; and as the adaptation of policy and policy processes”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 4 – 5) It is worthy of mentioning that those categories, in their turn, are divided regarding to minimalist and maximalist interpretation of Europeanization. In other words, the first two categories having broader meaning are related to the maximalist elucidation, while the other two are minimalist due to being “closely linked to the operation of the European Union”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 5 – 6)

Figure 3

The Europeanization process typology applied to the Bologna process matrix

<i>Europeanization “fourfold” typology applied to the Bologna process</i>	
<i>Minimalist view</i>	Historical process
	Process of cultural diffusion
<i>Maximalist view</i>	Process of institutional adaptation
	Adaptation of policy and policy processes

**Source: Featherstone and Radaelli classification, Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 5 – 6*

As it was mentioned by Featherstone and Radaelli, this “fourfold” typology of the Europeanization trend constitutes the main lines in its description. Let us start the discussion regarding the process of Europeanization from identification of the maximalist views. Observing the factor of ‘Europeanization’, from one side, as a historic process we may find out that the term primarily was designed to describe “the export of cultural norms and patterns”, thus linking it for characterization the “spread of European norms and habits”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 6) The Bologna process at this context may illustrate the fact of launching the common higher education policy development as a single European incentive. However, on the other hand, we have the Europeanization process as the background for separation of Europe. Even today, initializing a great work towards the creation of single European citizenship through spreading the common higher education standards, the personal identification of the single individual is not a “European”, but a separate ethnical. This statement may be explained by the fact of the “separation of social identities and interests within the broad geographical area understood today as ‘Europe’”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 6) The other point of the Europeanization process is expressed in the context of a historical phenomenon and may be comprehended as an adaptation “to West European norms and practices, acknowledging the ‘pull’ to convergence of the major powers of the region”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 6 – 7) This factor may explain the phenomenon of expanding the influence of the Bologna process and crossing borders of the European Union.

The other angle of the maximalist description of the Europeanization process is transnational cultural diffusion. Talking about the second category of application of the term, we find out the process of so named “transnationalism”, which implies dispersion of “cultural norms, ideas, identities, and patterns of behavior on a cross – national basis within the Europe”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p.7) This classification remains the broadest one, because there is no special particular point of description of the Europeanization process as it may affect important strategic activity as the education process. Furthermore, the design of the term allows to describe the changes in a political culture, ‘redefinition of citizenship, and the phenomenon of “shift in ideology”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 7) It is worthy of mentioning that in this context of “extraction” of European norms and values, they cross the overall European borders, thus affecting on the policy making processes in many countries located even on different continents. The Bologna process is the brightest example of such an observable fact. The affection of the Bologna process “appears to have at best an indirect linkage to the activities of the European Union”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 7) The Bologna declaration expectations are considered as primary ones for reformation and modernization in higher education area in countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), Latin America (Argentina), South Eastern Asia, and Africa. Thus, the Europeanization process appears to be much broader than just a “European” process. The example of the certain “Bruxellization” factor of the Europeanization process is complete acceptance and signing the Bologna declaration on a wave of enlargement of the “European” family by newly accepted member states.

Paying our attention to the minimalist description of Europeanization as a matter of institutional adaptation, we may discover following findings. The first one is that the ‘Europeanization’ process nowadays is more characterized as a “domestic adaptation to the pressures emanating directly or indirectly from the European Union membership”. This process may be considered in two ways: as the ‘integration building’ going under the guidance of “Bruxellization” or as a result of a “second – image reversed” impact. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 7 – 8) Thus, we can observe the matter of “how actors and institutions have been affected”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 7) Thus, the wave of changes covered the national higher education policies started right after the signing the Declaration. At this point, for example, there was a considerable shift of authority and market regulation to the Dutch higher

education institutions and the creation of the additional agencies in the Great Britain. In other words, the factor of “Europeanization” in the context of the higher education reveals the example of how public administrative institutions adapt on the new conditions formed under the common necessity of making European higher education more competitive in the world.

The factor of Europeanization in matter of institutional adaptation especially affects the transformation processes in the higher education. There is a strong opinion asserted in the book of “Politics of Europeanization” by Featherstone and Radaelli on that by means of institutional transformation there is coming about gradual strengthening of ‘sub-national governance’ (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 8) This meaning can be explained in a way that the European Union is encouraging for formation of so – named ‘multilevel governance’. Thus, in other words: some previously centralized functions of the state up to the supranational level and some down to the local or regional level”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p.8; see also Marks, 1993, p. 392) The institutional affection and the matter of transformation are observed in a more detailed way in the following chapters, concentrated on description of every single case of the selected countries.

The second form of minimalist description of the ‘Europeanization’ supposes the top down affect of the Bruxellization process. The first indications of the adaptation effect became more visible after increasing importance of “European Political Cooperation’ (EPC) process started in 1980s with the development of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) after Maastricht meeting of 1991. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 9 – 10) Mostly the notion of the Europeanization impact relates to the political changes the world faced in the end of 1980s and very beginning of the 1990s. At this case, such scholars as Heimann and Langeiweische outline the most memorable changes were the falling of the Berlin wall marking the unity of Germany, crisis of communist regime in numerous countries of the eastern and central Europe, and the collapse of dictatorship in the Southern Europe. At this respect, the main idea of the Europeanization process is “a result of foreign policy cooperation remaining the preserve of national sovereignty”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 11)

This point of view is described as pressures formulated under the influence of the European Union leading to ‘national reorientation’. The positive effects expected from the process of integration of the European member states inspire more states

characterized by the “European’ location to “join the club” thus enhancing the influence of top-down impact powers of Europeanization process. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, p. 11)

2.3 Methods of impact: domestication and internationalization

At this sub – chapter is devoted to observation of the situation occurred in the area of the higher education after introduction of the Bologna declaration. Uniting 45 countries under the notion of the development of international cooperation and development of the higher education, the Bologna process represents a compliment, complicated process, which causes many questions. Thus, there are continuing argues concerned the fact if the Bologna process is a matter of balance of internationalization or domestication factors. Or, furthermore, what results we can have nowadays keeping the equilibrium between those two impacts on the formation or reformation of the national higher education policy agendas.

Coming up to the question of definition of the methodology of the Europeanization factor of the area of higher education within the concept of public policy let us identify the methods of impact: domestication and internationalization. At the beginning let us conceptualize of the domestic impact on the policy formation in the sphere of higher education within the framework of Bologna process. At this part I am going to describe the situation of how the process of the domestic policy creating forces may affect on the European agenda and the Bologna process itself.

Featherstone and Radaelli classify the feature of the domestic impact on the design of Europeanization process as a “transfer of policy from one European country to several other countries”. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 27) Following the same direction of definition of the domestic impact of Europeanization, Lawton explains it as a “de jure” transfer of sovereignty to the EU level. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp.29) Observing those definitions of the domestic influence on the education policy formation, we may draw a conclusion of lobbying process taking place in terms of development of the Bologna process.

It is obvious that within the European Union there are countries that may affect on the design and orientation of the public policy. Thus, for example we may follow the line of promotion of the national ‘best practices’ proposed by the UK to be implemented in overall Bologna process member countries.

The second form of impact of the Europeanization factor is the internationalization. Being defined as a “top down” form of the impact of Europeanization, the matter of internationalization through Europeanization is overviewed from different points. The main point of this master thesis is going to be concerned around the intervention of the Europeanization factor into the domestic education policies which is brought with the adoption and implementation of the Bologna declaration. Thus, there is going to be overviewed the matter of possible “threatening of the domestic agendas” and the results which are caused by those higher education changes in the selected countries of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

First, let us take an insight to the Bologna process from the position of the internationalization. Following the “internationalization” action line, we observe undeniably the movement towards ‘blurring’ the borders through acceptance of the Bologna intentions. Starting as an initiative of the ministers of education of four countries, nowadays we have 45 member states following the ideals of the Bologna process. Furthermore, there are countries that are not primarily linked with the European Union. So, the changes that are brought by the Bologna process “make high demands” on the member states in the area of higher education systems of the European Community. (Pechar, Pellert, 2004, pp. 203 - 204) The situation we can observe from country to country may differ due to distinction in the systems that were formed by a matter of the historical and cultural processes in the member states, thus bringing them to different “positions” that they reached by the launching of the Bologna process. Therefore, the initial data that played the crucial role in starting point of the Bologna declaration varied from country to country. According to this particular point, Pechar and Pellert outline that the reforms aimed to harmonization of the “study architecture” may differ in various countries, thus pressing on the reformation processes in different ways.

2.4 Internationalization process as a matter of centralization of power (Bruxellization) rather than movement towards the creation of the “United States of Europe”

Discussing on the question of the international impact of the Europeanization that is coming from the Bologna process it is worthy of mentioning

the strengthening role of the European Commission in the higher education policy design.

It has become obvious the interest of the European Commission in the development of the common European area for higher education through following the objectives aimed towards creation the “knowledge based competitive economy”. During the last five years, the involvement of the European Commission in the organization and provision of the new strategies under the aegis of the Bologna process has been expanding. According to the argumentation line of Keeling there are two major directions of the involvement. The first one is a research policy – the ground of development of the Lisbon agenda, objected to economic growth and job opportunities, while the second direction is “supporting institutional and structural reform of the tertiary education sector under the intergovernmental umbrella of the Bologna process”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 205) Thus, those “processes” provided the European Commission with the opportunity to “assert” and “insert itself” into the sector of the higher education. This option for the EU Commission has become possible through financial support of number of reforms caused by the Bologna process in the member states. Thus, financial intervention into the Bologna process from the very beginning, gave the Commission the feature of “increasing the EU visibility and significance to the universities”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 205) In other words, it has become clear the dependence of the higher education institutions from the financial aid given by the Commission. This particular option gives a good opportunity to the EU for the design of preferences in the sphere of higher education and certain centralization of the decision making process. Following this idea we may come to conclusion about the threatening of the domestic agendas with centralized influence on the question of the public policy in the sphere of higher education. To some extent we can state that the Bologna process has turned from the primary intention of spreading the knowledge throughout the European area to centralization of policy. Thus, the changes brought by the Bologna process appear to be instruments of centralized impact for creation of the certain standards and unification of the higher education that was vigorously argued in the Bologna declaration itself. The situation around the Bologna process that we may observe nowadays proves us the complementation of the European “objectives for the universities within the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process”, bringing us to the consequence of further goal settling in terms of the EU member states’ joint Work Program 2010 that give greater

intervening opportunities of the European Commission. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 205 – 206) As it was mentioned by Keeling, the European Commission has started to gain considerable “political weight” due to the “expanding range of its educational activities to support European research and the Bologna Process”, thus becoming an essential political player and gaining “greater political impact on a wider scale” in the area of higher education of Europe. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 208)

Furthermore, with the development of the Lisbon agenda EU Commission brought the Bologna process a new discourse. Thus every meeting running on the Bologna summit provided transformation of the primary incentives to a certain “production” discourse. In other words, the Commission started using the learning process as a “productive activity”, through which students obtain knowledge. It is expected that during the process of education with its following implementation for the creation of common social and individual benefit. Thus, the knowledge has become a source for trade and design of the policy in the higher education area with a consequent institutional transformation in the member states. Furthermore, it has become apparent the increased political influence made by the European Union in the non EU followers of the Bologna process. Coming up to the definition of the central element of the policy formation in the area of higher education, we find out the notion of “knowledge production”. Following the texts designed by the European Commission we may find out the main policy discourse chasing the creation of: “innovations”, “new technologies”, “knowledge assets”, and “intellectual property”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209) Under the aegis of those main lines, the following outcomes should be aimed for creation greater benefits for the society. Seeking the altering the economic welfare of the EU member states, the research of the Commission runs out of so named “applied research” and re-builds the higher education research incentives for the “production” bringing certain “results for individual and society”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209) Developing this idea we may draw following conclusions on the “measurability” of the results obtained in a way of implementation of the Bologna ideas. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209) As it was outlined in the Bologna declaration itself there should be a common basis, according to which the universities in terms of the accepted framework should comply with the “system of easy readable and comparable degrees”, adoption of the system based on three learning cycles, and “establishment of the system of credits”. (Tomusk, 2004, pp. 76) But, looking on those criteria cited above through the prism of the “measurability”, we can

summarize the fact that the ECTS credits can be understood as a system of measurement, which then may represent a subject for the following evaluation of the “performance of participating countries”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209) Thus, there disclose an econometric approach to the transformation of the higher education policy. As it is outlined by Keeling, the “identification of “indicators” and its use of “benchmarking” form the both sides of reformation and research of the system of higher education “ broke open the formerly unique status of universities”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209 – 210) Thus, even the structural composition of the universities has been changed according to the standardization brought by the European Commission. Furthermore, those changes led to following situation where the universities have become educational organizations that should “compete in the open market” among the identical ones. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209) It is worthy of mentioning that in such terms, Bologna process and the Lisbon agenda both affected on the higher education policy formation and brought the ground for “economically beneficial” perspectives for “both individual and the society”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209 – 210) Thus, following texts of the official documentation of the EU Commission, we may find out the fact of drawing the issues seeking for realization certain political initiatives like increasing of the employability of the university graduates and raising the competitive benefits of the European Higher Education Area. As a consequence the decision making process is concerned about the ‘response to the needs’ of the main objectives settled in the EU working papers. Keeling strongly criticizes the situation occurred around the changing of the Bologna incentives as initiation of the project aimed for “‘up-skilling’ of the workforce”, thus simplifying the outcomes of the higher education to the subject of “production and trade”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 209) Following Keeling’s line of reasoning we can find out the notion of the mutual bargaining relationships, where the consumer’s role is given to student, the teacher is a “producer”, and the ECTS system represents the “currency of exchange”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 210; see also Nyborg, 2005)

The research in terms of the ‘econometric’ approach has become more ‘scientific’ rather than ‘creative’ activity. This point of view is based on the preferences drew by the European Commission in a way of realization of the ambitions of creation the “information and knowledge based most competitive economy”. There have been mentioned the raising attention to the specialties related to the “science, engineering, and technologies” reflected on demands for “strategic

research management". (European Commission, Keeling, 2006, pp. 210) It has become obvious that this statute of the EU Commission in the design of the education policy stepped out the borders of the universities, thus linking the education with the process of knowledge implication. At this point the idea of a lifelong learning seems like a best suitable. In other words, through the Bologna 'action lines' we can observe the process of 'validation of the non-formal learning" and justification of the previously obtained academic discipline through the system of ECTS accreditation. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 210 – 211) Coming up to criticism of the lifelong learning system it is worthy if noticing that this feature proposed in the Bologna declaration is intervening the traditional system of university education and 'breaking down the academic disciplines'.

The concept of quality of the higher education in terms of the Bologna process also may find the ground for the 'trade'. It is a key element of the Commission documentation devoted to the Bologna process as well as to the Lisbon Agenda. Again, at this point Keeling addressed her critique to the reforms seeking for the raise of quality of higher education. According to Keeling's line of reasoning, the European education is slowly moving "towards the development of the 'culture of quality'" demonstrating selectivity and a certain preference for "supporting students, academics, and institutions 'of a high quality'" (Keeling, 2006, pp. 210 – 211)

The aspect of the 'quality' of higher education within the European area is one of the key points of the increasing the EU universities' competitiveness in the world. The question of the raising of competitiveness of the European higher education may relate directly to attraction of the international students and altering the data in the 'university league tables'. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 211) At this point we may conclude the fact that the chase for the adjustment of the position in the university league tables comes on the first row leaving the matter of dealing with the international students behind. The econometric view of the EU Commission on those cases draws a certain conclusion that the international students are considered more as the additional source of income and the subject for trade for the universities in the open market. However, the movement in this particular direction predicted by the "Commission's Bologna initiatives with enhances political relevance and a new line of reasoning for these reforms" become widely accepted direction in the further "perspective for the higher education at the European level". (Keeling, 2006, pp. 212)

The texts and documents of the Lisbon strategy and the Bologna process presented by the EU Commission in relation to the area of higher education gave a certain legitimacy basis for the deeper involvement of the EU Commission in all the educational projects. Thus, the interests for intervention of the EU Commission in the sphere of higher education through the Bologna process are guided by the economic side, which allow continuation “to express a detailed interest in the management, governing, and financing of the European universities”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 212) This dependency of mutual relationships between the intergovernmental actors launched the Bologna process and the EU Commission is progressing in a way of its further engagement into the future work provided in frames of the Bologna process. This fact found its reflection in the follow – up texts of the Declaration, thus stating “that the process of establishing a European space for higher education requires constant support, supervision and adaptation to continuously changing needs”. (Bologna declaration – an explanation, 1999, pp. 5) At this particular point we can distinguish the centralization of the decision making in one European domain, which lets forcing on the rules of the game in the higher education policy making. As a result we are getting the practical strategy of promotion of the initiatives like EU Qualifications Framework, the ECTS system of evaluation, and the European register of quality assurance agencies. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 212 – 213)

The position of the European Commission in the question of the raising interest in the sphere of higher education becomes clearer, taking into account the critique presented above, because of creation of the European identity according to the “concept of Europe”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 213) Thus, there is an idea of drawing a certain ‘competitive’ image of Europe – “economically powerful, internationally significant, with a well educated, technologically innovative population that is open to working with the world”. (Keeling, 2006, pp. 213) That fact let us consider of a higher education policy as a significant instrument of the ambitious “European project”. Keeling describe the situation occurred as following the principle of “rationality”. As a result, there are many mismatches and misfits with the initial incentives of the Bologna process. This phenomenon may be characterized by the fact that the member countries in a way to reach the “Bologna priorities” are not implementing the primary ideas of the Declaration, but are trying to design a certain unification of the higher education discourse. As a consequence, there take place the subject of standardization of the Bologna articles.

The Bologna process every year raises themes for discussion bringing out new contradictions. The first one that comes up to the mind is negation of any standardization options in regard of the implementation, but in fact there is a certain form of standardized package of basic reforms that the member states should provide in order to be engaged into the Bologna process and become one step closer to the European family. These reforms are not only concerned about the strict following the basic ideas of the Bologna process, but being engaged into accepting entirely all the rules of the “game”.

The dual nature of the Bologna process does not suppose any univocal answer. The case is that independently taken Bologna process is considered as an independent initiative of the EU member-states ministries to unite the efforts in order to create the common European Higher Education Area. Thus, in theory, it may be considered as a voluntary initiative of the member states. According to this, all the countries are free to implement the Bologna ‘action lines’. Furthermore, there is no standardization in description of the main points of the Bologna declaration and no unification in realization of the higher education initiative of implementation of the common higher education policy. (Bologna Declaration, 1999, pp. 4-5) However, it is necessary to notice that the initiative is undertaken by the sovereign member states. Besides, the current state of affairs show us that practically we can show us visible dependence of the Bologna process on the financial support of the European Commission. The factor of the financial support leads to financial dependence of the states (especially of the eastern European countries) and certain centralization of the entire process. Thus, we can state, that the Bologna process initiative represents one of the crucial matters in a way to creation of the United States of Europe. However, at the same moment, it brings certain factor of centralization. This fact defines the double nature of the Bologna process.

CHAPTER III

European Aspects in Higher Education

The current chapter is devoted to description of the process of development of the higher education dimensions within the European Union. To scrutinize the research there are going to be overviewed declarations, agreements, and EU Treaties among which the primary attention is going to be paid to Maastricht and Lisbon ones that laid as a fundament to the process of Europeanization in the development of the European area for Higher Education.

3.1 European Governance

Observing the question of the European Governance, first let us determine its definition. According to the public administration literature, the term of “governance”

The central point of this work is the Bologna declaration signed in 1999 and primarily ratified by 29 European countries in order to shift towards common transparency and comparability through the chain of changes in the higher education policy on the national and international levels. (Barboza, 2003, p.4; Bologna declaration, 1999, pp.2 – 4) At the current research there will be provided the comparative analysis of the ways of reaching the common goal settled in the Declaration by the member states towards creation of “a European Space for higher education in order to enhance the employability and mobility of citizens and to increase the international competitiveness of European higher education”. (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p.4)

Such a big cross – national incentive as Bologna process, of course, leads to certain transformations on the national level. Thus, the implementation of the main ideas of the Declaration “makes high demand” on all European nation–states providing own higher education policy under the guidance of the basis ideas proposed according to the international requirement. (Pechar, Pellert, 2004, p.318)

At the example of the education policy building by the member – states according to the Bologna process we can clearly observe the process of the first and

second – image impact of the Europeanization factor, thus being an interesting case for the research of the “two level bargaining structure” and the reflection of the supranational and intergovernmental elements decision – making process on the “nested games” of the actors involved (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 8 – 9). The process of the European integration is becoming more feasible blurring the borders and finding its reflection on the activity of the European Union member states, and their citizens as well. In other words, studying the Bologna declaration implementation procedures going in member – states, we can observe the “complex interpretation between the ‘domestic’ and the ‘European’” level impacts, besides, at this same example we can also scrutinize the “variety of opportunities for actors to exploit” on their way of creation of the one European Higher Education Area (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 9; Barboza, 2003, p.1).

Another one crucial element motivating the research in this sphere is the link of the Bologna process with the Lisbon Agenda issues, aiming to creation of intellectual, cultural and technological dimensions directed for the development of the “common education space” and emerged by the EU Member states. (Barboza, 2003, p.1) Emerging through the Lisbon agenda and Bologna Process, we can also study the factor of further involvement of the European Commission into the sphere of education regulations. As it was outlined by Huisman and Van Der Wende, the education policy has represented the policy sphere “less obviously” affected by the EU regulations. Thus, according to them, the Bologna Process being a general policy agenda of the entire European region represents a factor of “national government’s acceptance of supranational interference in higher education policies” (Keeling, 2006, p. 203; Huisman, Van Der Wende, 2004, p.349; Jallade, 2004, p.261).

3.2 Principles of Europeanization, Internationalization, and Institutionalization of the higher education

The Bologna process since the time of its signing attracts considerable attention of scholars and researchers. The reasons lied behind this fact are the crucial importance of well design of the education policy development in the European area aimed for reaching ambitious goals settled in accordance to the Lisbon Agenda and entirely accepted by the European Union member – states. Besides, the idea of the

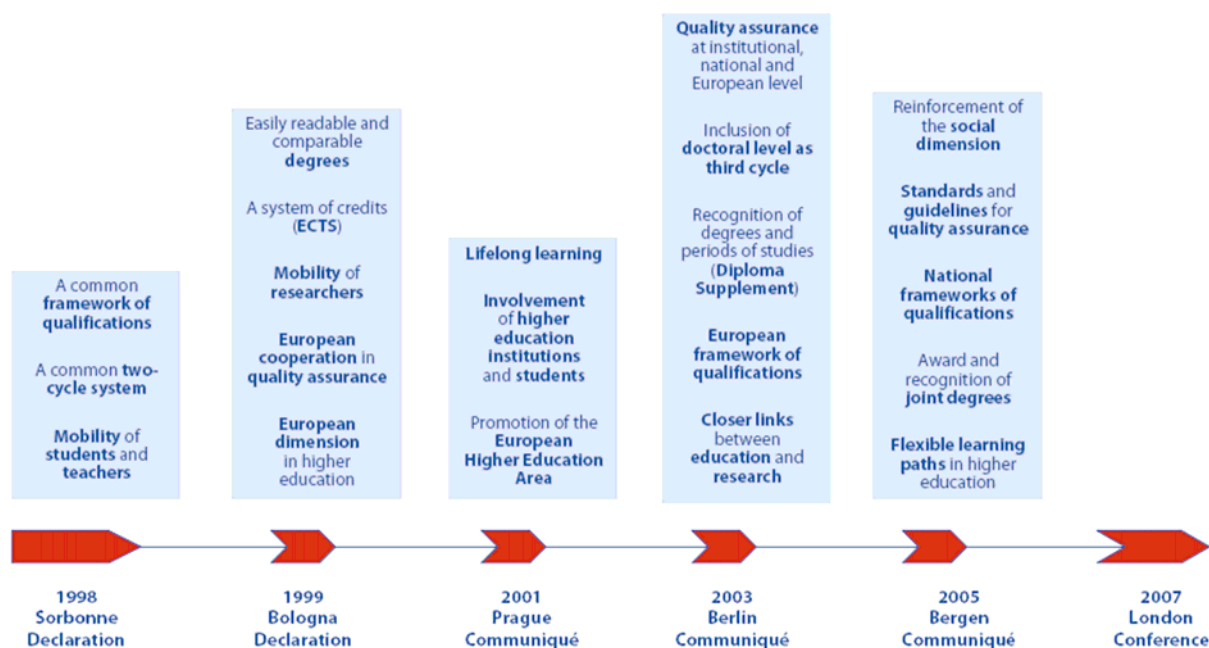
internationalization in the sphere of education policy also is dictated by the necessity for preparation of students “for European and global citizenship” (Barboza, 2004, p. 4).

But, there was a long way prior formulation of the main ideas in the context of Europeanization and internationalization of the policy provided by the member states. On the way developments there were accepted prerequisite significant attempts. Coming up closely to description of the origin of the Bologna process, let's focus on the brief historical background. The Bologna declaration was created on the basis of the Sorbonne meeting held in May 1998 in Paris. During the negotiations there was reached an agreement within minister of education of United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany concerning the necessity of reformation of the higher education in those four countries. Being designed for meeting the necessity of the four countries, the Sorbonne declaration, anyway, arouse the interest in number of other countries. Thus, “with a practical support from a variety of sources”, in June 1999 there was held a significant follow – up meeting in Bologna. (Furlong, 2005, p. 53) The Bologna declaration, which was initially signed by 29 countries, detailed the reformation project of the Sorbonne meeting, thus agreeing on the administrative structure of the goals implementation. Covering a wide range of strategically questions on higher education policy effectiveness and competitiveness the Bologna process was continued by the further conferences held in Prague in 2001, in Berlin in 2003, in Bergen in 2005, and in London in May 2007. (Furlong, 2005, p. 53-54; the Bologna Declaration on the European Space for Higher Education: an Explanation, p. 5-6;) As a result of the incentives obtained by December 2003 there were 38 countries, and nowadays, by 2007 there are already 45 countries signed a joint declaration of Bologna, thus attracting much interest of the countries outside the European region. (http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/bologna_process/index.cfm)

There was a long way connecting the statute of Europeanization since the official formation of the European Community, based on specific policy development to creation of the European Higher Education Area. Thus, let us take a brief glance on the factor of Europeanization bringing us directly to the Bologna process through following the timeline showed beyond in the Figure 4:

Figure 4
*Timeline of the Bologna Process**

TIMELINE OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS



**Source: Eurydice European Commission “Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe 2006/07. National Trends in the Bologna Process”, The information network on education in Europe, pp. 16*

3.2.1 The Treaty of Maastricht

One of the most important agreements signed was the Treaty of Maastricht making a giant move towards the process of Europeanization. The treaty of Maastricht established the European Communities and “resolve a new stage” in the overall process of European Integration. (The Maastricht Treaty: Treaty on European Union, 1992, pp. 2 – 3) Furthermore, it would be fairly to notice, that the treaty of Maastricht marked the main lines, according to which Featherstone and Radaelli based their description on the Europeanization factor, Vink also notices, that the Treaty marked the beginning of the institutionalization of the European space, and the area of higher education is included without a limitation to institutionalization process. Thus, looking up on the treaty from this point we may find out that “the competences of the European Union in the area of education were institutionalized”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 9)

The Maastricht treaty brought a value in promotion of the principles of internationalization to the area of education. Thus, there were made first attempts for

stimulation of the education policy, formulation of the international education programs in the European Union. Thus, under the aegis of the Maastricht treaty there were designed first three “action lines” of Europeanization of the member states: education, which was shaped in the Socrates program; vocational training with developed program named after Leonardo da Vinci, and the youth with designed Youth for Europe – program. (Barboza, 2003, p. 9; see also Verhoeven, de Wit, 1996, pp. 346 – 351) If we take a look on the following article describes us the importance of the Maastricht Treaty in formation of the entire European policy in the area of higher education as it outlines the main direction towards internationalization of education. (Barboza, 2003, p.9)

Thus, the article 126 gives us a certain reflection on the specificity of importance given to the education alongside with creation of the European community. Also we can state that the fact of Europeanization and internationalization of the area of education is presented as a matter of deeper integration of the European community. Let us pay attention on the text of the article 126, which contributes the importance of “development of high standard by encouraging co-operation between the member states and if necessary to support and complete, with fully respect of the responsibility of the member states to the content of the education and the design of the education system and of their cultural and grammatical diversity”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 9; see also Leune, 1992, pp. 21) Thus, we can declare that the grounds for creation of the European Higher Education Area were already created with signing the Maastricht Treaty. Besides, it is necessary to outline the attempts that were designed as major ones in the Bologna declaration as spread of languages, mobility of students, exchange of information, and encouragement of the academic accreditation were noticed in the Maastricht treaty as well. Thus, for example, the basic direction of the European Community education area development outlined following features as: bringing the European facet of the development of the higher education throughout the region “by instruction and spread of the languages of the Member states”; supporting of the student mobility among the EU member – states by introduction of the academic accreditation system, diplomas comparability, and equitation of the study periods; development of the information co-operation systems between the education institutions of member states compounded alongside with exchange of education experience and promotion

of the “exchange programs for youth and youth workers; and setting a goal promoting the distance education. (Maastricht treaty, 1992, art. 126; Barboza, 2003, pp. 9 -10)

Besides benchmarking the importance of the education area of the European Union, the Treaty is concerned about the introduction of the education program of Socrates as a certain matter of pushing forward of the Europeanization process in the area of higher education. Thus, the major ones as Socrates, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, and Minerva are designed in a way of contribution “a development of an education of quality with the use of series of actions, promoting a tight co-operation between the member– states”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 9 – 13; European Community Guide, 2000, pp. 3)

It is worthy of outlining the importance of the Maastricht Treaty made in regard of re – thinking of the education matter and promotion of students for obtaining the higher education within the European states.

3.2.2 The Convention of Lisbon

Observing the European system of higher education we should mention the next considerable step towards intensifying of the Europeanization processes – the signing of the Convention of Lisbon in 1997. Many researchers are in lockstep with the meaning that the Lisbon convention “was made for the revalue and the harmonization of the university study in Europe”. (Barboza, 2003, pp.13) Furthermore, this convention gave an attempt for bringing out the new system of mutual accreditation of diplomas among the member states. That actually means that every diploma obtained in certain state of EU should have an equal value in the range of the other countries of the EU. Additionally to those claims the Lisbon convention set “a number of basic requirements” so that foreign qualification could be appraised and assessed equally by all member– states. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 13; Lisbon Convention, 1997, pp. 4)

Thus, allowing the system of mutual recognition, the Lisbon agenda anyway set rules for the policy actors allowing selectivity in provision of the “admission to the higher education institution, or to a given program within such an institution”. (Lisbon Convention, 1997, pp. 8) Considering about the result causing this “selectivity” finds its roots in former difference of points of views on higher education as there is a grain of prejudice and stereotypic view on the higher education

institutions of the transition countries of Eastern Europe have a less qualification for providing the same level of education for the students. The other one reason is historical difference developed during the formation of the national system of education of every single state. Even nowadays we can read between the lines of different scholars the subject of importance of the national education system heritage, thus discussing about British, German or French style of education.

However, the Lisbon Convention brought the policy makers to the idea of further harmonization of the education process within the European area. Those necessities for harmonization brought a step further to a new meeting In Sorbonne with a consequent signing of the Sorbonne declaration in 1998.

3.2.3 The Sorbonne Declaration

The Sorbonne declaration in many research works is described as the decisive meeting that led to creation of the Bologna process. Sorbonne summit the collected four ministers of education of France, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Germany in May 25th 1998 in Paris. Importance of such an effort is the re-design of architecture of the higher education policy making by the harmonization processes launched in terms of the declaration. Thus, following the idea of “strengthening and building the intellectual, cultural, social, and technical dimensions” of the European area, it is necessary to accord a special priority to the universities. (Sorbonne Joint Declaration, 1998, pp. 1)

The outgoing step for signing the Joint declaration was explained by the fact that the knowledge which was obtained in certain country was not accepted as the competitive one outside this particular country. In other words, the rectors and ministers of education tried to address the European community the message regarding that “nowadays, too many of our students still graduate without having had the benefit of a study period outside of national boundaries”. (Sorbonne Joint Declaration, 1998, pp. 1 – 2) So, the process of removing of the physical barriers between the member states was launched after the decision accepted in Paris. Besides this declaration put an objectives of development of the “framework fir teaching and learning, which would enhance the mobility and even closer cooperation” though presenting the credits system, such as ECTS, that could “allow for validation of these acquired credits for those who choose initial or continued education in different

European universities and wish to be able to acquire degrees in due time throughout life". (Barboza, 2003, pp. 13 – 14, Sorbonne Joint Declaration, 1998, pp. 2)

Describing the Sorbonne meeting from the position of Europeanization process, it is necessary to outline the following features, as the process of transformation of the national education policies formed during the long period of history and forming certain traditions in educational approach. In other words, the declaration was seeking the "international recognition and attractive potential of our systems are directly related to their external and internal readabilities. A system, in which two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate, should be recognized for international comparison and equivalence, seems to emerge". (Sorbonne Joint Declaration, 1998, pp. 1 – 2) Thus, the Sorbonne declaration emerged the blurring of the borders for the students of the European zone, giving the student an opportunity to study at least one semester outside the country of getting knowledge. The introduced system value consists in "removing obstacles for mobility and recognition of degrees and academic qualification". (Barboza, 2003, pp. 13 – 14; Sorbonne Joint Declaration, 1998, pp. 2 – 3) It goes without saying that this incentive moved forward the emerging Europeanization process. On other words, we can state that it became clear that Europe is not a zone of the Euro currency and stable economy but the one with developing knowledge opportunities.

Summarizing the Sorbonne declaration inducements and outlining the main direction for the development of the education policy of the member states, it is reasonable to say that the member states (the UK, Italy, Germany, and France) created an overall framework of academic degrees and education cycles in the European zone for higher education, which emerged the development of common Bachelor – Masters system of graduates and gave a real opportunity for the student and teacher mobility. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 14; Sorbonne Joint Declaration. 1998, pp. 1 – 2)

The further incentives aimed for the development of the common European education area find the continuation in emerging the biggest project concentrated on the questions of higher education – the Bologna process.

3.2.4 Bologna Declaration

Now, let us observe the Bologna process “in section”, discussing the prerequisites and strategies of one of the ambitious attempts being realized by the European community. Firstly, I am going to discuss about the features which stand behind the organization of the Bologna summit. Then the text is going to be followed by the description of the objectives that are planned to be reached by the time of 2010. An after all I observe the strategies developed for successful realization of the ambitious expectations viewed in the Bologna Declaration.

Bologna Process: description, aim, and strategies

As it was mention before, the Bologna Process represents a complex intergovernmental process seeking to settle the European Higher Education Area by 2010. The strategy of creation of EHEA is underpinned by the following ten accomplishments, so – named “action lines”. Thus all the reforms provided in the Bologna process member states are designed in accordance to the following ‘action lines’:

<http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/resources/Guide%20to%20the%20Bologna%20Process%20-%20Edition%202.pdf>

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees – designed in a way that every university may have comparable degree system, which may lead to increase in student mobility system.
2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles – thus it has a common ground on the higher education system – bachelors and masters.
3. Establishment of a system of credits – in a way to bring the commonness, accountability, comparability to the system of higher education for the successful creation of the European Higher Education Area.
4. Promotion of mobility – the attempt for giving an opportunity for students and teachers to share experience and provide competitiveness for the European universities.
5. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance – for leading the European higher education to a more competitive level than the USA and Canadian one. Besides, this attempt is seeking for the improvement of the education

environment for attraction of higher number of the international students to the universities of Europe.

6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education – thus it is a new step towards creation of the European identity.

7. Focus on lifelong learning – giving an opportunity for the students to have an opportunity to continue the education process starting from the certain cycle it was stopped.

8. Inclusion of higher education institutions and students – for deepening of the co-operation processes throughout the Europe.

9. Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area – in a way of raising the competitiveness of the European higher education institutions for the international students and researchers.

10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area.

Bologna Process: three cycle system

It is worthy of mentioning the fact that the central point of the Bologna declaration represents promotion of the better transparency in the sphere of the higher education in the European area. The work towards the transparency and accountability in the Bologna process member states is planned to be realized through the three cycled system of: undergraduate – the bachelor lasting three years, and the graduate – the master and the doctorate. The necessity and importance of the bachelor degree might be explained by the possibility of bachelor to continue the academic research choosing the Masters program or the further integration to the labor market. Furthermore, the bachelor graduate still has the opportunity of continuation of the education process through the part – time programs and training courses thus “combining the sequel training with a job”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 15; see also Onderwijstraad, 2000)

The Masters program usually takes form one to three years of time depending on the type of study and represents the continuation of the lifelong attempt for education that brings the academic research value that is provided in an independent way that gives “enough insight of his own and related fields of study”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 15)

The international valuation of the higher education system of bachelors, masters, and doctors is reached through the system of accreditation. The main changes that are covered by the public administration are concentrated on the modification and reformation of the education system of the Bologna declaration member states. At this point it is necessary to mention the strong case leading to comparison and accreditation of the bachelor and master studies may be obtained only through “qualitative considerations instead of the formal characteristics as the length of studies or the origin of institutions”. (Barboza, 2003, pp.15) This point gives the researchers the ground for the continuing debates. It is necessary to mention the fact that the difference in implementation of this feature of the Bologna process result considerable differences in implementation by the member states. Furthermore, this point is going to be analyzed in a more deeply way in the following chapters. But, concluding the information regarding the Bologna process, there should be mentioned several consequences. Returning to the incentives of the Process’ explanation, it is worthy of mentioning the fact that the Bologna declaration ‘action plan’ covers the initiatives of removing the obstacles of the student mobility in the European Union area, enhancing the attractiveness of the European higher education worldwide, thus competing with universities of the Northern America. Furthermore, the Bologna declaration seeks for establishment a common structure of higher education systems across the Europe basing on the two mainframe cycles: the undergraduate and graduate.

http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/bologna_process/index.cfm)

The greater significance of the Bologna Process was reached after the contribution of the European Union’s Lisbon Strategy, which is aiming “to deliver stronger lasting economic growth” leading to creation of more and better jobs, resulting from the improvement in higher education across the Europe.

http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/policy_areas/lisbon_strategy.cfm)

3.2.5 Salamanca Convention

The first meeting after the launching the Bologna process took place in Salamanca in March 2001 for the discussion the question regarding the development of the European Higher Education Area. The main point of the Salamanca summit had more political issues. The necessity for the meeting was underlined by the education institutions involved into the Bologna process, which needed to come to

the joint problem solution linked directly to creation of the European higher Education Area. In other words, this convention outlined the particular importance of the independent condition of the universities and the student mobility in terms of vertical (moving from one to another university after the finishing a particular term for obtaining there a desirable degree) and horizontal (temporary studying in the other university for one or two terms with further reversion to the home university) transfer. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 15 – 16; see also Osterwalder, 2001, pp. 2) Besides, the raise of competitiveness of such an incentive also was concentrated on seeking for the attraction of international students.

Summarizing the points overviewed on the Salamanca summit it is worthy to notice the following additions that forced the Bologna process as “empowering the universities”, thus giving the academic freedom, promoting the competitiveness of the European higher education institutions in the world, creation more flexible framework and quality certification among the universities. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 16; Salamanca Convention, pp. 3)

The idea on the university authority creating the academic freedom for realization research and education purposes also faces with the number of problems. The European Higher Education Area supposes the development of the common ground. But, at the same moment there are different habits, traditions, and approaches in the sphere of education. So, the transformation of the higher education system has certain consequences for every country launching the Bologna process. It is not clear yet the fact regarding what type of education system should be observed as a “model” for the institutions to be judged in terms of accountability and quality assurance.

3.2.6 The Prague Summit

Two years after the signing the Bologna declaration in the capital of the Czech Republic on May 19th 2001 was held another one meeting of the Heads of Education Ministries of the member states in order to mark the following action lines. The results of the Prague summit were aimed for “simplifying the pathwork of higher education qualifications”, further blurring of country borders for the encouragement of student, teachers, and academic staff mobility, and “ensuring high standards” for raising the competitiveness of European education in the world.

It is necessary to outline that this incentive found its reflection on the processes that affected on the spread of the Europeanization and internationalization processes crossing borders of the European Union. The standards and objectives raised and approved by the Bologna process, by this time counting 29 member countries, were met positively in the countries outside the European area, crossing borders to Asia and Latin America. This was the considerable step for declaring of success and appreciation of the Bologna incentives.

The main lineament of the Prague summit from the internationalization point of view is that the Europeanization process initiated by the EU higher education institutions became a matter of serious competition for the North American universities. Furthermore, it became obvious the attractiveness of European system of higher education in a way of support by the international community willing to join the Bologna process. However, it is necessary to mention that this result was reached on the account of the idea of attracting the students from overseas. In other words, the member states countries fell into a muse of the commercial advantage of the Bologna process.

3.2.7 The Barcelona Convention

Following the way of launching the new steps and reaching agreements on the questions recking the Bologna process member states, there was held a Barcelona meeting taking place on March 22nd 2002. The importance of this meeting is explained by the European Council level. Form this point we can follow the obvious involvement of the European Council to the Bologna process. This evidence gives us the ground for the debate regarding the Bologna process idea turning into the Bruxellization process. During the Barcelona meeting there was declared a convention, where the main points indicated the improvement of higher education quality, “facilitating the universal access to education and reach a world dimension in the area of formation”. Besides, there were outlined in the meeting the steps towards launching the instruments for “guaranteeing the transparency” of diplomas and qualification obtained. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 16) Of course, these incentives enforced processes in the context of the Europeanization. But at the same moment, it reflected on the negative integration processes. Here, we can argue on the principles of domestification and internationalization processes going under the aegis of the European Council and Commission in terms of the Bologna process. From one side

we can observe the domestication caused by the British considered as the most US-like system of higher education, dictating the rules for the reformation of the education policies in the other states involved into the Bologna process. On the other side there are the member states that are obliged to introduce the other than their domestic design of the higher education system. Thus, it represents a clear form of standardization of the procedures held in the sphere of higher education policy, thus interfering to the education process and breaking the autonomous position of the universities of the member states.

3.2.8 The Santander Follow-up meeting

The 24th of May 2002 was marked by the follow – up meeting of the Bologna process group held in Santander. This summit united the European council and Commission on the clarification of the certain procedures going under the Bologna process. Thus there were clarified the uncertainties regarding the harmonization of the different systems of higher education existed throughout the region with the subsequent approving of the program by the 32 states.

During the negotiations there were reached the agreements of the provision of the following Berlin summit and the establishment of the European doctoral program of quality. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 16)

3.2.9 The Berlin Summit

Stated during the Santander follow up meeting, the Berlin summit took place in September 18th – 19th 2003. The Berlin summit designed the main points in reviewing of the Europeanization processes going far beyond the European area. Taking these positive reflections in the world, during the meeting there were defined the main priorities for the next steps towards creation of the European Higher Education Area. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 16 – 17)

3.2.10 The Lisbon Agenda

The Lisbon meeting of the European Council which occurred in February 12th 2000 was marked as a “not only a radical transformation of the European economy, but also a challenging program for the modernization of social welfare and education systems”. The skeptics of the education field are critically pertain the possibility of creation of the common competitive education area throughout the European zone. It

is doubtful the full implementation of the idea that “by 2010, Europe should be the world leader in terms of the quality of its education and training systems” (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html; Report from the Education Council to the European Council, 2001, pp. 3 – 4)

The Lisbon Agenda has a specific interest in development of the higher education. There is a ambitious notion of bringing the Europe to the most competitive economy in the world through increasing competitiveness of the European higher education institutions. Thus, it is outlined the idea “to undertake a general reflection on the concrete future objectives of education systems, focusing on common concerns and priorities while respecting national diversity, with a view to contributing to the Luxembourg and Cardiff processes and presenting a broader report to the European Council in the Spring of 2001”.

(http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html;
http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/rep_fut_obj_en.pdf)

It became arguable the independent position of the Bologna process started as an independent attempt for creation and development of the European higher education area. But forcing Europeanization processes have brought us to the following results. So, there we can observe the European commission’s “personal” interest related to the economic side of the policy making. In other words, I am trying to explain the turnover in the higher education policy provision among the states. There occurred a situation of centralized influence of the Bruxellization factor on the development of the higher education in the member countries, thus affecting of the outcomes of the education policy transformation going in those states. So, the “individuality” in provision of changes determining the success of the higher education policy transformation based on the traditional way of a particular country gained the certain feature of “obligation”, thus being “downloaded” from centralized organ of European policy making to the nation state ground.

Thus, after the launching of the Lisbon agenda, the questions vied under the aegis of the Bologna process obtained more economic character rather than purely enlightenment initiative distinguished on the very first Bologna meeting.

3.2.11 *London Summit*

During the May 18th – 19th 2007 the representatives of the ministries of education of 45 countries met in London to benchmark the future objectives towards

establishment of the European Higher Education Area. The other noticeable fact of this meeting was the common agreement of adoption of the strategy of crossing the borders of the European area and further movement to other continents. One of the memorable steps for reaching this endeavor, besides the quality assurance in higher education and recognition of qualifications and periods of study, was the creation of the Register of European Higher Education Quality Assurance Agencies. (J. Fidel, 2007, pp. 1 – 2; National Trends in Higher Education, 2006)

The London meeting showed us the obvious and visible impact of the Bruxellization factor realized through the European Commission having a personal interest in such a tendency. Furthermore, Jan Fidel – the European commissioner for the for Education, Training, Culture and Youth mentioned the fact that “Countries should modernize their higher education systems in all their areas of activity – education, research and innovation – making them more coherent, more flexible, and more responsive to the needs of society. These would be great steps towards the goals of the European Higher Education Area as well as the European Research Area”.

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/uploads/documents/CommissionpressreleaseLonMinConf.pdf>

In other words, the theme of this summit let us propose the idea of that the Europeanization process through the Bologna declaration crossing the borders of the member states, started to influence the countries that lay beyond the borders of the EU. Besides, observing the level and the outcomes of the London meeting we can state about the feature of the following dependence: the more internationalized the Bologna process become, the more centralized is the provision of the process. This statement can be emerged because of financial support of the incentives being launched during the realization of the Bologna incentives by the European Commission. Besides, it is remarkable that “the Commission supports the global strategy in concrete terms through its policies and programs”. (Fidel, 2007, p. 2; <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna/uploads/documents/CommissionpressreleaseLonMinConf.pdf>)

All those attempts that were brought after the signing the Bologna declaration had certain positive results. But, however, we can observe the shift going from the idea of development of the education policy from the “independent” way to “centralized” impact of the European Commission. In other words, different levels of

the state affect linked with the overall European idea, leading to Bruxellization of the processes and policies that are “uploaded”. At this point, we are not only talking about the Bruxellization of processes covered with the incentives of the Bologna process. There is much deeper meaning. If there is a feature of centralization of the power distribution in the area of the European Union, then there is no possibility of creation of the United States of Europe.

3.3 The response of the nation states on the Bologna Process and the grounds of differences in its implementation

The adoption of the common strategy in the sphere of the higher education was met with big enthusiasm by the majority of countries adopted the Bologna declaration. Anyway, as the majority of researchers outlined that there are many drawbacks in the national policies of the countries leading to differentiation of implementation of the “action lines”. It is worthy of mentioning that the common objectives of the Bologna process are too vague and unclear in most cases.

Looking on the higher education system and policy in three elected countries of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, we see dramatic differences in ways of adoption and implementation “action lines” of the Bologna process.

For example, the United Kingdom – the country that conducted pioneer in creation of the Declaration, is trading off between the traditional system in the sphere of higher education and internationalization impact. As a result of these biases the UK is trying to reform and stand against the major changes in higher education simultaneously. (Furlong, 2005, pp. 59 – 60) In such consequence, we can observe strong positions of the state involvement into the process of Bologna’s implementation due to characteristics of the administrative system of the Great Britain. (Ash, 2006, p. 256 – 257)

In the Netherlands, the process of implementation is going relatively fast, there were introduced the main objectives of Bologna process: student mobility, lifelong learning, and three- cycled education (including PhD). But due to the legal system of the state there are certain difficulties in legal framework in higher education sphere challenging the competitiveness attractiveness of the Dutch universities, comparing for instance to those of the UK.

(http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/EN/national_impl/00_Nat-rep-05/National_Reports-Netherlands_050125.pdf; The Netherlands National Report on the Bologna Process, 2005, p. 11)

Prerequisites of signing the Bologna Declaration on Higher Education

Looking on the higher education policy making from the contemporary state of view, it is obvious to discover that the education policy is no longer a privileged field of a single nation state, but of an entire European community. The matter of education through Bologna process, and after – the Lisbon agenda, has become one of the pushing power for realizing one of the most ambitious projects of present – day.

Of course, such a project of the designing of international cooperation and integration suppose more close inter – governmental, institutional, and organizational cooperation for realization of “networking translating, mediating, and constructing educational policies”. (Lawn, Lingard, 2002, pp.290) The case of research of the Bologna process going in the member – countries is better viewed through the prism of Europeanization and internationalization studies. At this point the discussion on higher education policy is going to be continued with definition if the process of European integration taking a form of sneaky centralization and the process of increasing domestication. Thus, the sub-chapter is seeking to discover whether the Europeanization may be understood as consolidation of the Bruxellization position, so – named centralization of all powers eliminating the federative organization of the European Union or the process of reinforcement of national consciousness of the EU member states, thus resisting the tendency of centralization – Bruxellization and maintaining the sovereignty in decision making process particularly but not exclusively to the area of higher education in terms of the Bologna Process.

Taking a glance on the treaties and agreements described we can ask ourselves if there is a real idea of development of the higher education policies single handed by each member state as it is mentioned in the Bologna declaration or there is a certain role of centralization, so named Bruxellization factor, that interfere every single education policy making process, thus causing certain difficulties in its implementation. Taking this into consideration let us observe if there is a link between the efficiency of implementation of the Bologna incentives and centralization and involvement of the Community pressures into the process of re-directing of the

education system into the more comparable and competitive way. The following chapter is going to seek the answer on the question of the influence of factor of centralization, Europeanization, institutionalization and centralization of the higher education according to the Bologna Process.

3.4 Bologna process and the Internationalization

At this sub-chapter I am going to describe the general situation in higher education policy formation of the EU member states before narrowing down my research till the selected case studies. After signing the Bologna Declaration, the education policy appeared a matter of the entire EU, thus obtaining statute that is more international. The question of the internationalization in the system of higher education has become a point for scientific battles since early times. Starting from the 1970s with settlement of the information network “as a basis for a better understanding of national policies and system structures” and the precursor of the “Erasmus” education incentive – so named Joint Study Program –, then finding its continuation in 1980s with spreading and variation of the “supranational programs” as Erasmus, Delta, and Lingua. (Huisman, Van Der Wende, 2004, pp. 571) The Bologna declaration appeared to be a far more international initiative. Being launched on the level of inter-ministerial level, the idea of the Process was to “consolidate the European Higher Education Area by 2010”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 15)

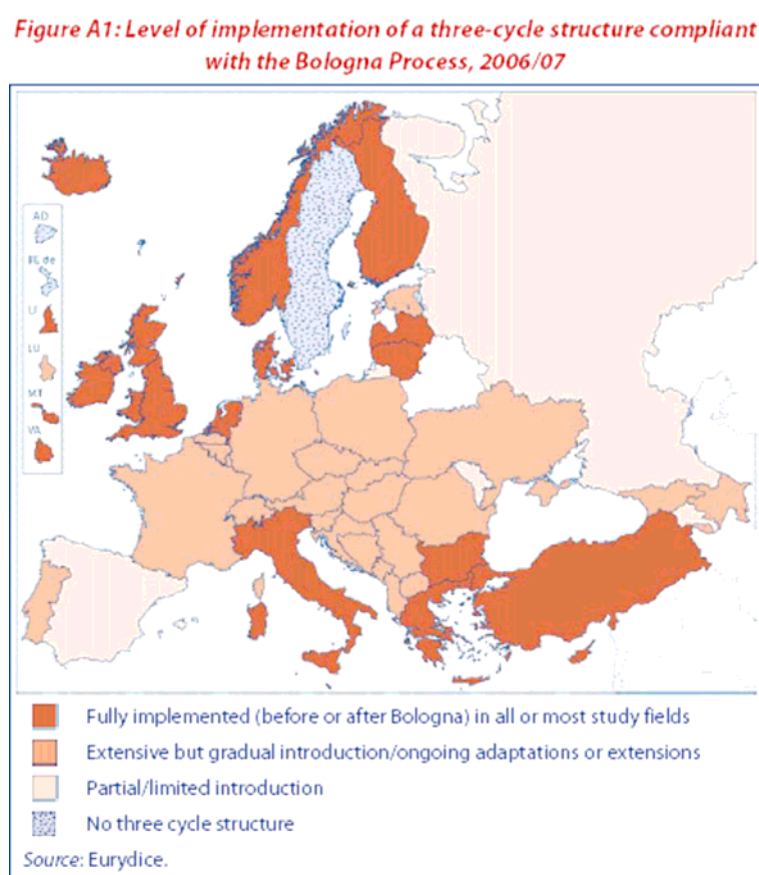
Three cycle system

Now let us scrutinize the main points of the Bologna declaration in respect of the entire EU states. Coming up to observation of the three-cycle system, it is noticeable to mention that there were several countries that had Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctor's structure before signing the Declaration in 1999. The tree cycle system in 'remaining countries' was introduced during 1999 – 2006. Thus, all states engaged into the process 'virtually' implemented this Bologna expectation. Nevertheless, there are three regions which are still dealing with three-cycle system issue, which are Andorra, where the Bologna initiative is being discussed on the state level; German-speaking part of Belgium, where the initiative cannot be entirely implemented due to limited quantity of higher education institutions; and Sweden, where the three level structure is applicable for certain university programs. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 15) Furthermore, it is certain that some regions

are unable to implement the three-cycle structure by 2010. Thus, for example the medical universities of the Flemish community of Belgium are going to be able to introduce the Bologna process defined structure only in 2010 – 2011 study year. Higher education institutions of Austria and Germany are still offer ‘pre-Bologna reforms’ study programs. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 15 – 16) In Spain the full transition from the Diplomado, Licenciado, and Doctor programs is planned to be finished by 2012. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 16) Let us follow figure 5, indicated below, that will help us to define the level of implementation of the three-cycle structure in the Bologna process member-states.

Figure 5

*Level of Implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna process 2006 – 2007**



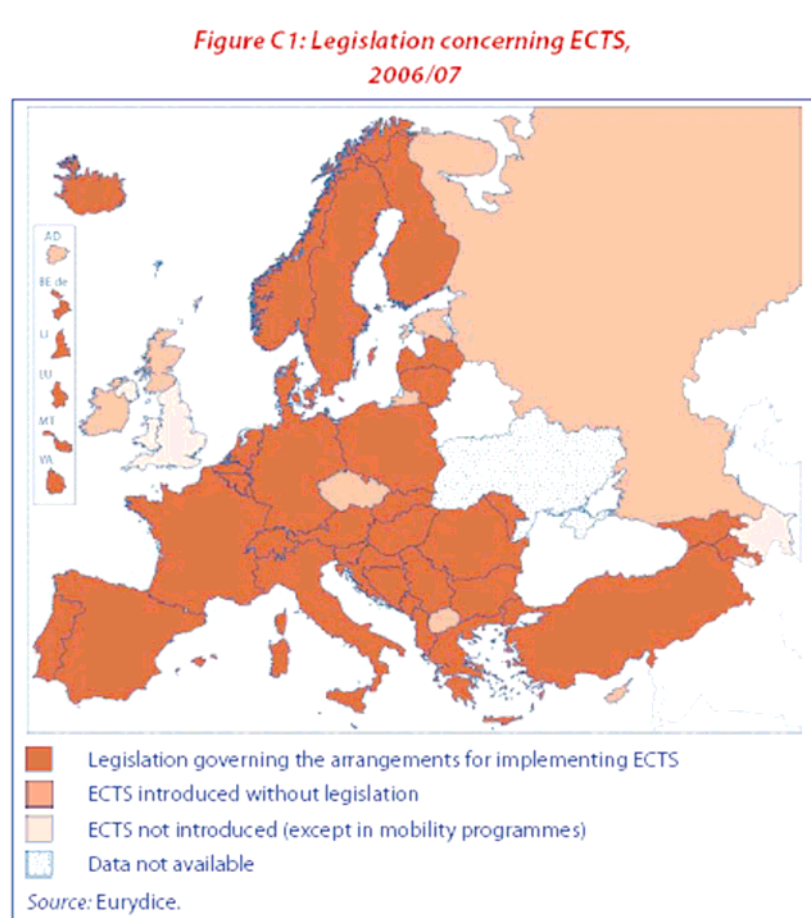
* Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 16

The European Credit Transfer System

Now, let us continue with the description of the Bologna process initiatives with the description of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation system.

Primarily the ECTS was created for simplification of the procedures for the student exchange in terms of the “Erasmus” program in 1989 – 1990, which was adjusted on the following ministerial meetings. In most cases, the ECTS introduction is defined by the legislation. According to Bologna standards, those countries, that did not provide the legislative basis for the ECTS, created it during the last years. Thus, for example, “in Armenia, Greece, Liechtenstein, Moldova and Poland, legislation adopted in 2005 or more recently states that ECTS is mandatory. In Andorra, Cyprus and Estonia (in which ECTS will become compulsory in all higher education institutions from 2009/10 onwards), draft laws or regulations await ratification or formal approval. In the Czech Republic, no legislation is planned at present”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 25) The Ireland the system of ECTS is not governed by the authorized structures, thus it is “incorporated with the national awards systems”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 25) The following figure 6 and figure 7 helps us to understand current situation of the ECTS implementation.

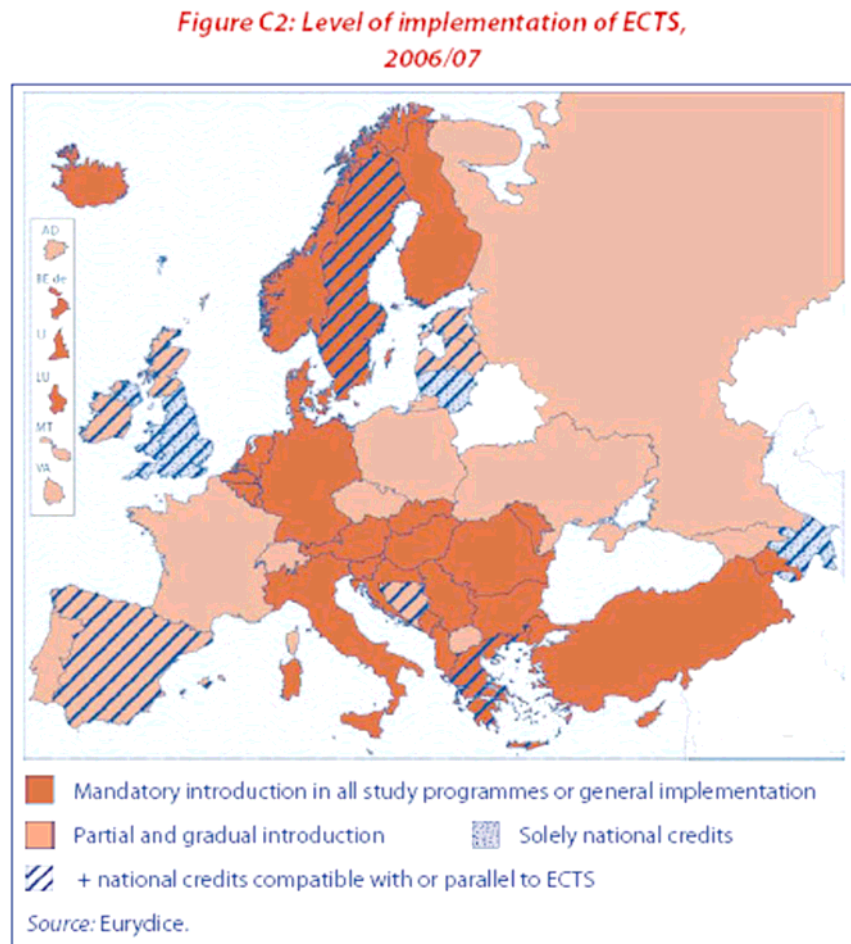
Figure 6 *Legislation concerning ECTS in 2006 – 2007**



* Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 26

Figure 7

*Level of implementation of the ECTS in 2006 – 2007**



* Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 27

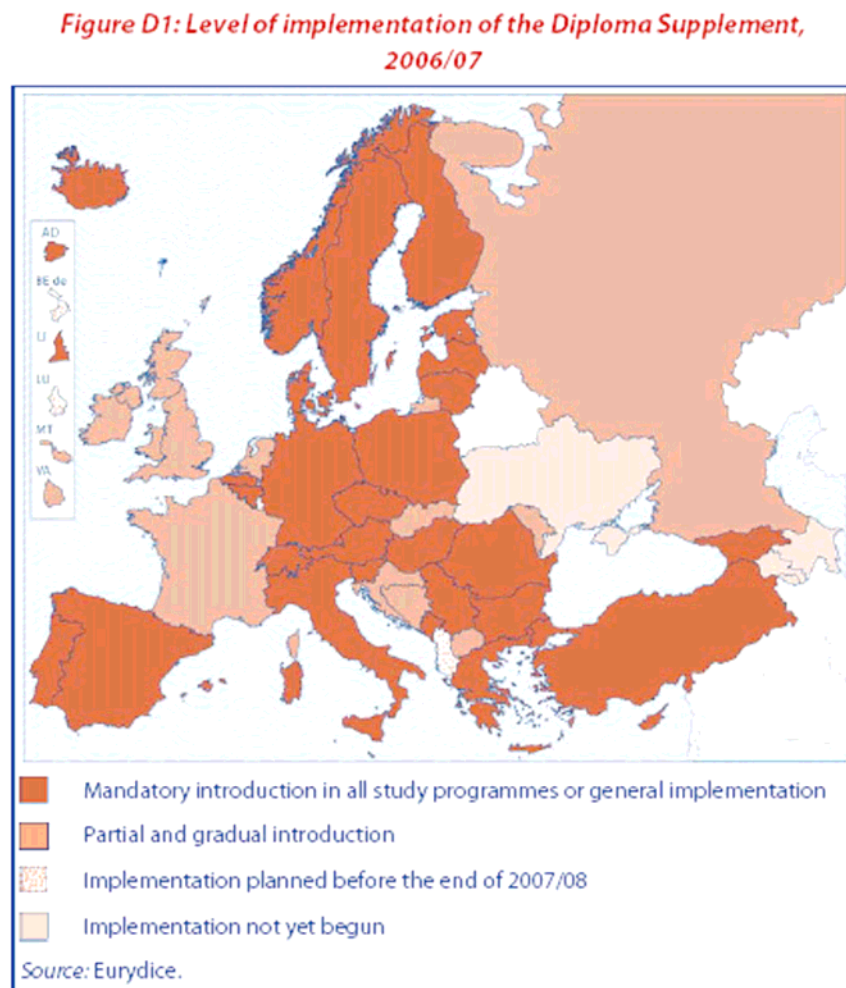
Diploma Supplement

As it is in the case of the ECTS introduction, the Diploma supplement should be assured by the legislation and starting the 2006 – 2007 “the DS was specifically referred to in legislation and issued by higher education institutions in the majority of signatory countries”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 29) In most signatory countries the process of DS implementation was banished by 2004. However, the numerous countries the issue of the Diploma Supplement is introduced partially. Thus, for example, Croatia and Russia are going to be able to introduce DS on a ‘general basis’ by 2008, in France starting 2009. The Scottish and Irish universities plan to implement the DS starting this study year (2007). (National

Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 29) The situation with the DS may also be viewed on the following Figure 8.

Figure 8

*Level of implementation of the Diploma Supplement 2006 – 2007**



* Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 30

National Qualifications Framework

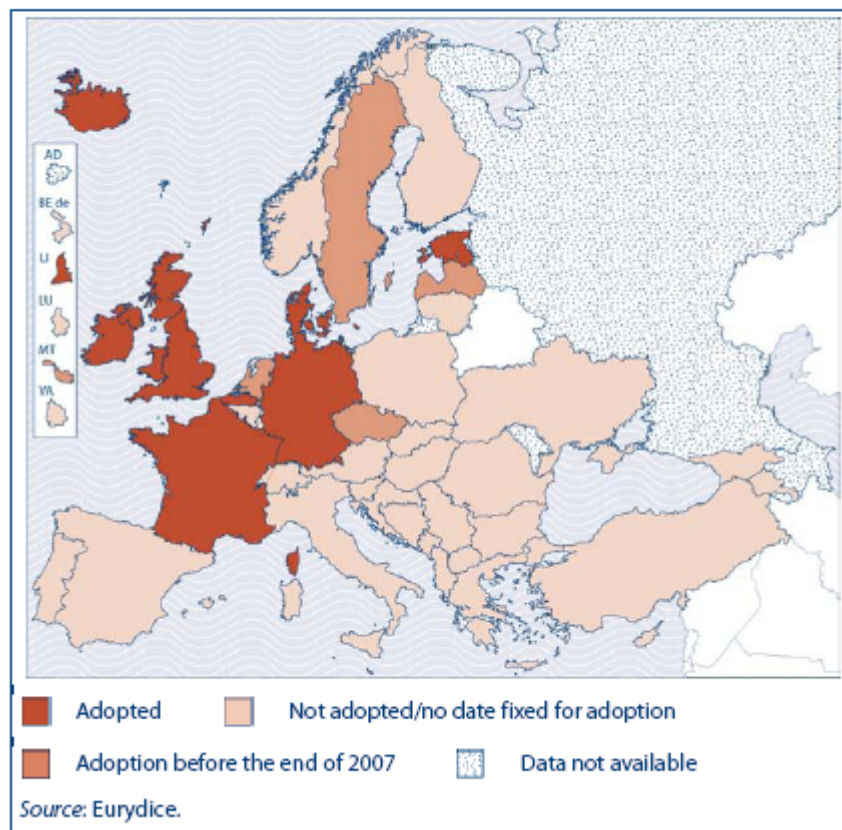
The agreement reached on the Bergen conference concerned on adoption of the “overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 33) The Bologna Declaration defines the National Qualifications Framework as “a mechanism for describing formal qualifications and other learning outcomes at all levels of education; its components and format may vary from one country to the next. It is also intended that the framework should be an intelligible, meaningful resource at

international level”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 33) Nine countries already adopted the NQF system by 2004. In 2007 there is scheduled to adopt the system in the Netherlands, Latvia, Malta, Sweden, and the Czech Republic. However, it is necessary to mention that there was outlined the concrete date for settling the NQF. But, according to Bologna standards, every country should have a working group that promote the Framework adoption. Now let us take a look on the following Figure 9 for better understanding of the situation with the creation of the National Qualifications Framework.

Figure 9

*The situation regarding the adoption of national qualifications framework including higher education, 2006 – 2007**

Figure E1: The situation regarding the adoption of national qualifications frameworks including higher education, 2006/07



* Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 34

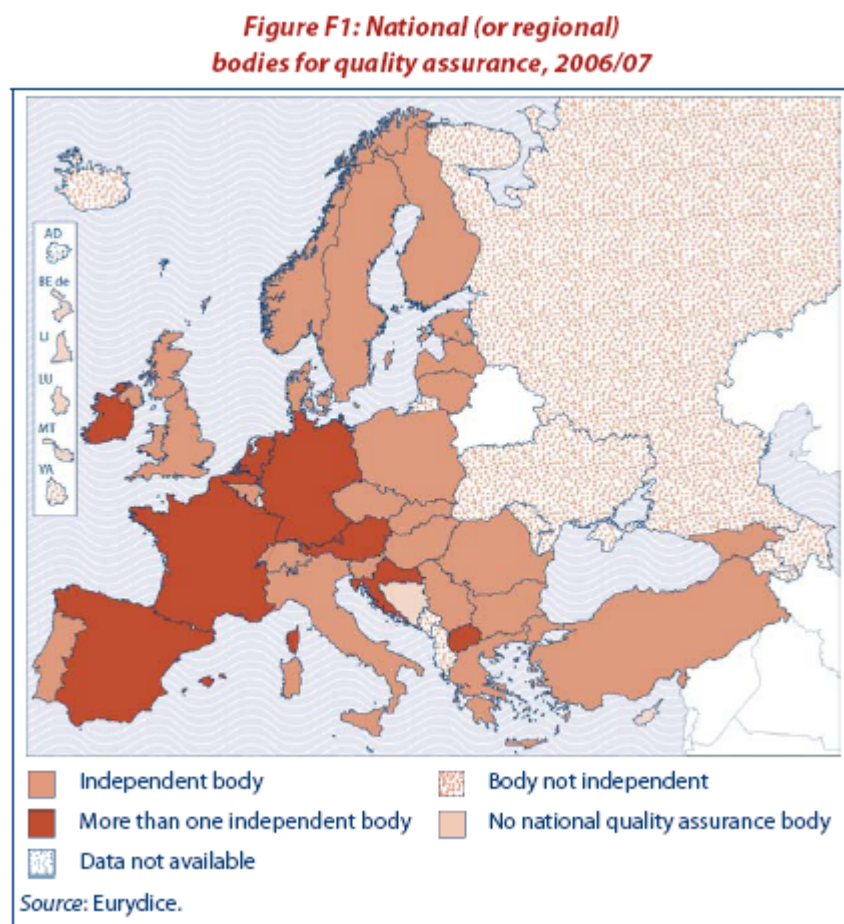
Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance is a very important issue of the Bologna process, which “calls for the development of clearly defined and commonly accepted

evaluation and accreditation criteria and methodologies”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 37) The Bergen Communiqué outlined the fact that “almost all countries have made provision for a quality assurance system based on the criteria set out in the Berlin Communiqué and with a high degree of cooperation and Networking.” (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 37) Let us follow the figure 10 describing the situation with the national and regional quality assurance.

Figure 10

*National (or regional) bodies for quality assurance, 2006 – 2007**



* Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 34

The Bologna process represents a very ambiguous project in the sphere of higher education. The most aspects are quite feasible in many countries. So, to provide the research it was crucial to select the countries that will not be different in the starting points, political and economical development, and the package of reforms introduced after the adoption of the Bologna’s main ‘action lines’.

CHAPTER IV

The Case of the United Kingdom in the Bologna Process

This chapter is devoted to observation of the case of the United Kingdom, its contribution and role in the Bologna process. Besides, there are scrutinized the outcomes brought by the Declaration into the British higher education system. First, I am going to view the specificity of British governing system. Then the chapter is going to be continued with the description of the primary incentives of the United Kingdom in launching the Bologna process. Afterwards, I will overview the following processes of enlargement of the ambitious educational initiative. And closing this chapter, there are contributed the results of the higher education policy re-formation and suggested some recommendations for the smoothening the harmonization and future integration of the educational processes aligned with the general process of Europeanization.

4.1 Introduction

This sub – chapter is going to draw up a brief insight into the British public administration in order to provide information on political situation in the United Kingdom. In such way, let us take a look on the following table describing the main data about the state. (see Table 1 Appendix 2; Appendix 3)

Looking on the figures eleven and twelve, we can observe the legislative basis for implementation of the policy changes in the UK.

Figure 11

Legislative basis for implication of the policy changes in the UK: England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

Legislative and/or official references

Date	Term
July 1997	Dearing Report. National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education. <i>Higher Education in the Learning Society</i> .
September 2004	Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). <i>Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Section 1 (Postgraduate Research Programmes)</i>
September 2004	Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). <i>Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Section 2: Collaborative Provision, and Flexible and Distributed Learning (including e-learning)</i>

Source: *National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 304*

Figure 12

Legislative basis for implication of the policy changes in the UK: Scotland

Legislative and/or official references

Date	Term
1966	Acts on Universities
1992	Acts on Higher Education Institutions
2001 and 2003	Scottish Higher Education Framework
2001	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
September 2004	Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (regulations underpinning doctoral level study)
2005	Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act (merged the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Councils)

Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 309

4.2 Organization of higher education in the United Kingdom

This chapter is dedicated to analysis of the existing system of higher education of the United Kingdom. Nowadays the case of the United Kingdom is in the spotlight of the studies of many scholars. Only scrutinizing the case of the United Kingdom we can find out that the reasons of different outcomes of the same expectations of the Bologna process. Being such traditional in the aspects of the public administration, the Great Britain was the founder of launching one of the most ambitious projects that led to considerable changes in the field of the higher education. Starting this project, the United Kingdom tried to keep the powerful decision making positions in questions of reforming in the entire EU region. Proposing the reforms in the field of the higher education in the overall European Union Context, the United Kingdom itself does not hurry up with breaking up with the traditions that were developed forming the . As a result, such political behavior and traditional approach to policy-making process lead us to discover the basic reasons for implementation diversity of the Bologna Process.

Before starting the deep research of the higher education policy, it is necessary to make a notice that specifications of administrative structure of states can cause differences in the higher education policy formation within the United Kingdom. Thus, the implication of expectations of the Bologna process went in a diversified way. So, it is worthy to outline that the research of the higher education policy of the UK is going to be scrutinized in accordance to organization of the higher

education administration abstracting Scotland with England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

4.2.1 Organization of higher education in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

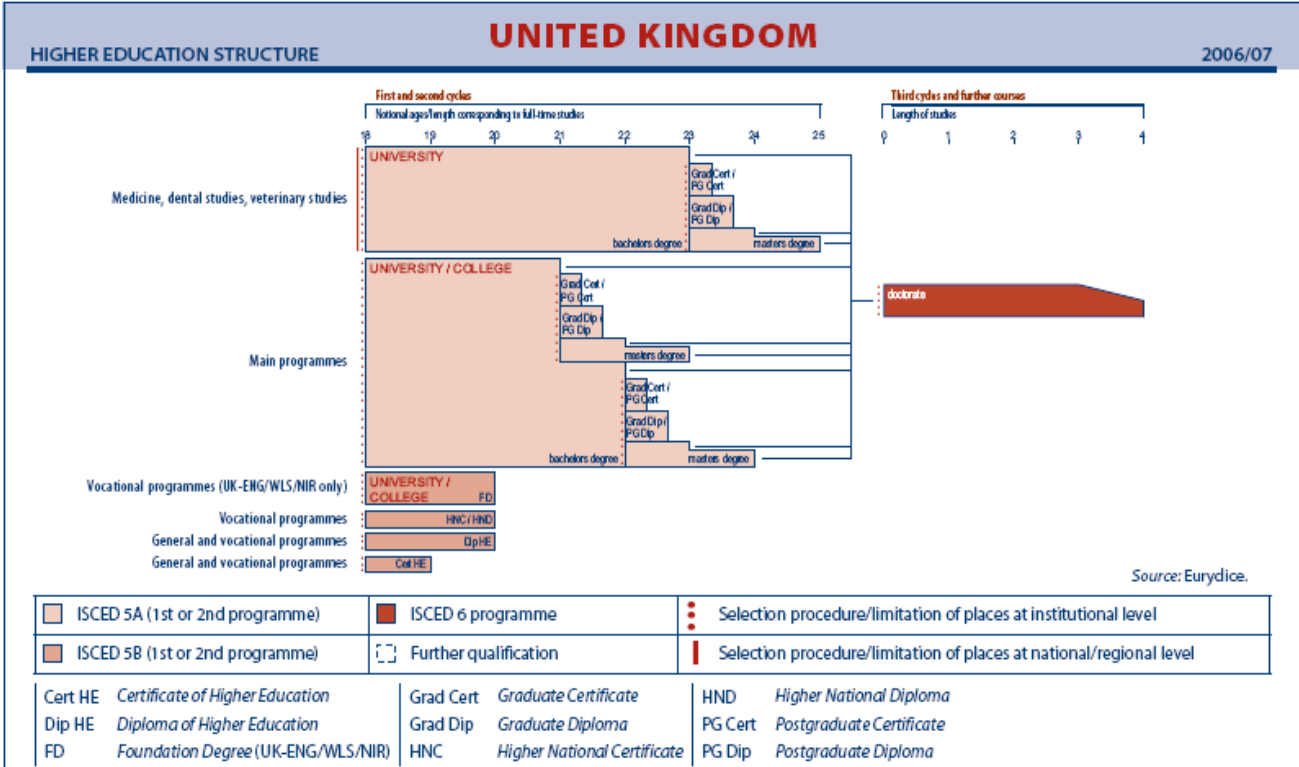
The organization of the higher education in England, Wales and the Northern Ireland did not pass through significant alterations with acceptance of the Bologna ideas. The independent position of higher education institutions is still kept the same as it has been before the signing of the Joint Declaration. The independency of the higher education institutions are regulated on the basis of either the Royal Charter or an Act of Parliament, thus giving the universities 'to develop their own courses and award their own degrees'. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299 – 300) Thus, the Law gives the right to the higher education institutions to use an official title of 'university' as well as awarding the academic degrees. However, it is worthy of mentioning that all the degrees as well as other higher education qualifications are the subject of 'legal possession' of so named 'awarding institution'. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299) After the launching the Bologna process, the Quality Assurance Agency developed the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland. Since that time the degrees awarded in the higher education institutions of the UK were systemized in nomenclature but still are used on a basis of recommendation. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 300 – 301) This document introduced for implementation in 2003 represented the UK reaction on the adoption of easily readable degrees. Noticeably, before this Framework the academic degrees design was developed by the universities themselves.

The institutional autonomy also implies the fact that all the universities have no legal obstacles for effective accomplishment of the Bologna expectations. According to this we may summarize the positive reaction of the higher education institutions of England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland on the reforms brought by the Bologna process. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299)

The organization of higher education programs is also based on the traditional three – cycle structure, consisting of: Bachelors, Masters, and Doctors

degrees. It is necessary to outline that this structure is not regulated by any legal frameworks, but based on the traditional organization. Thus, we can declare that the design of degrees awarding proposed by the Bologna Joint Declaration is organized with a high scale of conjunction to that one of the UK (England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland). The three cycle structure supposes the Bachelor program lasting usually three (or four) years, then may be followed by the Master program with duration of one (or two) years, and the third-level academic degree may be reached with finishing the Doctor which is of three (or four) years of study and academic research. But there are exceptions in cycle's duration within certain professional degrees, for example, like medicine and dentistry. The following graph is designed in a way to provide deeper information on the structure and organization of higher education in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Figure 13
Higher education structure of the United Kingdom: England, Wales, and Northern Ireland*



Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, OECD, p. 301

As we can observe from the Figure 13 there is no difference in the higher education structure that should become a subject for changes. Thus, “there are no

policies to encourage or enforce compliance” (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302) Thus, the traditional structure of the university programs of UK (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) countries met basic Bologna requirements that is contained of three cycles.

The first cycle of higher education includes getting the internal short-cycle qualifications, like Foundation Degrees and Diplomas of Higher Education after the finishing of every academic year. Such certificate on higher education gives the right to ‘enter employment directly’. However, there is possibility of continuing the higher education making a transfer to the following second or third year of Bachelors program. In such practice, the UK higher education institutions made a contribution to focus on lifelong learning concept.

The second cycle graduation implies the Masters Degree awarding, thus becoming a result of contribution of one/two years of education. However, the UK (England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland) universities also offer ‘the short-cycle qualifications at Masters Level’. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299)

Before applying the third cycle Doctoral program, the student should finish the Master course. But, there is another option for the students to enter the Doctoral program. If the student with “good results in a Bachelor degree with Honors in a relevant discipline” the UK higher education institutions sometimes allow him/her to follow the third cycle program “without a Masters degree with the agreement if doctoral supervisors”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299)

The system of higher education of England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland supposes diversification of academic programs preparing students. Thus, the specialization of the universities may vary from provision of practical to academic skills that are supposed to be applied either in the labor market or in ‘academia’. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299 - 300) Sometimes, we can face the combination of the research and practice in terms of the Doctoral program. To contribute this incentive there are formed special research councils. The Research Councils are the special agencies that fund the post graduate education, which may “require one year’s training in research methods” of so named MRes before applying the Doctorate program. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299) Besides, there is a possibility for a Master graduate or a

Doctor student to have an academic practice within the higher education institution. This right is protected on administrative level of the state. Furthermore, the opportunity for the students and graduates to have a practice had been traditionally developed in most of universities of the UK (England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland) a long time before the launching of the Process, but was reinforced after the signing of the Bologna declaration.

The proper opportunities for the students and graduates are guaranteed by Quality Assurance Agency. This independent body is created to “safeguard the public interest in sound of standards of higher education qualifications, and to encourage continuous improvement in the management of the quality of higher education”. The QAA is funded by subscriptions from the British higher education institutions as universities and colleges. (Quality Assurance Agency for higher education: an introduction - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>) The Bologna process also reflected on the functions of the QAA. For instance, it's the quality audit and advisory functions now are spread across the UK border. Besides, signing the convention also proclaimed the creation of the “Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education”, which promoted the synergy of doctoral studies throughout the EU. This document encouraged the development of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for Their Recruitment, thus affecting the creation of the European Research Area within the Bologna process. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 299 – 300)

Another one particularity of the higher education institutions of the Great Britain is ‘a long experience’ of issuing the single joint award degrees representing a result of collaboration of one university with another. This feature of British universities gives a competitive advantage of getting a double degree for the international students because “there are no legal barriers to awarding joint or dual degrees with international partners provided that an institution has appropriately formulated its statutes and regulations”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 300) Thus, the United Kingdom higher education institutions can fulfill the Bologna expectations encouraging the attractiveness of European Higher Education Area, enforcing the student mobility, and promoting the European co-operation in quality assurance. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 300; Bologna Declaration, pp. 5 - 6) The process of this double degree issue

is also controlled by the Quality Assurance Agency and regulated by the Charter on the “Code Practice” and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

The university degrees ‘comparability’ according to the Bologna process is based on the system of Credits (ECTS). But, it is necessary to outline that the Credit system had been widely used in England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland since the time of its acceptance in 1989. Primarily, the ECTS system was used as a basis for students transfer within the Socrates and Erasmus programs. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 300 – 301) The full compliance to the system of Credits proposed by the Bologna declaration was reached in the UK (England, Wales, and the Northern Ireland) by 2005. For example, by that time, the qualifications were introduced in Welsh universities with acceptance of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW). However, the system of credits the UK accepted nowadays resulted from the collaborative work of several higher education agencies. The final “convergence in respect of the basis upon which credit is awarded, and the credit tariff” was developed in 2005. And the final consensus upon the credit system awarding was reached only by 2006 with publishing the credit arrangements, which may be considered as “compatible with ECTS”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 300)

4.2.2 Organization of higher education in Scotland

Just like in the case of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the Scottish higher education organization was barely changed. Being based on three cycled system of degree structure, the higher education institutions totally comply with the demands of the Bologna declaration. The first cycle, so named Honors degree, usually takes four years of academic education. The duration of the Master courses lasts a year. Of course there are some exceptions in terms of issuing the other professional qualifications. Additionally post graduate education includes the Doctors programs, which were designed in accordance to the guidelines proposed by the Quality Assurance Agency “QAA Code of Practice”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 306) Usually for being accepted to the Doctoral study program it is requested to have a Masters degree. However, there are some exceptions, like in the case of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. According to them, the student may follow the Doctoral program in case of agreement of the doctoral supervisor(s).

Besides, the student should have high grades from the Bachelor Honor cycle, and prove the “he or she has made an original and significant contribution to knowledge”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 306) The design of the doctoral programs is identical all over the United Kingdom. However, in Scotland, the research directives are divided into four fields of research. Thus, the doctorate programs may be distinguished as following: PhD or DPhil – the traditional research based doctoral degrees; the ‘doctorates with substantial taught core’, which are widely spread in such areas like engineering, business, and education; the professional doctorates, which let the scholar to combine the research with the professional practice; and the doctorates ‘by publication’, which actually means the possibility of being awarded after the “submission of high quality previously published work written by the candidate, and supported by a substantial critical appraisal of this work”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 306)

In Scotland, the higher education institutions also offer a joint or double degree. As in case of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the arrangement of the joint degree study program is based on the agreement signed between the partner institutions. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 306)

The main arrangements objected to modernization of the national education system were provided under the supervision of the Scottish Higher Education Framework (SHEF). The SHEF, as well as the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, was adopted in 2001. Before signing the Bologna Declaration the higher education institutions of Scotland have their own responsibility over the academic degrees award. The situation was changed in 2001, when all higher education institutions and programs started using the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). This Framework classified Scottish system of grading, “programs and qualifications in terms of qualification descriptors, credit points, and credit levels”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 306) However, it is necessary to mention, that the SCQF should not be confused with the ECTS system proposed by the Bologna declaration. The system of SCQF is compatible with the ECTS where 2 SCQF is an equivalent to 1 ECTS. So, the higher education institutions are working within two frameworks, using SCQF at national level and ECTS at the European level to enforce the international transfer of students. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 306)

4.3 Higher Education Policy in the United Kingdom

Now let us scrutinize the specification of the higher education policymaking process of the United Kingdom. Starting our observation, we can make interesting findings. Because of administrative system of the United Kingdom, (See Appendix 3) there are certain differences in higher education systems of Scotland and England, Wales, and Ireland. Consequently, the observation is concerned on separated scrutiny of these cases.

4.3.1 Higher Education Policy in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

Traditional three-cycle organization of the study programs became a reason of the minimal policy changes that were brought by the Bologna process into the higher education of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Minimizing the Bologna affection on the higher education, the UK policy is aimed on introduction of the country's best practices into the Bologna process. To realize this British policy intention there was organized a new agency of the Measuring and Recording Student Achievement Group which developed the UK system of ECTS. Currently this group "is working jointly with the UK Higher Education Europe Unit". (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302) The UK Higher Education Unit represents a "sector wide organization" which is objected to introduction of the "UK higher education sector to the European Union and Bologna Process policy-making forums". (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302) This higher education policy making line brings to results which "ensure that UK developments will interface with ECTS and other international transparency instruments such as Diploma Supplement". (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 301 - 302) The Diploma Supplement at this case gives more transparency in higher education. Besides, Diploma Supplement should be issued 'in English and free of charge', which guarantee its international readability. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302 – 303) This intention of the UK was met positively by the Bologna promoters and it was supported by the National Recognition Information Center for the United Kingdom UK NARIC – the important

member of the European ENIC/NARIC. This fact indicates the valuable contribution of the UK policy makers into the Bologna process policy making framework.

The question of quality assurance of British higher education institutions represents the main pushing power for the maintenances launched after the signing the Joint Declaration. Scrutinizing the quality assurance processes going in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland we can find out that they are concentrated on institutional management of quality and standards. It is necessary to outline that before the Bologna the quality assurance was based on the Dearing Report. The contemporary approach of the quality assurance is aimed for “providing verifiable information to the public about the quality and standards at program level”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302) This ‘internal assurance’ of the UK universities as well as the ‘external reference’ of the member states provided by the Quality Assurance Agency is objected on defining and alteration of the ‘clear and explicit’ standards in higher education. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302 – 303) This feature of the QAA lets the UK policy making cross the nation-state border and interfere the entire EU higher education policy development process. Observing the responsibilities of the QAA within the framework of the Bologna process we may find out a wide range of expertise work made for improvement of the higher education qualifications and benchmark statements of the EU Code of Practice for Quality Assurance. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 300 - 303) Providing the expertise the QAA has no right to close higher education institutions or withdraw the funding. The right to stop funding of the higher education institution belongs to the Higher Education Funding Council uniting the four national funding bodies as Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Department of Education of the Northern Ireland (DENI), and Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). (<http://www.hero.ac.uk/>) Basing on the findings made by the QAA, the HE Funding gives the university one year opportunity to work out the pitfalls otherwise the funding may be stopped. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 303) Thus we can be verified that the information provided by the Quality Assurance Agency is of a vital importance. Making a survey, the QAA uses different approaches. Thus, the QAA board includes so named student observer. In fact, the big attention is paid by the QAA to the collaboration with students. In case of research processes standing behind the higher

education policy transformations the students play a big role. Furthermore, there is a member of staff “dedicated to student matters including liaising with the National Postgraduate Committee and the National Union of Students and Universities UK in the ‘Quality Takes Time’ project on training in quality assurance for its members”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 303) Alongside with the surveys provided by the QAA, the students are also involved in the National Student Survey (NSS). The NSS represents a crucial element for the quality assurance of the higher education. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 303)

Observations of the administrative structure of the UK (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) can show us that there is no system for accrediting of the higher education institutions. However, the right to award the degrees is reserved after the higher education institutions and protected by the Government. Those institutions, that do not obtain the right to issue a degree, provide courses “leading to degrees validated by institutions with degree – awarding powers” as universities or colleges.

The QAA influence on the European decision making process grew even more after the Agency became a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) since it was founded in 2000. Under the patronage of the ENQA the Quality Assurance Agency was in charge of the international evaluation projects as Translational European Evaluation Projects (TEPP) and the Quality Convergence Studies - the projects that were designed after the launching of the Bologna process. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 304) Besides, the QAA is a member of the Higher Education Regulatory Review Group (HERRG). Also, it is necessary to mention that after the enlargement of Bologna process participant countries, the Quality Assurance Agency has the ‘bilateral links with other agencies thought the Europe and in other parts of the world’. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 304)

4.3.2 Higher education policy in Scotland

Traditionally being distanced because of high degree of autonomy it is logically correct to separate the observation of the Scottish higher education organization from that of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Thus, let us scrutinize the changes that were brought by the Bologna process to the higher education policy of Scotland.

Observing the Scottish higher education on the question of the Diploma Supplement, we can make interesting findings. Signing the Bologna declaration the Scottish higher education institutions agreed on introduction of the Diploma Supplement that might be comparable to the European official model. But a deeper look on the Diploma Supplement (DS) of Scotland does not show us the compliance to this Bologna intention. The case is that there is no common design of the DS and all the higher education institutions produce it in accordance to the standards accepted within the university, not by a higher leveled organ or an EU agency. However, it is worthy of mentioning the fact that the DS is awarded by the end of the academic program, free of charge and in English. Also, to be more transparent, alongside with the UK and EU higher education transparency data it contains information regarding the particularities of the “Scottish higher education system developed by QAA Scotland and the Scottish higher education sector”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 307)

Having the three cycle system of higher education academic degree issuing there were no considerable changes brought to Scotland. However, it is necessary to mention the Scottish Bologna Stakeholder Group controlling the execution of the Bologna expectations. This Group consists of the “Scottish Executive (the devolved for government for Scotland), representatives from Universities Scotland, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA Scotland) and the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council (SFC), the successor body to the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 307) Thus, the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council is in charge of guiding the quality provision within the higher education institutions. Unlike its working practice in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SFC ‘discharges this responsibility’ from the Quality Assurance Agency. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 307)

The Quality Assurance Agency has the independent subdivision in Scotland, established in 1992. Thus, the QAA Scotland ensured the quality of the degrees issued by the higher education institutions of Scotland. Scrutinizing the QAA Scotland’s approach we may find out that it was developed to fulfill the national necessities rather than to comply the international (European) standards. In other words we can tell that the “QAA Scotland has developed its own distinctive approach to quality assurance and enhancement in partnership with SFC and the Scottish higher

education sector”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 307) This distinctive approach is known nowadays as the Quality Enhancement Framework, which is concerned on conduction of the internal universities review, external institutional reviews, student performance surveys, quality standards provision, and the publishing the reports on the outcomes.

Student surveys, like in case of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, form the basis of the quality assurance in Scottish higher education institutions. Thus, the students “have full involvement in the design processes which focus on the student learning experience”.

It is noticeable to mention that because of the independent self – governing position of the Scottish higher education institutions, the internal surveys remain the case of the universities themselves. Besides, it is necessary to outline that the degrees and other higher education qualifications are under the legal possession not of the state but of the ‘awarding institution’ as well. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 308) The government statement certifies the higher institutions of Scotland. Scrutinizing the position of the universities we should mention that they have to ‘meet strict criteria’ before they are empowered to award a degree. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 308) Thus, the universities provide the quality assurance evaluation in compliance with the guidelines issued by Scottish Funding Council. Observing the higher institutions, we can find out that the quality assurance emphasis is placed on external review. Thus, the ‘newly designed’ institutions and bad performing higher education institutions are supposed to undergo a ‘more rigorous external review’ until there ‘is confidence in their internal systems’. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 308)

CHAPTER V

The Case of the Netherlands in the Bologna Process

This chapter is going to overview the case of the Netherlands in the Bologna process. Meanwhile I am going to observe the contribution of the Netherlands into the educational policy formation in accordance to the Bologna Declaration initiatives. During the observation the big attention is going to be paid on the specifications that distinguish the implementation process from those proposed in the basic Bologna documents. Besides, there is going to be analyzed the following action lines the Netherlands universities and the government accomplished in regarding the Bologna initiatives. Additionally there is paid attention on the enforcing the Declaration in a particular way that differs from initial proposals. Concluding the observation I am going to propose the recommendations for the reaching of the successful realization of the Bologna process in accordance with the specification of the Dutch administration system.

5.1 Introduction

This sub – chapter is designed in a way to provide a brief information on the political situation of the state of the Netherlands. Thus, at the very beginning of the description, let us define the main information on the state and the legislative basis serving the implementation of the Bologna process. (see Table 2, Appendix 4; Appendix 5).

Figure 14

*Legislative basis for implication of the policy changes in the Netherlands**

Legislative and/or official references

Date	Term in English	Term in national language
Act adopted 8 October 1992 Implemented from 1 September 1993 (amended in 2002, 2003 and 2004)	Higher Education and Research Act	<i>Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW</i>
New legislative proposal sent to parliament on 8 June 2006	(New) Higher Education and Research Act	<i>Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHOO</i>

Source: National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, OECD, p. 241

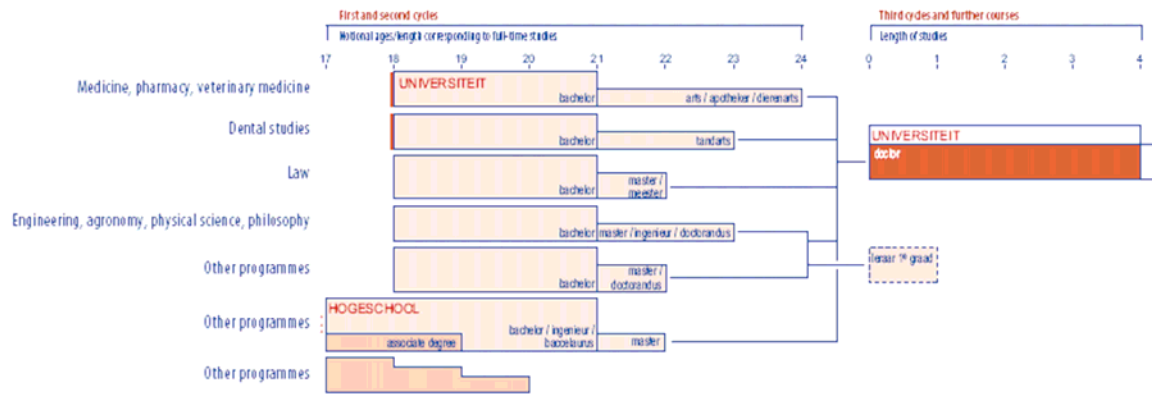
5.2 Organization of Higher education in the Netherlands

Comparing to the UK, the Dutch system of organization of higher education passed through multiple reorganizations in accordance to the Bologna process launched in 1999. Thus, there was introduced the renovated system of Bachelors, Masters, and Doctors. The other point of interest that pushed ahead the motivation for the further reorganization found its roots in attracting the foreign students, thus causing the competition to the Northern American Universities and bringing certain interests and income to the local educational institutions. Thus, the overall initiative that was launched from the part of the Netherlands appeared some kind of ‘political action response’ to the ideas following the Bologna process. (Dittrich, Frederiks, and Luwel, 2004, pp. 299)

Before starting the description of the changes caused by the Bologna process, it is necessary to scrutinize the specificity of the Dutch education system. The higher education system of the Netherlands is designed in a binary way, consisting of hogescholen and universities. (Huisman and Toonen, 2004, pp. 109 – 111; Litjens, 2005, pp. 212) Thus, the higher education is divisible into university education (WO) and professional education (HBO). The major difference between those two institutions is that the Hogeschool is concerned in providing the professional education, while the universities “focus on academic teaching and research”. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212) The possibility to follow WO and HBO programs is guaranteed by Higher education and Research Act of 1993. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) This act was adjusted in order to the Bologna process expectations in 2002, 2003, and 2004, thus introducing the ECTS, degree issue structure, Diploma Supplement, and quality assurance. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) As a result, the Dutch system of higher education has experienced multiple changes in a way to fulfill the Bologna requirements and accelerate the movement towards the ‘knowledge based society’. (Kaiser and Vossensteyn, 2005, pp. 187) The renovated structure of the higher education system of the Netherlands may be viewed on the following Figure 15.

Figure 15

*Higher education structure of Netherlands**



Source: Eurydice.

□ ISCED 5A (1st or 2nd programme)	■ ISCED 6 programme	• Selection procedure/limitation of places at institutional level
□ ISCED 5B (1st or 2nd programme)	□ Further qualification	▬ Selection procedure/limitation of places at national/regional level

In addition to institutions shown in the diagram, there are a number of non-government-funded private higher education institutions (*aangewezen instellingen*) that award qualifications equivalent to those awarded by government-funded higher education institutions.

Students awarded a *bachelor* qualification by a *Hogeschool* may move on to a research university *master*, either directly or via a bridging programme, depending on the arrangement between the *Hogeschool* and research university concerned.

Since 2006/07, a two-year programme (leading to an associate degree) has become part of the ISCED 5B Bachelor programmes offered at *Hogeschool*.

The ISCED 5B programmes offered at *Hogeschool* will be phased out by 31 December 2007.

*Source: *National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, OECD, p. 241*

The first step of working out the Bologna requirements was introduction of the Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctors structure. The design of the degrees resulted from the amendments made in the Higher Education Act in 2002. To comply to renovations brought by the Act the Dutch universities had to convert the major degrees which tend to be single – cycle' and last four years to Bachelor's and Master's. Introduction of the Bachelor/Master (BAMA) degrees was outlined since its signing. But, the universities implemented this practice only in 2002 – 2003 study year. Furthermore, it is necessary to mention that the higher education degrees transformation is still proceeding. This fact may explain the prospective implication of the BAMA system in such spheres as medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary only in 2008, which currently are taught in accordance to national standards. Divided into two components the Dutch system of higher education caused certain difficulties with realization of the Bologna incentives on the local level. If there were no considerable problems with introduction of the Bachelors – Masters – Doctors system in the universities, the Hogeschols met some problems. The majority of courses provided by

the Hogescholen were 'either ended or converted into Bachelor's programs'. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) The complexity of reformation of the HBO concerns in a particular institutional division of study programs into levels. Thus, for example, we can outline the courses of ISCED level 5A and courses of the ISCED level 5B provided by HBO. Logically, the ISCED level 5A courses were transformed into the Bachelor consisting of 240 ECTS. Scrutinizing the case of the 5 B programs we find out that "it is possible to transfer from ISCED level 5B programmes to ISCED level 5A via an intermediate qualification called an associate degree (AD), implemented via pilot projects in 2006/07 by the Hogescholen". (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) Thus there was found a solution to separate 5B program in a way it could be an 'integral' part of 5A level program. Before implication of the Bologna incentives, there was no access for a 5B level program student to switch the 5A course. Nevertheless, the Bologna action lines changes the former system so that the student may study two years of 5B program and then follow the 5A one. It let the student to obtain the Bachelor's degree form the HBO, gaining necessary 240 ECTS credits 'in total'. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240)

The Master's program usually requires completion of the Bachelor's degree. However, it is possible to follow the Master's course in case of approval of the supervising professor. Besides, the students have a chance to enter the masters program on the last year of the Bachelor's degree at the university.

Generally according to the Bologna process, the doctoral programs, with a duration of at least four years, may be accessed after the finishing the Master's course. But, as in case of the UK, "any student may be admitted to doctorate training at a professor's discretion". (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) There also is a rare practice of acceptance of the Bachelor students to the Doctor's program. According to the main directives of the Bologna process, the Dutch Doctoral programs are accomplished with the "scholarly or scientific research generally leading to a thesis or dissertation (*dissertatie*)". (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) After graduation from this program the student is expected to obtain a doctorate degree. The Dutch Ministry tries to pay a big attention to the research schools within the universities and keep its 'multidisciplinary context'. Besides, the research schools are concerned about provision of a competitive level of 'supervision and tuition for doctoral studies'.

(National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) Furthermore, there we can observe the practice of attraction of the young researchers and specialists.

It is well known that the transformations of the higher education led to switching of a greater part of administrative responsibilities to higher education institutions. Thus, the introduction of the BAMA courses rather remained the main objective of the universities and HBO than of a Ministry of Higher Education. But, however, there are particular differences like, for example, the design and innovation of the curriculum. Thus, for example, some higher education institutions are apply forces for its innovation, while the others are shifting this initiative to shoulders of the education program directors. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212)

It goes without saying that the differences brought by the binar higher education system of the Netherlands caused challenges with the Bologna process implementation. Thus the universities of the country beared the brund of the reforms. As a consequence, the entire university program appeared to be a subject of total revision. At the same time, the Hogeschols had to diversify the range of the education programs. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212 – 213; Van Der Wende and Lub, 2001, pp. 4) On the first sight, observing in general the Bachelor system of the university and the hogeschool, we may not find any considerable differences. But, however, it is worthy of mentioning about the debates aroundf the Bachelors degree obatained in the university and the higeschool. The first point is the quality assurance and comparability of those drgrees with the ones issued in the other Bologna process member countries, while the second point is concerned about the study period, because the Bachelor programs may last for the period of three to four years. Thus, there occur a logical guessing that the four year education should be of a higher value than that of the three year. For example, this point is sharply argued by the scholars, considering that “a three year bachelor degree cannot be expected to have gained the same academic skills as the student who have obtained a four year bachelor”. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 213) But, however, the Bologna does not make any differences between the particularities of the single nation’s higher education system, offering single comparable system of BAMA degrees. The other side of the binar education system also runs against the main idea of internationalization of the higher edcuation in europe. The case is that the universities introducing the three level Bachelors – Masters – Doctors system, appeared to be more internationally oriented and aligned with the other universities of the European area, while the Hogeschools concentrated

their sources on the domestic level, thus being concerned on the “national legislation”. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 213; see also Van Der Wende and Lub, 2001, pp. 4)

The changes that were brought with Bologna Declaration signing led to certain higher education policy transformations. Thus, starting 2002 the parliament agreed on corrective actions in the National Law on Higher Education. As a consequence, the universities of the Netherlands got the right of confirmation of the degrees assigned in the Bologna Convention since the academic year of 2002 – 2003. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212; Lub et al, 2003, pp. 250) The Higher Education law changing process caused the domino effect that led to approval of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) , which came as a replacement of the previous system of credit points. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212) Thus, since that period of time, we may consider the beginning of the major program of reorganizations aimed bringing the Dutch education system on a more competitive level, than it was before. To strengthen the positions of the Universities of the Netherlands undertook actions for simplification of procedures for Dutch students to study in universities outside the country as well as letting the international students to get knowledge from the local higher education institutions. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212; see also Lub et al, 2003, pp. 251)

Continuing the discussion on the theme of higher education development and involvement more students into the process of the higher education, let us observe some general statistics. In the context of obtaining the higher education in the frames of the Bologna process, there is considered the obtaining the degree of in accordance to the Bachelors, Masters, or Doctors. The process of modernization of the higher degrees supplement started after the issue of the Higher Education Act in 2002. Thus, all the programs that used to be “traditional” were converted into the Bachelor – Master’s courses in 2002 – 2003 academic year. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 240) It is necessary to mention the fact that not all programs offered in the Netherlands were converted to the system proposed in the Bologna Declaration. Thus, for example, the courses in medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary are still provided in accordance to the old format that is going to be changed only in 2008.

Now, let us discuss on the subject of readability of the Bachelor’s/Master’s degrees defined by the system of credits ECTS. The ECTS were brought into the Dutch higher education system with adjustment of the Higher Education Act of 2002. The ECTS has a standardized structure and contain 60 study points a year. Thus, the

new system appeared a substitute to the former 42-credit system. However, since 2002 academic year the ECTS became the obligatory study measurement tool and a subject for inter-university transfers. National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242)

The other mandatory element of the Bologna process is the Diploma Supplement, which was fully developed by March, 2005. National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242) The universities provide the Diploma Supplement in accordance to the standards of the Bologna declaration. They offer it to all graduate students, who followed the programs either on English or in Dutch languages, of the Bachelors, Master, and Doctors programs free of charge. The OECD specialists outline the fact of using the simplified forms of the Diploma Supplement in the Netherlands that contain only basic information regarding the studies. However, it is necessary to outline that it is planned to issue a totally Bologna process complied DS, that is supposed to be in English and 'corresponded to the EU/CoE/UNESCO format. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242)

5.3 Higher Education Policy in the Netherlands

Working on the internationalization and issuing comparable degrees in the system of higher education, the Netherlands government is emerging the projects aimed for the immediate neighbouring countries as Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Belgium. Thus, in frames of cooperation there was signed the Joint Declaration (Gemeinsame Erklärung) among the bordering countries during the years 2000 – 2001 aimed for the experience exchange in the sphere of the higher education and science, and supported by the regular annual meetings. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 44)

Before the launching the Bologna process, the higher education was oriented mostly on the needs of the internal market. But, the Declaration defined the new perspectives, thus marking new trends in the Dutch higher education as well. According to this, the main idea of the higher education internationalization policy in the Netherlands is objected on the formation of a particular 'international trademark' based upon the comparable degrees and the transparency. The major influence on the higher education policy development however is coming from the side of Bruxelles. The common objectives of the higher education improvement are designed under the

pressure of europeanization process. Afterwards, the legislation takes a shape of the reform on the domestic policy field. The case of the Netherlands was not an exception. The result of all the changes that the Dutch higher education has faced represent the close interdependent collaboration of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science, the VCNU (Dutch Universities Association), and the European Commission intervening powers. Consequently, the higher education policy goes to the domestic level, where the Ministry develops the project of changes that should be made within the national education system. At this point, it is necessary to mention the considerable influence of the Universities Association in the process of policy implementation. Thus, because of the collaboration framework of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science there might be reached a certain agreement on changing the nature of the education policy. The negotiation between the Ministry and the VSNU may obtain the last long process as it was in case of introduction of the Bachelors – Masters Degrees. Still this process is in the stage of negotiations. It is reasoned by the fact that there is no agreement reached in respect of granting the Masters and Bachelor degrees in the medical science, which is considered as more time consuming and special experience demanding at this particular area of knowledge. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 45) Continuing the discussion on the influential power of the VSNU in the Netherlands, it is worthy of mentioning the fact of so named “national internationalization”. This actually means the actions of the universities to take up decisions on ‘internal’ cooperation followed by the international inter-university agreement signing within the frames of the autonomy the university has. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 45)

The administration on the higher institutions is exercised though Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sciences. (Luijten – Lub, 2004, pp. 166) Besides, it is necessary to outline that the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sciences (MECS) of the Netherlands is responsible for the governmental strategy and policy formation for the education and the scientific research as well. (Luijten – Lub, 2004, pp. 168) Thus, the Ministry is obliged to publish the Higher Education and Research Plan reflecting the main challenges of the field of education. Apparently, there are other actors involved into the higher education administration process alongside with the MECS. There are such institutions, like Education Council (Onderwijsraad) and Advisory Council for Science and Technology Policy, which are concerned on providing consultative work to the Ministry. Litjens also pays attention to the

collaboration with so named “buffer” organizations, such as the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), the Association of the Universities of Professional Education (HBO – Raad), and the National Student Union (LSBV) in the questions of effective realization of the educational policy. (Litjens, 2005, pp. 212)

Now, let us continue the scrutiny of the Dutch system of higher education with the description of the quality assurance of Bachelor’s and Master’s programs. The Higher Education Act of 2002 foresaw the creation of the Netherlands Accreditation Organization (NAO) that is in charge of provision of the quality assurance on the national level. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242) The creation of the NAO is linked with the processes of Europeanization. Thus, after establishing a course for internationalization, the Netherlands signed a treaty with the Flemish Community of Belgium within the framework of NAO. Since that time the National Accreditation Organization represented a supranational organization working for two countries. Furthermore, this treaty was ratified by the European Community, which led to further development of the organization, which nowadays is well known as Netherlands – Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (NVAO, or Dutch – Flemish Accreditation Organization) (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242)

Accreditation of the higher education institution of the Netherlands represents a guarantee for the examination of the quality assurance. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242) In accordance to its directives, all the Master’s and Bachelor’s programs remain a subject for accreditation and are requested an approval of the CROHO – Centraal Register Opleidingen Hoger Onderwijs (Central Register of Programs in Higher Education) (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 242) The administration over the registration of new and old qualifications realizes by the NVAO. Being ‘entrusted by the law’ the NVAO has the right to ‘validate’ the programs “provided by government – funded higher education institutions as well as institutions approved (but not funded) by the Dutch government”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243)

The main sources for quality assurance reports are external evaluations. To contribute the external expertise, the NVAO conforms the data provided by validation and evaluation organization and agencies as Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities, Netherlands Quality Agency, and Hobéon Certificering bv. Furthermore,

there are combined external/internal evaluations, generally provided by the Visiterende en Beoordelende Instanties (VBIs – Visiting and Assessing Institutions). (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243) According to this practice, every “peer review” is followed by the deep internal evaluations. Scrutinizing the work of the external peer review committees we can find out following characteristics. The Visitatiecommissies (external peer review committees) provide the research for all Dutch higher education institutions on the subject of their courses. The frequency of research conduction varies from five years for the research programs to six years for other general courses. This type of research seeks for wide scope of educational aspects, thus involving into the research members of a student committee and foreign experts. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243) It is noticeable to tell that those peer reviews influence the future of the program provision. Thus, for example, if the universities should comply the peer reviews summaries, while the research programs use the results as recommendations for the future improvements. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243)

The process of the Dutch universities quality assurance is rather complicated process. Due to the specification of the hierarchical state structure, the evaluation provided by the Visitatiecommissies is controlled by the NVAO. Since 2003 the responsibility of NVAO is concerned about scrutiny of the organization that comply to the standards of assessment and compliance to standards. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243) Furthermore, the law guarantees the openness of the evaluation incentives and obliges the NVAO and Visitatiecommissies publish reports. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243) Besides, the Bologna process encouraged the universities to ‘organize their own system of quality assurance of their own education and research’, that may consist of internal and external evaluations as well. The questions of the Quality assurance of the administrative level are organized in a collaboration of the Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities, Netherlands Quality Assurance and the Visitatiecommissies inspectorate members. All those organizations since 2000 remain the permanent members of the European Association for the Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) The NVAO became the member of the ENQA after introduction of the changes into the Higher Education Act in 2003. The responsible work of the NVAO also includes the membership n the European

Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). Working together on the quite important in terms of the competitiveness Dutch higher education questions of quality assurance, all those organization became a key members of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAHEE). (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243 – 244)

Chapter VI

Comparative analysis of the higher education policy outcomes brought by the Bologna process

This chapter is devoted to analyzing the higher education policy outcomes of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands reached after the signing of the Joint Declaration on Higher Education.

6.1 Adoption of the system of easy readable degrees

Being launched by the 29 member states at the very beginning the Bologna process appeared to be far more than just a single European issue. But, however, the Joint declaration outcomes let the process of Europeanization to be pulled towards further expansion. Furthermore, the Bologna process raised the value and competitiveness of the higher education within the entire region. We still can consider the Bologna process as one of the most ambiguous projects developed and provided under the common idea of Europeanization. Most of the initiatives already been introduced right after its signing. The great effort was applied on the nation state level for transformation of the higher education policy and administration. As a consequence, we got modernization of the higher education made on the single-state level thus fulfilling the requirements of the Declaration and getting closer to creation of the single European Area on Higher Education. There are ministerial reports of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom confirming movement to creation of the most competitive and internationally attractive higher education area. Following the chain of 'action lines' let us compare and scrutinize what results there were achieved by the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in the question of applying the Bologna ideas.

First, let us scrutinize the adoption of system of easy readable degrees. Those degrees should be designed in a way that every university has a comparable and approved system of degrees based on a three cycle system: Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctor's. Comparing the cases of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands we can draw certain conclusions. Firstly, it is necessary to tell, that the UK degrees design as a whole barely underwent any alterations. However, some Universities of

Scotland were ought to re-design the Master of Arts degree which was issues after the finishing of the 4 years of academic study at the university. If we observe the case of the Netherlands shows us more significant changes of the system of higher education. In accordance to the Bologna ‘action lines’ there were introduced the three cycle system of Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctor’s, that replaces the national system of degrees.

The mismatch between the UK and the Dutch systems of education may be explained by several factors: the organization of higher education of the state, the higher education governing structure, state regulation of the HE policy making process, and the quality assurance specifications. The majority of the factors that are mentioned in the Bologna Declaration remain the main ones in the UK system of higher education. Thus, the UK tries to affect much on the decision-making process on the higher European level. As a consequence the system of degrees ‘distribution’ of the UK laid as a basis for the renovations and transformations presented in the higher education in all countries which signed the Bologna Declaration. This initiative was actually reasoned by the fact that the British system remains a part of so named Anglo-Saxon system of higher education. That supposes the high degree of matching of the British system of higher education to the American one. This fact reasoned the transformation of the entire higher education policy and system in all Bologna process member states to the competitive unity in accordance with the UK system. In such case, the British university degrees were not incurred to any changes unlike the Dutch university degrees. Comparing to the UK, the innovations brought by the Bologna process to the Dutch system of higher education changed the entire degree issue structure. The following graph may show the modernization of the university degrees issue in the Netherlands.

Figure 16

*The changes in the Dutch Bachelor – Master – Doctor degrees issue **

<p>Before the implementation of the Bologna ‘action lines’</p>	<p>1 year of “propaedeutic” course (including the studying in the university or in the polytechnic institution like HBO)</p>	<p>3 years of doctoraal education (which should not be confused with the contemporary understanding of the doctoral degree)</p>
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After the implementation of the Bologna 'action lines'	Bachelor degree issued after 3 years of academic education	Master degree issued after 1 (in some cases 2 years) years of academic education and research	Doctor degree issued after 3 (in some cases 4) years of academic research (with writing the thesis) and education
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*Source: Barboza, D. (2003) "Education Policy in Comparative Perspective. Internationalization in Dutch and Spanish Higher Education", Erasmus University Rotterdam, pp. 48 – 49

As we can see in the Figure 16, there were considerable changes brought into the Dutch higher education degrees issue. Thus, before the Bachelor – Master system in the Netherlands, there was one year of so named "propaedeutic" course studied in the either university or the HBO polytechnic institution which was followed by the three years of "doctoraal" education. As we can see from the figure 16, there is a big difference in the degrees design that was before and that was got after the signing of the Bologna Declaration on higher education. It is necessary to outline that there were met serious mismatch with issuing the Bachelor degree, occurred being a result of the two-sided system of Universities and the HBO's of the Netherlands. The polytechnic education of the HBO's of more practice character has not the same structure as the more scientific and academic university education. However, there was reached a certain compromise with issuing the Bachelor degree obtained both in the university and in the Hogeschool. Comparing to Dutch system of higher education, the British one did not face with considerable changes with the academic degrees issue. But, however, observing the British system of higher education more deeply, we can find out certain differences. Those mismatches of the higher education degrees issue are reasoned by the non-standardized approach of the universities regulation. Thus, we can find out that the Scottish universities used to grant the degree of Master of Arts, instead of 'Bachelor', after finishing the four years of academic education. Besides, the UK universities have the right to provide a double degree education. Thus, after the graduation of British university, the student may obtain a diploma of two universities. The Dutch universities at this point do not

provide such opportunity for the students. However, it is possible to study at one university and follow s a course from the other one (if it is in compliance with the main study program).

Summarizing the findings on the first issue, we can declare that the Bologna process brought particular changes reflected directly on the outcomes of the higher education institutions degree issue system. Besides, it is necessary to mention that this point of the ‘action lines’ remains one of the first challenges that were implemented by every Bologna process member state right after the signing of the Joint Convention.

6.2 Adoption of the system of Credits – ECTS

However, we already can outline the adoption of the three-cycle degrees system by both the UK and the Netherlands. The system is designed in a way of the three levels, including three (or four) years Bachelors, one (or two) years of Master studies, and the Doctors. The positive side of that system of common approach of degrees can eliminate the ‘discrimination’ among the higher education institutions of the Bologna process member – states. Thus, all universities within all Bologna process member states remain equal. If the three cycle degrees issue system is fully established in the UK, in the Netherlands it is still proceeding. For instance, the courses of a healthcare, medicine, and veterinary did not pass through any slight changes. The Bologna incentives are planned to be introduced to these spheres of education in academic year 2008-2009.

Now, let us pay attention on the second issue of establishment of a system of credits, which represents the essential part in commonness, accountability, comparability to the system of higher education within the European Higher Education Area. The point on the establishment of the system of credits still causes many questions. They were designed to promote the student mobility within the region and bring commonness. But, scrutinizing the credits issue system in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom we came to interesting findings. For instance, there is slight mismatch in the credits issuing procedure in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. If there are no differences in the Bachelor programs, where the “valuation” of credits should be not less than 60 ECTS, then the system of credits of the Masters programs is diversified. The recommendations developed in the Bologna

Declaration are worked out in different way by every case study member state. The only common ground for the credits “quantity” is the duration and the character of the Masters program. Thus, in the Netherlands, it is necessary to complete 60 – 120 credits, obtained during one (60 ECTS) or two (120 ECTS) years of education. Thus, the only factor defining the quantity of necessary credits obtained is the length of the study program. Meanwhile the observation of the British system shows us that the Master’s programs are valued on a different way. Thus, the complete Masters program counts 180 ECTS, and the research Master’s program consists of 240 ECTS. Thus, the quantity of the ECTS of complete Master program is equal to complete Bachelor program. In other words we can declare that in the Netherlands the ECTS are counted on the basis of the duration of the study program, where 1 academic year should include 60 ECTS, no matter if it is a Bachelor or Master program. At the same moment the ECTS of the British BAMA are based not on the duration of the program, but on the completion of the program, thus containing 180 – 240 ECTS. The Bologna Declaration, however, leave the judgment on the issue of the state. It is outlined that one year education should be evaluated 60 ECTS. But at the same time there is contributed in the Bologna declaration that the decision of the overall valuation of the programs should be decided within the state. Mostly, this difference in ECTS issue may confuse the students, especially those who are going to study according to exchange programs. Besides, at the context of the Masters degree ECTS, the UK universities have a greater competitive advantage and thus may be more attractive than the Dutch universities.

There is the other challenge outlined in the Bologna declaration and directly linked to the ECTS issue – the promotion of student and staff mobility. The initial Bologna expectation supposes the attempt for giving an opportunity for students and teachers to share experience and provide competitiveness for the European universities. Regarding to this question, the UK and the Netherlands created all conditions for the student and teaching staff mobility. Thus, the teachers, researchers, and students of all levels have the equal opportunities for working/practicing/studying within the European Union. It is worthy of mentioning the fact that the course towards the student mobility was taken much earlier than the launching of the Bologna process. Thus, the conditions of the exchange programs were designed alongside with the development of the international study programs like “Erasmus” or “Minerva”. Besides, the student mobility in terms of the study

programs is also aligned with the other 'action line' towards internationalization of European higher education. In accordance to the incentives of the Bologna process, the course for internationalization is aimed for deepening of cooperation processes throughout the Europe and promotion of the European Higher Education Area for raising the competitiveness of the European higher education institutions for the international students and researchers.

6.3 Issues of Europeanization and internationalization of higher education policy making

The matter of internationalization of higher education became an important factor of raising the competitiveness of the EHEA. The internationalization of higher education policy became a nation of the single state interest. If the UK universities launched the public strategy towards internationalization since mid-1980s, Thus, elevating the internationalization of the system of higher education to the national policy interests the Netherlands politicians are interested in strengthening the positions of the European higher education, thus at the same moment considering about the improvement of the quality of domestic education. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 41)

The idea of internationalization and Europeanization of the higher education was supported by the Dutch policy makers since the times of creation of the European Union. There we can remember either the co-operation incentives with the higher education institutions of Germany and Belgium in 1991 – 1992 or launching the 'cross – border' program of institutional co-operation and the teacher - student mobility, being approved for the period of four years (1997 – 2000) (Barboza, 2003, pp. 43; <http://www.eurydice.org>)

The final attempt is associated with the biggest and widely spread higher education initiative that crossed the faraway borders of the European Commonwealth. In accordance with the statements presented in the Declaration on Higher Education, the Dutch policy makers came to conclusion of accelerating the international cooperation process. Thus, as a result we may distinguish the following action lines aimed:

1. To give the opportunities for the citizens to obtain the knowledge outside the country

2. To provide the comparable education with the consequent BAMA degree conferment
3. To attract the international students in order to “increase the cross border transparency and comparability of courses and qualifications” (Barboza, 2003, pp. 44; see also OcenW, 2002, pp. 13)

We can draw certain findings, scrutinizing the compare of the Netherlands with the United Kingdom. Thus, for example, UK launched the program towards internationalization even earlier. From the mid 1980s there the sphere of higher education policy of the UK faced with a big wave of transformations, mainly aimed for economic efficiency. (Shattock, 2006, pp. 133 – 134) The changes that were brought by the Bologna declaration also were carried by the economical pressures. This incentive is illustrated in the White Paper “The Future of Higher Education” issued in 2003. Thus, the Ministry and DfES, the Cabinet office, and the head of HEFCE agreed on the action lines were characterized as following ones (Shattock, 2006, pp. 133 – 134):

1. Making selection of institutions to be eligible for the state investment;
2. Enlarging of the age participation rate to 50% of the age group. Actually, this initiative is promoted by the idea of the lifelong learning. Thus, the UK officials try to attract wide range of citizens;
3. Making the higher education ‘more inclusive’ (Shattock, 2006, pp. 135)
4. Raising the efficiency of the higher education quality audit;
5. Promoting of assistance of the UK universities in the regional economic development. (Shattock, 2006, pp. 135)

Furthermore, it is necessary to outline the incentive of the British universities association to reconsider the fee paid for the education. This incentive is reasoned by certain factor. The case is that the UK has the fixed rates for studying in all the universities. According to this, the tuition fee for a particular subject is almost equal (for the EU students the cost is approximately 3200 GBP), no matter if it is Oxbridge or some regional college. The main competitive advantage for the universities is the quality assurance of education, staff, conditions and the level of prestige. But this practice raises the constant disputes in the Ministry of Education and agencies voting for the “making higher education more subject to market pressures”. (Shattock, 2006, pp. 135) This plan of the politicians is not realized yet,

but the works objected to changing the tuition fees have been already launched. The Netherlands has the system of the fixed rates for the study programs as well (approximately 1500 Euros). Notwithstanding, there were no suggestions made for transformation of the study rates as in the UK.

Scrutinizing the cases of the Netherlands and the UK, however, we can find a common ground for the policy changing process that came with the Bologna process. The major realignment is that the change is “derived essentially from economic competition, responsiveness to society’s demands and the general extension of competition as the singular driving force in society and, by extension, therefore, in HE”. (Neave, 2006, pp. 119) Neave defines the tendency of changing of the higher education policy on nation state level as a ‘continuity of change’. This term is designed to express the attempt of the state to interfere the independent position of the universities. Thus, “‘Continuity in change’ re-situates the relationship between university and society from being one of distance to its polar opposite, the principle of proximity. Likewise, the basically conservative value of caution, which underpinned ‘continuity and change’, shifted, the weight placed on ‘the tried and tested’.” (Neave, 2006, pp. 119) In other words, there is a ‘caution’ of the consequences that the considerable policy changes may bring into the higher education of the nation state. This line of reasoning scrutinizes the outcomes of unreasonable risks, “institutional initiative and entrepreneurial derring-do” of politicians. (Neave, 2006, pp. 120)

6.4 European dimension in quality assurance

It is impossible to deny the risks that always follow new initiatives. At this point, the higher education policy reformation in accordance to Bologna is not an exception. At this point, the policy should concern on raising of the quality assurance provision. The Bologna process is looking for the promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance – for leading the European higher education to a more competitive level than the USA and Canadian one. Besides, this attempt is seeking for the improvement of the education environment for attraction of higher number of the international students to the universities of Europe.

Basing on the Bologna expectations shown above, let us specify the works made for the quality assurance promotion in the case study countries. For instance, to guarantee the quality assurance of the programs of all three levels of higher education

the Netherlands created a new agency. Thus, the Netherlands Accreditation Organization was created in 2002. This incentive was affected by the Europeanization factor, and in 2003 on the basis of NAO there was established a treaty with the Flemish Community of Belgium. In 2004 the Netherlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (NVAO – Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization) supranational body treaty was ratified. The main concern of the supranational organization NVAO is to accredit programs at higher education institutions. Besides, the NVAO organizes the examination regulations of the universities and HBO. Besides, the NVAO is concerned about the design of the programs and degrees. In other words, “NVAO confirms jointly with Centraal Register Opleidingen Hoger Onderwijs (Central Register of Programs in Higher Education) that the program is indeed new, and that it has neither been registered, nor has had its registration withheld in the past”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 243 – 244) This feature of NVAO radically differs from the possibility of British universities to decide on the name and design of the study program. There is a special agency dealing with the questions of the quality assurance of the British higher education institutions – the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The QAA is mainly concerned on the maintenance of the management “of the quality of the higher education of higher education”. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302)

The Netherlands made a considerable contribution to the quality assurance provisions as well. It is necessary to outline the big role of the Netherlands in the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation. The EAPAA was created to improve the learning processes going under the aegis of the Bologna incentives implementation. The EAPAA is ensured the high quality provision of the Public Administration programs of the member states universities. Now, the Association counts 30 programs in 16 countries. (<http://www.eapaa.org>)

Being so different in the options, the quality assurance organization of both the United Kingdom and the Netherlands were created to provide “verifiable information to the public about quality and standards at program level” and constant working out the quality of education in the universities. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 302)

The higher education system foresees the ways of further europeanization process encouraging. From this point, there are three main ways of spreading the power of the europeanization process. The first two are concerned about the outcomes of diplomacy and the negotiations. The last variant is more pragmatic way of affection of the policy formation going through the supranational organizations, as OECD, UNESCO, or within the European Union member states. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 44; OcenW, 2001, pp. 13) At this particular point we see enforcing the power of europeanization process to appear as a subject for the Bruxellization and the centralization processes. Barboza describes this situation, explaining that there are many “actors in the education field and with this, dependency between them to have success on the elaboration of the policy actions”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 44)

The Bologna process at the context of the new higher education policy implementation process represents inertial policy application caused by the factors of Europeanization. Thus, the policy implemented by the case study countries were not specified neither by the particularities of the nation state administration system, nor by the organization of the higher education. The Bologna process enforced new ‘action lines’ which had to be worked out. But the way those action lines were contributed was defined by the state itself. At this point we can raise the suggestion that we have to consider not about what policy in the sphere of higher education we can design, but the framework for the policy making that should be invented. (Shattock, 2006, pp. 139) However, the nation state governments, ministries of education, and agencies had to “either ossifies existing structures or imposes shifts to align them with other Government policies. Universities become less differentiated (except in relation to research intensity) and more dependent on Government policy making even while they seem more free to develop their own initiatives”. (Shattock, 2006, pp. 139 – 140) Thus, the government policy of the state becomes dependent on the specifications of the national public structure and organization of higher education. Thus, it affects the way of the policy implementation. From one side it is more efficient for the state to affect the decision making process on the supranational level, bringing more ‘inside-out’ decisions then to transform the national HE structure, as we can observe in the case of the UK. On the other side, we can observe the vice-a-versa effect of ‘outside-in’ policy implementation from the side of the Netherlands, which ought to accept the ‘rules’ of the Bologna process due to too

specific and distinct mode of national higher education organization. To get over this difference of the common Bologna expectations the politicians should “balance between ‘inside-out’ and ‘outside-in’” and create a ‘proper architecture’ for the common higher education policy. (Shattock, 2006, pp. 140)

To conclude the chapter there may be made a following matrix presenting the differences of the Bologna process implementation in the case study countries.

Comparative matrix of the case study countries

	The Netherlands	The United Kingdom
Organization of the state	decentralized	centralized
Higher education policy adoption	‘outside in’	‘inside out’
Three-cycle system adoption	Totally reorganised national higher education framework	Almost no changes on the general state level
ECTS adoption	ECTS adopted are equal to 60 ECTS for every study year according to university/hogeschoolen program. The system is based on the completion of the academic year. For example, the Master’s program consists of 60 (120) ECTS	ECTS adopted are equal to 60 ECTS for every year of study program. However, the British universities grant the credits on the basis of the completion of the program. For example, the Master’s program consists of 180 (240) ECTS
Quality Assurance Framework	Netherlands – Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie, European Association for Public Administration	Quality Assurance Agency, including Higher Education Funding Council for England, Universities UK, the

	<p>Accreditation</p>	<p>GuildHE, the National Union of Students UK and the Higher Education Academy, Scottish Executive and the Scottish Funding Council, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, National Union of Students Wales, Department for Employment and Learning (Ireland)</p>
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Chapter VII

Conclusion

The final chapter of the master thesis is devoted to making a summary on the question raised in the very beginning of the research. The conclusion contains a review of findings followed from the preceding chapters of the thesis. Consequently, the big attention is going to be paid for the observation of the answers we got from questions we tried to solve during the research of the higher education policy implementation differences brought by the Joint Declaration in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. First, let us describe what results we got answering the sub-questions. This observation then helps us to answer the main question of the master thesis. Thus, let us set about the settled questions and answers part.

The Bologna process represents a wide intergovernmental initiative. It was launched by the 29 states in 1999 and today the enlarging Bologna initiative reached 45 member states. The Bologna process became a field of arguing due to its dual nature. It is outlined in the Joint Declaration the obvious fact that it is a “commitment freely taken by each signatory country to reform its own higher education systems or systems in order to create overall convergence at European level”. (Bologna Declaration, 1999, pp. 3) However, the financial interference became the “other side of coin”. Besides, the Bologna acquis became a basis for trade in hand of the European Commission. Despite the common opinion, the Bologna process does not consider unification or standardization of the higher education practices. However, it has a common single-European idea of “the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education”. (Bologna Declaration, 1999, pp. 4) Besides, there is mentioned the objective of the Bologna process, which is to “ensure that the European higher education system acquires a worldwide degree of attractiveness equal to [Europe’s] extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions”. (Bologna Declaration, 1999, pp. 4 – 5)

The Bologna process became far more than single European dimension. Thus, it appeared to be one of the most ambiguous processes of the EU aimed for the development of the European Higher Education Area. Uniting 45 countries, the Bologna process impact on the countries is better understood as a matter of

internationalization. At this context, we consider the internationalization as a “process of integrating an international, inter-cultural and/or global dimension in the goals, functions (teaching/learning, research, services) and delivery of higher education.” (Bjarnason, 2007, pp. 5) Indeed, the Bologna process meets all the necessary conditions that is brought by the internationalization. It provides the student, teaching staff mobility, introduces the system of easy readable degrees, implements the system of study credits (ECTS), develops system of European quality assurance, and opens spaces for EU higher education standards to spread along the world.

The further success of the Bologna process is dependent in many aspects on the policy decisions, which can contradict for instance to the traditional concepts. In other words, there is a dilemma to be solved “whether it is possible to break with some of the traditional concepts and to free them in line with a embedded in the (past) national structure in order to reform them in line with a modern student-centered learning culture”. (Pechar, Pellert, 2004, pp. 328) However, it is not a fact that all countries follow the suggestion of transformation. The main point in reformation of the system is the outcome of the ‘action lines’. Thus, the way of Bologna expectations implementation is not the main one. As there is a difference in the way of the ‘incentives’ implementation, then the overall outcomes are different as well. Besides, every country has the right to interpret the Bologna ‘action lines’. By virtue of the internal higher education structure, the states interpret the vague main points of the Bologna declaration in terms of the single state interests. The difference of interpretation is fully shown on the multiple case study examples. The outcomes are indeed the same: the easy readable degrees, ECTS, and the quality assurance. But the functions and methods are absolutely different. Even the inquire of the Bologna process is different. For instance, the UK universities traditionally have the independent statute. The administration of the higher education institutions almost did not have a pressure form the side of the state. But, with the acceptance of the Joint declaration on higher education, the administration UK universities and colleges became more influenced by the state regulation systems. Thus, many scholars outline the partial lost of academic independence of the British higher education institutions. On the opposite side, the case of the Netherlands shows the vise-a-versa effect caused by the Bologna process. At this example we can observe the ‘transition of power’ from the state level to the universities. Thus, the Dutch higher

education institutions became more independent in the decision making process from the state.

Furthermore, the success of the Bologna process implementation expectations in many aspects is dependent on the possibility of the equal affection on the decision making process. As we can observe on the example of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, there is a difference in the system of political lobbying on the supranational level. Thus, there occurs a difference in the starting points of the UK and the Netherlands.

Answering the settled sub-questions, we can turn to the answering the main question of the Master thesis. It is necessary to mention the fact that the full accomplishment of the Bologna process is quite feasible. It is planned to contribute the creation of the European Higher Education Area by 2010. However, the working documents indicate us the full accomplishment of the main points of the Bologna process in the majority of countries. There is an opinion that, the action lines of the Bologna process may be fully worked out. But on fact it may have differences and pitfalls. Most of the signatory countries are going to finish the implementation process by 2010. But, there are countries that prolong the reformation of the national higher education till 2012. (National Trends in the Bologna Process, 2006 – 2007, pp. 15-25) To reach the result it is necessary to work on the entire package of higher education reforms during long period of time. More probably, that the expectations outlined in the Bologna Declarations are going to be reached not by 2010, but 2020. The reason of those different outcomes is laid in the text of Joint Declaration itself. The action lines are too vague and there is a room for different interpretation. However, it is possible to approximate the policy change outcomes to the Bologna expectations. Thus, for example, it is necessary to study the 'best practices', which can be used on the way of the Bologna expectations implementation. Besides, every state should benchmark the 'action lines', to decide 'first things done first' in order to smooth the implementation and decrease the difference in outcomes. The last point for success of the pan-European incentive is not to concentrate on the economic benefits on the short term, but work out the quality of the higher education itself.

It is necessary to study the outcomes from the expectations of the Bologna process. It is obvious, that the Bologna process stepped far more than just the

European domain. It became a vague international project. Still, many countries are willing to implement the standards of the Bologna Declaration. The participation in the Bologna process already became a synonym of the high qualified education. Kazakhstan is paying a big attention to the adoption the standards of higher education offered by the Declaration as well. It pays a big interest in transformation of the national system to more transparent and internationally oriented. The most countries in transition are also needed in the competitive educated specialists. Thus, the Bologna process may suggest the package of necessary transformations to reach the competitive education. To simplify the implementation it is necessary to study best practice and benchmarking of the countries successfully implemented the Bologna expectations to find a better solution.

Theory critics

The Bologna process opens boards for standards of higher education to spread through the borders of the EU. Thus, we can already discuss about not only the single European, but also an international approach to the higher education. In the case of international observation, the theory of Europeanization does not cover all the aspects of the Bologna process.

Now let us turn to the observation and criticism of the theoretical part of the thesis. The theory of Europeanization fits the dimensions and even may explain the spread of the Bologna process throughout the countries and regions. However, it does not cover entirely the explanation of all the processes going under the Bologna Declaration. The Minimalist view at the context of the Bologna process is applicable to the little amount of countries that may affect on the higher education policy development. The maximalist view on the Bologna process is closely linked to creation of the European identity, which is almost eliminated in the more international context. (Featherstone, Radaelli, 2003, pp. 5 – 6) The Bologna process is taking more “globalized structure”.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

The Bologna Declaration on the European space for higher education: an explanation

This document was prepared by the Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences and the Association of European Universities (CRE). It includes:

- a comment on the meaning and significance of the Bologna Declaration and information on the follow-up process in progress;
- the text of the Declaration;
- a list of internet addresses from which more detailed information can be obtained.

The authors are grateful to the European Commission for its support and its willingness to disseminate this document.

The Bologna Declaration: an explanation

The Bologna Declaration is a pledge by 29 countries to reform the structures of their higher education systems in a convergent way

The Declaration is a **key document** which marks a **turning point** in the development of European higher education.

- It was **signed by 29 countries** which “undertake to attain the Declaration’s objectives” and to that end “engage in coordinating [their] policies”.
- It is a **commitment freely taken** by each signatory country to reform its own higher education system or systems in order to create overall convergence at European level. The Bologna Declaration is not a reform imposed upon national governments or higher education institutions. Any pressure individual countries and higher education institutions may feel from the Bologna process could only result from their ignoring increasingly common features or staying outside the mainstream of change.
- The Bologna process aims at creating convergence and, thus, is not a path towards the “standardization” or “uniformization” of European higher education. The fundamental principles of autonomy and diversity are respected.
- The Declaration reflects a **search for a common European answer to common European problems**. The process originates from the recognition that in spite of their valuable differences, European higher education systems are facing common internal and external challenges related to the growth and diversification of higher education, the employability of graduates, the shortage of skills in key areas, the expansion of private and transnational education, etc. The Declaration recognises the value of coordinated reforms, compatible systems and common action.

The Bologna Declaration is not just a political statement, but a binding commitment to an action programme

The **action programme** set out in the Declaration is based on a clearly defined common goal, a deadline and a set of specified objectives:

- a clearly defined common goal: to create a European space for higher education in order to enhance the employability and mobility of citizens and to increase the international competitiveness of European higher education;
- a deadline: the European space for higher education should be completed in 2010;
- a set of specified objectives:
 - the adoption of a **common framework of readable and comparable degrees**, “also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement”;

- the introduction of **undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all countries**, with first degrees no shorter than 3 years and relevant to the labour market;
- **ECTS-compatible credit systems** also covering lifelong learning activities;
- **a European dimension in quality assurance**, with comparable criteria and methods;
- the **elimination of remaining obstacles to the free mobility** of students (as well as trainees and graduates) and teachers (as well as researchers and higher education administrators).

The Bologna Declaration and global competitiveness of European higher education

- Next to the need to “achieve greater compatibility and comparability in the systems of higher education” (mainly an intra-European issue), the Declaration wants “in particular” to increase “the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education”. It says that the “vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal its culture has for other countries”. The signatory countries explicitly express their goal to “**ensure that the European higher education system acquires a worldwide degree of attractiveness** equal to [Europe’s] extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions”.
- **On these “external” issues, the Bologna Declaration is genuinely opening up new avenues.** In stressing so explicitly the need for European higher education as a (cohesive) system to become more attractive to students from other world regions, it provides one more reason for moving in the direction of a coherent European system and implicitly invites European institutions to compete more resolutely than in the past for students, influence, prestige and money in the worldwide competition of universities.

From Declaration to implementation: an organized follow-up structure and process

- The 29 signatory countries committed to attain the Declaration’s objectives will “**pursue the ways of intergovernmental cooperation**”, in collaboration with higher education institutions and associations.
- **Ministers have agreed to meet again in Prague in May 2001**, together with representatives from European higher education institutions and associations, in order to assess progress achieved and to agree on new steps to be taken.
- They have also established a specific **follow-up structure with a mandate** to prepare the Prague Conference and to facilitate and coordinate the action needed to advance the goals of the Bologna Declaration. The follow-up structure is based on:
 - a “consultative group” consisting of representatives of all signatory countries;
 - a smaller “follow-up group” comprising the countries successively holding the EU Presidency in the 2 years from Bologna to Prague (Finland, Portugal, France, Sweden), the Czech Republic, the European Commission, CRE and the Confederation;
- in addition, since new political decisions may need to be taken in the process towards Prague, the follow-up to the Bologna Declaration will be on the agenda of meetings of EU education ministers.
- **Follow-up work is in progress at the European, national and institutional level.** The Declaration states that the process of establishing a European space for higher education requires constant support, supervision and adaptation to continuously changing needs.
 - A series of surveys and studies are in progress at the initiative of the group of national contact persons of the signatory countries, the EU Presidency, the European

Commission and higher education associations and networks. They deal with transnational education, accreditation, credit systems, quality assurance, etc., and serve as preparatory steps for the next stages in the process.

- Signatory countries are considering or planning legislative reforms and/or governmental action in relevant areas of their higher education systems; **convergent reforms** have already been introduced or are in progress in several European countries. They signal a move towards shorter studies, 2-tier degree structures, credit systems, external evaluation, more autonomy coupled with more accountability. Another trend is towards the blurring of boundaries between the different constituent sub-sectors of higher education.

- Individual universities as well as higher education consortia, networks and associations are studying and discussing the implications of the Bologna process in their particular country, subject area, or type of institution.

The Bologna Declaration invites the higher education community to contribute to the success of the process of reform and convergence

- The Declaration acknowledges the crucial role of the higher education community for the success of the Bologna process. It says that inter-governmental cooperation should be “together with non-governmental European organisations with competencies in higher education”. Governments also “expect universities to again respond positively and to contribute actively to the success of (their) endeavour”. It is therefore clear that higher education institutions have a unique opportunity to shape their own European future and to play a crucial role in the development and implementation of the Bologna process.

- The Declaration specifically recognises the fundamental values and the diversity of European higher education:

- it clearly acknowledges the necessary independence and autonomy of universities;

- it explicitly refers to the fundamental principles laid down in the *Magna Charta Universitatum* signed (also in Bologna) in 1988;

- it stresses the need to achieve a common space for higher education within the framework of the diversity of cultures, languages and educational systems.

- In order to respond to the invitation contained in the Bologna Declaration, the higher education community needs to be able to tell Ministers in a convincing way what kind of European space for higher education it wants and is willing to promote.

Universities and other institutions of higher education can choose to be actors, rather than objects, of this essential process of change. They may in particular :

- profile their own curricula, in accordance with the emerging post-Bologna environment, in particular through the introduction of bachelor courses in systems where they have not traditionally existed, and through the creation of master courses meeting the needs of mobile postgraduate students from around the world;

- activate their networks in key areas such as joint curriculum development, joint ventures overseas or worldwide mobility schemes;

- contribute individually and collectively to the next steps in the process.

- The Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences and the Association of European Universities (CRE) plan to organise a **convention of European universities and other institutions of higher education a few weeks before the Prague meeting**. This convention should provide an opportunity for the higher education community to discuss the main issues at stake and to produce a communication to Ministers on what higher education expects from the Prague meeting. 29 February 2000

Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999

The European process, thanks to the extraordinary achievements of the last few years, has become an increasingly concrete and relevant reality for the Union and its citizens. Enlargement prospects together with deepening relations with other European countries, provide even wider dimensions to that reality. Meanwhile, we are witnessing a growing awareness in large parts of the political and academic world and in public opinion of the need to establish a more complete and far-reaching Europe, in particular building upon and strengthening its intellectual, cultural, social and scientific and technological dimensions. A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competencies to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space. The importance of education and educational co-operation in the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful and democratic societies is universally acknowledged as paramount, the more so in view of the situation in South East Europe.

The Sorbonne declaration of 25th of May 1998, which was underpinned by these considerations, stressed the universities' central role in developing European cultural dimensions. It emphasised the creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development.

Several European countries have accepted the invitation to commit themselves to achieving the objectives set out in the declaration, by signing it or expressing their agreement in principle. The direction taken by several higher education reforms launched in the meantime in Europe has proved many Governments' determination to act.

European higher education institutions, for their part, have accepted the challenge and taken up a main role in constructing the European area of higher education, also in the wake of the fundamental principles laid down in the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum of 1988. This is of the highest importance, given that Universities' independence and autonomy ensure that higher education and research systems continuously adapt to changing needs, society's demands and advances in scientific knowledge. The course has been set in the right direction and with meaningful purpose. The achievement of greater compatibility and comparability of the systems of higher education nevertheless requires continual momentum in order to be fully accomplished. We need to support it through promoting concrete measures to achieve tangible forward steps. The 18th June meeting saw participation by authoritative experts and scholars from all our countries and provides us with very useful suggestions on the initiatives to be taken.

We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilisation can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions.

While affirming our support to the general principles laid down in the Sorbonne declaration, we engage in co-ordinating our policies to reach in the short term, and in any case within the first decade of the third millennium, the following

objectives, which we consider to be of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide:

- Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system;
- Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the master and/or doctorate degree as in many European countries;
- Establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS system - as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by the receiving universities concerned;
- Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:
 - for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services;
 - for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights;
- Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies;
- Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research.

We hereby undertake to attain these objectives – within the framework of our institutional competencies and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy – to consolidate the European area of higher education. To that end, we will pursue the ways of intergovernmental co-operation, together with those of non governmental European organisations with competence on higher education. We expect Universities again to respond promptly and positively and to contribute actively to the success of our endeavour. Convinced that the establishment of the European area of higher education requires constant support, supervision and adaptation to the continuously evolving needs, we decide to meet again within two years in order to assess the progress achieved and the new steps to be taken.

Signed by:

From 1999: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom;

From 2001: Croatia, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Turkey;

From 2003: Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Holy See, Russia, Serbia, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”;

From 2005: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine;

From May 2007: Montenegro

Appendix 2

Table 1 Brief information on the United Kingdom

• Official Name	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
• The Head of the State	Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith
• The Head of the Government	Prime Minister (Gordon Brown)
• Political Organization	Constitutional Monarchy
• Population	60.776.238
• Surface	244.820 sq. km
• Member of the Bologna Process	1999

Appendix 3

Country File: the United Kingdom

The Organization of the State

The organization of the state is one of the main factors of influence on the policy implementation process. As a consequence, being reflecting form the government and other institutions realizing the public administration, the policy may take different forms, even to be dissimilar to the initial one, as we can observe nowadays on the example of the Bologna process.

Principles of Constitutional Monarchy in the Great Britain

This sub – chapter is looking for the description of the principles of the constitutional monarchy the United Kingdom has. There are many specifications that differs the system of the Constitutional Monarchy of the UK from that the Netherlands has. Form the very beginning it is necessary to pay particular attention to the fact that British political system is better described as the one that represents the “majoritarian and adversarial” structure, founded on the “first – past – the – post” electoral basis. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 292)

The principle of British system of Constitutional Monarchy may be described through the detail that the Queen exercises the function of the head of the state. Thus being a constitutional monarch “the Queen does not ‘rule’ the country”, but exercises the more traditional for of administration playing ceremonial role “with respect to the Parliament of the United Kingdom, and the devolved assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland”. (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>) The functions of the Sovereign are not only limited the role mentioned above, but also represent “Fount of Justice, from whom justice in the United Kingdom derives, and has important relationships with the Armed Forces and the established Churches of England and Scotland”. (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>) Besides, the monarch has a special position in public administration in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, which are dependent territories of the English Crown.

The noticeable thing about the United Kingdom is that the state does not have a written Constitution, but the main rules of the state are established by conventions. (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page4682.asp>)

The Sovereign have no a right of making and passing the legislation, as she has to keep a political neutrality. At this point, we have to mention about the structures forming the executive and legislative branches of the country. There are two major and influential parties in the government – the Conservative and the Labour. . Besides, there also some minor parties among the considerable influence is provided by the Liberal Democratic party. However, the country government since World War II is ruled by either Conservative or Labour party. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 292)

Now, let us pay attention on the government institution and start the description from the Cabinet. The Cabinet represents the supreme decision making organ of the government is also the central committee of political system of the United Kingdom. Furthermore, Pollitt and Bouckaert outline the specificity of the Cabinet concerning the fact that it realizes “collective responsibility among the ministers and endorsing new policies. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 292) Traditionally, the Cabinet meetings are held every Tuesday in Downing Street 10, and unite altogether Secretaries of the State from all departments, twenty two paid ministers, one unpaid minister appointed to the Cabinet, six other unpaid ministers and peers with the common idea of finding solutions for administrative challenges of the day. (<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page19.asp>) The Cabinet meetings are provided under the guidance of the Prime Minister. Besides relating to the Cabinet chairing responsibility, the Prime has to “recommend their appointment as minister by the Monarch”, while the Secretary of the Cabinet is in charge of making records of the discussions, proposals and final decisions. (<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page19.asp>) Obviously, the Cabinet does not obtain any legal powers. However, there is a feature, according to which the Cabinet has a “collective responsibility to Parliament so all members are bound to support Cabinet’s decisions even if they were not present. (<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page19.asp>) In such a case it comes clear that the Cabinet is about to ‘enforce the collective responsibility among the ministers’ and development of new policies. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 292) But here it is necessary to make a notation – the most

policies are figured out outside the Cabinet, in so – named departments of the Cabinet Committees. (Pollit, Bouckaert, 2003, pp. 292; <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page19.asp>) Summarizing briefly the main responsibilities of the British government, we can tell that the government is in charge of development and implementation of the policies and proposing draft laws. Thus, the UK state government is the Executive branch and thus is running the country. (http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/role/parliament_government.cfm)

The government and the parliament of the UK both make a great contribution to formation of the laws. That fact derives from the specification of the highly centralized administrative system, where those separate institutions work together in a very “close” way, thus there may be confusions regarding which part is responsible for.

(http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/role/parliament_government.cfm)

In the question government, the Queen follows the advices given by the parliament and the Prime Minister. It is worthy of mentioning a special relationship the monarch has with the Prime – the major political figure of the UK Government ‘regardless of their political party’. (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>) Even being a politically neutral figure, the Sovereign still may call for a ‘regular’(usually weekly) audience to a Prime Minister of the UK during his or her term of office’ in which she expresses her opinion of Government issues and matters. Unlike the Dutch practice of meeting of the monarch with the head of the government, the sensitivity label covers the meeting of the British Prime and the Queen as well as all communications between the Queen and the government. Besides, the Queen plays a considerable role in the ‘mechanics of calling general election’. (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>) The Prime Minister of the General Election Day may request the Queen to ‘grant dissolution of Parliament at any time’ (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>)

After the elections, when the single party has the majority of voted in the House of Commons, the Queen would not stay against. After this the government has to resign and “the Sovereign would be unable to find an alternative government capable of commanding the confidence of the Commons”.

(<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>)

After the general election has been carried on, the monarch, guided by constitutional conventions, has a right to appoint the Prime Minister. In such a challenge the main issue the Sovereign has to fulfill is finding a person who is able to meet the expectations – ‘command the confidence’ of the House of Commons. The usual practice of appointment of a party leader is realized through the gaining the majority of seats in the Commons. But somehow there may occur situations, according to which the Sovereign “might need to exercise discretion to ensure that her Government is carried on” (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4692.asp>) The traditions kept by the British administration are dictating certain consequence of rules, according to which after the election of the potential candidate to the position of a Prime Minister, he or she is called to Buckingham Palace in order to give an answer to Queen whether he or she is going to form a government. The history of elections of the Prime Minister in the United Kingdom does not remember the cases of any refuse answers given. The Prime’s assumption to the office finishes with a following Court Circular record, stating that “the Prime Minister Kissed Hands on Appointment”.

After the ceremony of inauguration the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom commence the work in Downing Street 10 office, being responsible for the .

The United Kingdom: Representative Democracy

It is obvious that the system of the administrative system of the United Kingdom based on a traditional ways, therefore being a representative democracy.

Now, the sub – chapter is going to be continued with the description of the highest legislative authority in the Great Britain, consisting three “constituting” parts: the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the Crown.

(http://www.parliament.uk/faq/parlgov_faq.cfm) The Parliament, also known as Legislature, include in the regular duties the activities of checking the work of the government and examining, debating and approving new laws. Thus, we can state that the possibility of residing the legislation is concentrated in the hands of the elected Parliament. (<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4683.asp>) Besides, it is in charge of controlling the finance, protect the individuals, examine European proposals, and debating current affairs.

(http://www.parliament.uk/faq/parlgov_faq.cfm) Now, the description of the parliament duties is going to be followed by the explanation of the House of

Commons and House of Lords. The House of Commons (also known as a Lower House) has organization and controlling functions. Thus, the Lower House is responsible for the financial control. According to this, only the House of Commons “can give permission for the Government to control taxes”.

(http://www.parliament.uk/faq/parlgov_faq.cfm) Also, it is in charge of the question what taxes are to be collected as well as the public money spending. The House of Commons also decides what taxes are collected and how the money shall be spent. Examining of the UK government functioning is overviewed by the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Now, let us define the purpose and work of the House of Lords. Being also called the ‘Upper House’, the House of Lords represents “a mixture of hereditary aristocracy and appointed ‘life peers’”. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 292) Somehow, this function of the ‘hereditary aristocracy’ to get the seats in the House of Lords is being discussed during a long period of time, but the traditions are still kept with respect.

(http://www.parliament.uk/about/how/role/parliament_government.cfm)

It is important to notice that the Queen “acts on the advice of the Ministers” in almost all issues, but still can “formally appoint prime ministers, approve certain legislation and bestow honors”. Obviously, the role of the Queen is less formal than that of the Parliament, but however she remains a key figure in fulfillment of cultural and social functions. Those functions consist of providing a focus for national identity, unity and pride; giving a sense of stability and continuity; recognizing success, achievement and excellence; and supporting service to others, particularly through public service and the voluntary sector.

(<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page4683.asp>;

<http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page4682.asp>)

The UK: Centralized Unitary State

The United Kingdom represents a good example of a highly centralized unitary state. This fact actually means that the policy development and its implication are concentrated in the hands of the central government. This practice differing from the role of the central government in the Netherlands, nowadays represents the consequence of historical evolution of British public administration traditions. This evolution process brought a specific power distribution, according to which the new administrative institutions were created on the “ad hoc” basis, but

with an exception of “allocation new functions to already existing authorities and within existing structures”. (Knill, 2001, pp. 81; Gray and Jenkins 1985, pp. 11 – 12; Kingdom, 1989, pp. 19) The further development of the administrative system within those circumstances brought different types of organization, for example like executive departments, executive agencies dealing with the policy implementation process, sponsoring department, local government, the health services, and a variety of so named non-departmental bodies operating within the frame of the common guidance of the central government. (Knill, 2001, pp. 81) Also, Following this statement we also have to draw a line between “nationalized industries” and so named “quangos” (quasi – non – governmental – organizations) which represent a structure which can be described as private organizations, getting finances from the public funds, thus ‘exercise the public authority’. (Knill, 2001, pp. 81; Greenwood and Wilson, 1989; Peters, 1995, 138 – 140) The description of the quasi – non – governmental – organizations may be used to describe the administrative organization of British universities.

The particularity of the British highly centralized system besides implies the possibility of affecting the regulation and high level of intervention to the administrations of the central and local levels, thus we can see the picture of ‘inferior’ position of the local government in respect to the central one. (Knill, 2001, pp. 80) Describing the government competencies of decision making, Knill pays attention to the fact that even taking into account the public elections of the local authorities do not obtain ‘constitutionally guaranteed competencies and responsibilities’. (Knill, 2001, pp. 80) Furthermore, Knill at his discussions joins to the statement of King consolidating that the local governments in Great Britain “are subject to ‘ultra vires’, empowered to undertake only those functions deliberately granted to them by Parliamentary statute”. (Knill, 2001, pp. 80; see also King, 1993, pp. 217) Besides, it is noticeable to tell that the central government also obtains the competence of reduction of the local authority power also it has a right of reorganization of the “entire structure of local government as well as its finances”. (Knill, 2001, pp. 80; Page, 1992, pp. 69; Peters, 1995, pp. 138) Thus, the policy making process is totally dependent on the centralized decision making. Differentiating cardinally from the decentralized system of the Netherlands, the policy priorities and the main ‘action lines’ are also developed in the within the walls of the central government. But there should be a notice that the authority execution of British administrative traditions do

not intervene the top down straight hierarchical way, but a 'non-hierarchical' way. This feature may be better "characterized as emphasizing consensus and a desire to avoid the imposition of solutions on sections of society". (Knill, 2001, pp. 83; Jordan and Richardson, 1982, pp. 81)

The other administrative competence of the central government consists in coordination and control functions. Going further in description of the British administrative system, we can find out that the authorities responsible for a particular area, like for instance higher education, can "enjoy a significant degree of autonomy". (Knill, 2001, pp. 81) As it was mentioned above, with respect to centralization, the administration is designed in a multi – tier way, thus envisaging the hierarchical division of surveillance of 'subordinate administrative units'. (Knill, 2001, pp. 81) But, quoting Knill, it is worthy of noticing that the British "hierarchical guidance and control by the central government departments occurs only with respect to general rather than to policy specific aspects". (Knill, 2001, pp. 81) This statement actually means that all those administrative units, organizations, agencies, and subdivisions may execute 'far reaching discretion' on particular issues, but being regulated by the centralized authority's 'Parliamentary statute'. (Knill, 2001, pp. 81 – 82) However, Knill outlines the lack of "structural coherence" peculiar to organization of the British administrative system. Thus, he describes it linking to the responsibility of functional surveillance to the centralized authorities during the execution of their direct functions. (Knill, 2001, pp. 82 – 84) Summarizing all written above it is fair to tell that the UK administration practices are based on the historical development and certain affection of the British traditions.

Concluding the sub-chapter, let us make some general conclusions and comparisons. From the very beginning, it is necessary to outline the main administrative difference of the Dutch and British systems. Thus, taking a statute of the Kingdom both countries came up to the state power distribution from 2 different positions: centralized and decentralized. The 'core pattern' describing better the administrative system of the UK is that even being under the centralized influence, the local and central level authorities still have a room for autonomy for actions. At the same moment, due to the lack of the "structural coherence", the British system suffers from the guidance of the central government exercised in respect of the local and central authorities. (Knill, 2001, pp. 86)

Appendix 4

Table 2 Brief information on the Netherlands

•	Official Name	Kingdom of the Netherlands (Koninkrijk der Nederlanden)
•	The Head of the State	Queen Beatrix
•	The Head of the Government	Prime Minister (Jan Peter Balkenende)
•	Political Organization	Constitutional Monarchy
•	Population	16.570.613
•	Surface	41. 526 sq. km
•	Member of the Bologna Process	1999

Appendix 5

Country File: the Netherlands

The Organization of the State

First, let us observe the particularities of the state organization that are directly influencing on the realization of the major reformation in the area of public administration field – the higher education in accordance with the Bologna process.

Principles of the Constitutional Monarchy in the Netherlands

The Netherlands raises a particular interest for the research in the field of public administration as it is a “unitary, but decentralized state”. It was outlined by Pollitt, Kickert, and In’t Veld that the specificity of the state organization is that the Netherlands “has always resisted centralization of the state authority”, besides, Lijphart noticed of a “consociational, consensual, multiparty, and corporatist” structure.. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 270; see also Kickert and In’t Veld, 1995, pp. 45; Lijphart, 1984) However, the Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy, which consolidates that the power of the monarch is limited in accordance to the Constitution of the state. That actually means that the Queen cannot execute the political power on her own but with ministers staying in charge of political decision making, thus forming the government. It is worthy of mentioning that the parliament is “politically accountable” for the decisions announced by the monarch. The monarch also contributes the function of the President of the Council of state and thus every year on the third Tuesday of September delivers the Royal speech from the Throne in the opening of the parliamentary session.

(<http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/english/content.jsp?objectid=13299>; Barboza, 2003, pp. 36) The role of the head of the Netherlands also concerns about working “actively on behalf of the people of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, playing a cohesive, representative and encouraging role”. Besides, the Queen is in charge of the formation of the cabinet, which is an evident of a significance of the royalty. The contribution of the monarch also includes consulting the vice-president of the

Council of State, the presidents of the Senate and the House of Representatives; the party leaders in the newly elected House of Representatives, and sometimes the Ministers of State. In such a case, the Queen plays an important role in the process of formation new governments of the state. Thus, following the advices they make, “the Queen appoints one or more senior political figures (informateurs) to investigate the possibilities of forming a new government with adequate support in the Lower House”.

(<http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/english/content.jsp?objectid=13301>, Barboza, 2003, pp. 36; <http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/english/content.jsp?objectid=13303>) If there is no contradiction appeared on the field of relations of the coalition partners, the Queen appoints the person in charge to form a government. There are multiple details that may cause difficulties at this situation of government creation. Thus, for example, there may be a situation in which two or more parties might come to a decision of creation of coalition in a purpose of governing together, as a result of reaching the majority before the elections. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 36) Usually it happens that the person in charge is appointed before the elections, and “if he succeeds, the Queen signs the Royal Decrees accepting the outgoing government’s resignation and appointing the new team. The Queen then swears in the new ministers and state secretaries”.

(<http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/english/content.jsp?objectid=13301>, Barboza, 2003, pp. 36 – 37; <http://www.koninklijkhuis.nl/english/content.jsp?objectid=13303>) Besides, Pollitt and Bouckaert notice that the elections in the Netherlands are provided “according to the system of proportional representation”. (Pollitt, Bouckaert, 2004, pp. 270) That actually means that there are no “laws or regulations specifying the way a government is formed”. However, it is noticeable that the procedure is different every time of election, but still there are features when “the outgoing government tenders its resignation, informateurs and formateurs are appointed and report back to the Queen, a coalition agreement is drawn up, and a new government is appointed”.

(http://www.minaz.nl/english/government_policy/formation_government/index.html) In other words, we may summarize that the primary step in forming a government is “for the outgoing government to tender its resignation, usually when a general election is held”. The role of the Monarch is concerned about the resignation

of the government and follows the political action line in accordance with the interests of the Kingdom.

(http://www.minaz.nl/english/government_policy/formation_government/index.html)

Now, let us pay a separate attention to the specification of the coalition formation process. After the elections in the Lower House are being held, the next step is formation of coalition by the informateur and formateur chair resulted after series of the negotiations between the parties willing to join in order to provide a common policy program after signing the Agreement. The Agreement represents the “main policy objectives which the proposed new coalition wishes to achieve”. This Agreement makes one step forward the launching the coalition agreement. It is necessary to mention that the process of coalition creation might be judged as a complete one only “when the parliamentary parties involved give their consent”.

(http://www.minaz.nl/english/government_policy/coalition_government/index.html) We can also notice about the fact that in Dutch system the “prospective ministers endorse the basics of the coalition agreement in the inaugural meeting, for which no fixed rules exist”.

(http://www.minaz.nl/english/government_policy/coalition_government/index.html)

Now, let us follow with the description of the ministry apparatus of the Netherlands. Overall, there are 14 ministers who are responsible for the system of legislation: preparation and execution of laws; administration over the municipalities and province; and have a regulatory power over the international relations. Thus, together the ministers form the Council of Ministers, which is headed by the president of the government/ cabinet. The position of the Prime Minister may be characterized as head of the Ministry of General Affairs. It includes the Prime Ministers Office, the Netherlands Government Information Service and the Office of the Advisory Council on Government Policy.

(<http://www.minaz.nl/english/ministry/index.html>) It is worthy to outline the specificity of the Prime Minister’s role in the Government, which is best described as *primus inter pares* (First among equals) thus differing in status from, for example the British or German Primes. Besides, the Prime Minister also occupies the position of the Minister of General Affairs. In other words, this means that technically he is almost equal to the other ministers of the Cabinet, but has more authoritative rank.

As a consequence, “in the cabinet council he has a one vote, just as his colleague ministers... the colleague ministers are therefore not subordinate to the Prime Minister as usual in some other countries”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 37; see also Belinfante, De Reede, 1997, pp. 70) It is also necessary to mention that the Prime Minister is accountable for the actions of members of the Royal House. (See Appendix 2)

<http://www.minaz.nl/english/ministry/organisation/index.html>)

The package of issues of all the Ministers covers the politics of the government provision. The main direction of the policy orientation are discussed on weekly meetings of the Council of Ministers presided by the Prime Minister. (<http://www.minaz.nl/english/cabinet/procedure/index.html>; Barboza, 2003, pp. 37) Taking into consideration the responsibilities of the Prime of the Netherlands, it is very important for him to keep the unity in the government.

Now, let us come up with the description of the particularities of Dutch government. The government of the Netherlands is formed together by the ministers and secretaries. It is quite obvious for the minister to be the head of the ministry. Anyway, it may be so if the minister is attached to a ministry under other one’s chairmanship. Such a position is also known as minister without portfolio. Besides, there are posts of the state secretaries that operate on a position of an assistant for a minister. The concern of the interest and responsibilities of the state secretaries “may vary from government to government”, thus, for example, the secretaries may present on the Cabinet meetings on behalf of the minister, but don’t obtain the voting power. Usually their presence is dictated by a necessity of a person in charge in questions of their responsibility. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 37;

http://www.minaz.nl/english/cabinet/ministers_secretaries/index.html)

The Dutch government has ‘High Organs of State’ as well enshrined in articles 73, 74, and 75 of the main law of the state. In other words, we can surely say that “like the House of Representatives and the Senate, which together form the States General (Parliament), the Netherlands Court of Audit and the National Ombudsman, the Council is one of the High Councils of State”. (<http://www.netherlands.info/Government.html#Council%20of%20State>) So, those bodies are allotted by a particular task and acted independently from the government, just as it is outlined in the Constitution of the state. The Council of the State represents one of the most notional advisory organs of the government, which

playing a big role in the system of legislature and governance. All the laws are to be passed through the Council of the State. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 37; Belinfante, De Reede, 1997, pp. 85) Also, it is worthy of mentioning that “the Administrative Jurisdiction Division is the highest administrative court in the Netherlands. It hears appeals lodged by members of the public against decisions or orders given by municipal, provincial or central government”.

(<http://www.netherlands.info/Government.html#Council%20of%20State>; Barboza, 2003, pp. 37)

Alongside with the Council of the State, Upper and Lower Houses, and the National Ombudsman, the Court of Audit of the Netherlands represents a “High Council of State”. The High Counsels are designed in a way of ensuring the fact that “the democratic system works properly”.

(<http://www.netherlands.info/Government.html#Council%20of%20State>; Barboza, 2003, pp. 37) The Court of Audit is dealing with the financial side of the governing process, thus investigating if the “public funds are collected and spent regularly and effectively”.

(<http://www.netherlands.info/Government.html#Council%20of%20State>; Barboza, 2003, pp. 37) As well as the Lower House, the Court of Audit is designed to check the government policy. But, there is one proviso – the Court of Audit makes a report after getting the results from the already implemented policy. The critique made after those investigations may be derived to the parliament of the state, provoking certain actions and in such a way affecting on the policy making process. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 37; Belinfante, De Reede, 1997, pp. 85;

<http://www.netherlands.info/Government.html#Council%20of%20State>)

Starting from the year 1982, there is a National Ombudsman body, also known as the Public Defender. Thus the main concern of this institution is to deal with complaints and to provide an expert help to the citizens of the Netherlands in the questions of public administration. Taking into account the responsibilities of the Ombudsman, every citizen has a right to address there with a complaint concerning the actions of the government to be investigated and from the other hand it helps to “restore public confidence in government”.

(<http://www.netherlands.info/Government.html#Council%20of%20State>)

Representative Democracy

In the Netherlands, there is a system of representative democracy. That principle actually means that the main decision making power is concentrated in the hands of the Parliament. The parliament has bicameral structure, thus consisting of the First – Senate and Second – House of Representatives chambers, in Dutch known as Eerste Kamer and Tweede Kamer. Through the collaboration of the state Parliament, ministers, and the Queen the legislative power is realized. It is outlined in the Constitution that there should be regular election to the First and the Second chambers in a period of every four years.

(Barboza, 2003, pp. 38;

http://www.guide2womenleaders.com/Netherlands_Parliament.htm)

The main difference between those two chambers is that the “members of the House of Representatives are full time politicians”. Meanwhile the members of Senate are part time occupied person who is holding the other position apart. Derived from this difference, we may distinguish that the House of Representatives members are engaged into the “day-to-day” politics, while the Senate members are quite distanced from daily decision making process. However, the Senate is responsible for the ‘broad outline of the policy’ and “can operate rather more independently than the House of Representatives”. (<http://www.eerstekamer.nl/>; <http://www.eerstekamer.nl/9324000/1f/j9vvgh5ihkk7kof/vgipcmqcxu2#p3>) At the same moment, the House of Representatives realizes the functions for exercising “its right to institute an inquiry on several occasions, particularly in recent years, whereas the Senate has to date never exercised this right”.

(<http://www.eerstekamer.nl/9324000/1f/j9vvgh5ihkk7kof/vgipcmqcxu2#p3>)

Now, let us observe the responsibilities of the Dutch parliament through the prism of the Europeanization process. From this position, we can distinguish the parliamentary activity of the Tweede Kamer and Eerste Kamer in order to compare them with the European Parliament. Thus, lining parallels between the Dutch and European Parliament, we may notice that the Members of the Tweede Kamer cannot vote directly on the legislations coming from the European Commission. In other words, the House of Representatives exercise its influence on the EU legislation through the option of affecting the Dutch government, which represents interests of the citizens in the EU headquarters in Bruxelles.

(<http://www.eerstekamer.nl/9324000/1f/j9vvgh5ihkk7kof/vgipcmqcxu2#p3>) Also, it is necessary to outline the fact that the Lower Chamber is responsible for the “subsidiary check procedure, the results of which are communicated directly to the European Commission”.

(<http://www.eerstekamer.nl/9324000/1f/j9vvgh5ihkk7kof/vgipcmqcxu2#p3>)

Besides, there in the Tweede Kamer there are provided the permanent consultations aimed for the EU decision making process. Thus, behalf the national Parliament of the Netherlands, the House of Representatives may take part in negotiation process altogether with other countries national parliaments and other European Union actors during significant inter-parliamentary meetings like COSAC (Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union) or using the websites, like IPEX. Analyzing the statement written above and classifying due to Featherstone and Radaelli, we can say that this feature of the Tweede Kamer, we can tell that it is a possibility of domestication influence in the overall European policy making process.

(http://www.houseofrepresentatives.nl/how_parliament_works/tk_european_unio
[n/index.jsp](http://www.houseofrepresentatives.nl/index.jsp); <http://www.cosac.eu/en/>; <http://www.ecprd.org/ecprd/index.do>)

The Netherlands: Decentralized Unitary State

Coming up to distinguishing the levels of the governing system we come up to the conclusion of that there are three levels: the Kingdom (state), the provinces, and the municipalities. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39) If the Kingdom supposes the working with the issues of national interests, the municipalities and provinces are far more decentralized public administration units.

Before starting a description of the administrative system of the Netherlands, it is necessary to outline that it does not have a federalist system. So, it is not equal to that of bordering the Kingdom countries with regional levels like Länder in Germany or regions of Belgium. (<http://www.leda.ils.nrw.de/pdf/ax2-nl.pdf>)

There are 12 administrative subdivisions in the Netherlands. In such a way those administrative subdivisions – provinces represent the “connecting” part between the municipalities and the Kingdom. Facilitating the description of division of functions between those administrations, we can state that the provinces are responsible for the issues considered as regulation and management of

“housekeeping” as well as working on the general administrative tasks. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39) The regional planning is designed with a respect to the central government. At this point we may discover that the province administration always takes into account the fact if the municipal planning does not contradict with the issues of the regional planning. However being decentralized the municipalities are under the surveillance of the provinces. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39) This particular control from the side of the provinces is of a financial character related to public budgeting.

Now let us distinguish the organization of the province administration. Thus, closer observations let us know that it is compounded from the three main administration units. The first one is the Provincial Council – playing the main role in administration of the province. The members of the Council are elected directly by the province inhabitants for the period of four years. All the members of the Provincial Council are equal in their decision making right, thus, all the decisions undertaken by the simple majority of votes. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39; see also Belinfante and De Reede, 1997, pp. 219 – 220)

The second administration unit consists of the Provincial Executives, which is carrying the responsibility for the “daily administration of the province”. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39) The six members of this executive board are the members of the Provincial Council as well. Thus, they are also elected for the period of four years. The privilege differentiating the Provincial Executives is that they have the possibility of so named post elections votes on particular issues and decisions. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39)

The third administration unit is the Queen’s Commissioner. The Commissioner represents the President of the Provincial Executives. The Sovereign (in accordance with the board of the ministers) appoints the person for the position of the Commissioner for the period of six years. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39; see also Belinfante and De Reede, 1997, pp. 223) The Queen’s Commissioner carrying responsibilities for the broad spectrum tasks. Thus, the Queen’s Commissioner is responsible for organization of working out the decisions made by the Provincial Council and the Province Executives. Besides the responsibilities of the Commissioner are expanding to getting the supervision over the subordinate administrations and municipalities. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39; see also Belinfante and De Reede, 1997, pp. 222) Additionally, the candidate for the position of municipality

mayor is come forward by to the miniter of Domestic Affairs in accordance with the 'recommendation' given by head of the Provincial Executive. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 39 – 40)

The municipalities appeared to be a subject for the reformation. The case of reformating decision is the idea of incdcreasing the efficiency of the administrative units through reorganization and enlargement of the little municipalities. Thus, for example, the number of overall municipalities decreased from 504 in 2001 to 433 in 2007.

(<http://www.cbs.nl>; <http://www.sdu.nl/staatscourant/gemeentes/gemprovin.htm>)

Now, let us analyse the municipality administration of the provinces of the Netherlands. The public administration is executed through the Minicipal Council and a Municipal Executive. The head of the municipal administration – the Municipal Council is elected by the citizens once in four year period. As in the case of the Province Council, the Municipal Council's decision making process is relied on the majority voting. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 40; see also Belinfante and De Reede, 1997, pp. 228, 231)

On the other hand there is the second administrative body of the Municipal Executive, which is responsibe for carying out the tasks concerning daily decision making process with the further implementation of the final decisions. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 40; see also Belinfante and De Reede, 1997, pp. 243) The field of edeucation is in the list of the competences carried out by the Municipal Executives. The head member of the Municipal Executives – Alderman – is a person appointed by approbation with the Municipal Council, being it's member at the same time. (Barboza, 2003, pp. 40) The person – Burgomaster – is standing above those two administrative units both of Municipal Council and Munipal Executived is appointed by the Sovereign (in accordance with the ministers) . The Burgomester is taking out the responsibility to "order and guarantee the public security of the municipality". (Barboza, 2003, pp. 40; see also Belinfante and De Reede, 1997, pp. 232 – 233)

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