

# **Project Report**

## **Trends in Learning Structures in Higher Education**

**Final version: 18 August 1999**

**Part II:**

**Information on Learning Structures of  
Higher Education in the EU/EEA Countries**

**by Jette Kirstein**



[CRE](#)



[Confederation of  
European Union  
Rectors'  
Conferences](#)



[Bologna  
Declaration](#)



## **Information on Learning Structures in Higher Education in the EU/EEA Countries**

### **Contents**

#### **Information on Learning Structures in Higher Education in the EU/EEA countries**

1. Introduction
2. National frameworks for higher education institutions and qualifications
  - 2.1. Diversification of institutions
  - 2.2. Non-official and/or international/transnational higher education
  - 2.3. National higher education qualification frameworks and structures
3. Access and admission requirements
4. Quality assurance and accreditation/recognition procedures
5. International credit transfer and recognition systems

6. Organization of the academic year
7. Tuition fee systems
8. Student support systems
9. International student and career guidance systems

## **Annex one: Country profiles of higher education systems**

### **Tables:**

Table 1: Higher education systems and degree structures

Table 2: Higher education qualifications according to number of years of higher education

Table 3: Admission to higher education

Table 4: Credit transfer systems

Table 5: Organization of the academic year

Table 6: Tuition fees and student support systems for study abroad

### **References**

*This study has been based primarily on information from written sources such as the "Guide to higher education systems and qualifications in the EU and EEA countries", web page information from Eurydice and the individual countries as well as on information collected from national rectors' conferences, national NARIC offices and other sources in the spring of 1999. The interpretation of the information and its presentation are, however, solely the responsibility of the author. Unfortunately, generalisations and simplifications seem unavoidable when explaining national higher education systems in a condensed way while at the same time allowing for comparisons. I should be happy to receive remarks, corrections and supplementary information on the presentation for an improved final version.*

*Copenhagen, 7 June 1999,*

*Jette Kirstein (e-mail: [jk@rks.dk](mailto:jk@rks.dk)) (latest revised version as of 21 July 1999)*

## **Information on learning structures in higher education in the EU/EEA countries**

### **1. Introduction**

This study merely intends to give a fairly condensed and concentrated outline of some of the main trends of the higher education systems in the EU/EEA countries, illustrating the present institutional structures as well as national frameworks of higher education qualifications. Information will also be provided on other aspects of importance for discussions on mobility, transparency and convertibility such as credit and recognition systems, quality assurance, tuition fees and some of the more practical arrangements such as the organisational framework of the academic year and international student and career guidance possibilities. The study shows not only diversification of the systems, in many ways rooted in the national traditions of a specific country, but also some major common tendencies. Furthermore, major efforts seem to be used to, on the one hand, preserve the cultural diversity of a specific educational system and, on the other hand, promote international co-operation, mobility and European/international employability of students and the international competitiveness of European higher education institutions.

Summing up, comprehensive information on all these extensive and diversified developments can only give a glimpse of what is emerging in higher education in Europe. Furthermore, it should be noted that any comparison of higher education systems and identification of common trends can only be considered as fairly simplifying generalisations. Thus, further information has to be sought in more extensive descriptions and comparative analyses and publications on the various education systems; special reference is made to the European Commission publication "A guide to higher education systems and qualifications in the EU and EEA countries and Eurydice publications", cf. references.

## **2. National frameworks for higher education institutions and qualifications**

### ***2.1. Diversification of institutions***

Looking world-wide into the institutional structures of the various higher education systems, one sees a highly diversified system. But two different tendencies prevail:

1. A so-called *unitary* or comprehensive system where most higher education is catered for by universities or university-like institutions, offering both general academic degrees and more professionally oriented programmes of various length and level.
- 2.

2) A so-called binary or dual system with a *traditional university sector* based more or less on the Humboldt university concept and a separate and distinct *non-university higher education sector*.

The developments towards a more comprehensive university system as well as the development of a strong non-university higher education sector have introduced a broader definition of the concept of a university distinct from the traditional continental European definition of a university as an institution with intensive co-operation and co-ordination between teaching and learning and self-contained academic progression in studies, leaving a high degree of learning to individual studies.

In *the unitary system*, the study programmes offered are often much more diversified in level, character and academic and theoretical orientation than in traditional universities in a binary system. Many programmes are fairly professionally oriented with periods of practice. This system has so far been dominant in Anglo-American countries like the UK and USA and in a few other countries which have adopted similar higher education systems, e.g. Sweden. However, characteristics of unitary systems can also be found in a few other countries with different educational traditions as e.g. Spain and Italy.

*The binary systems* of some countries have so far entailed a fairly clear difference between universities offering the theoretically and research-based programmes and the non-university institutions offering high level professionally oriented programmes. However, in many countries the differences are becoming less obvious due to on the one hand a growing academic development in the non-university sector, also in the postgraduate and applied science field, and on the other hand universities' growing involvement in covering more professionally oriented activities.

The major objectives behind the establishment of professionally oriented higher education institutions parallel to the university sector seem to be very similar in most countries, viz.

- to offer more professionally oriented and vocationally/economically relevant types of education in order to meet a labour market demand for such candidates
- to cater for a growing number of higher education applicants without substantially increasing governmental expenditure for higher education
- to cater for non-traditional groups of students in a more innovative manner
- to offer primarily teaching oriented programmes with some use of applied research
- to upgrade existing vocationally oriented post-secondary education.

Germany was one of the first countries to introduce a distinct higher education sector with its own goals and mission alongside the universities - the *Fachhochschulen* - already in the 70-ies. Austria, Belgium, Finland and the Netherlands are some of the countries that have followed.

The UK, on the other hand, had a binary system until 1991 where it was partly given up and polytechnics were given the status of universities. This process was due to various developments in society and in both sectors which made the differences between universities and polytechnics more and more unclear and indistinguishable

The present trend seems to be that most countries (e.g. Austria, B (NL), B (Fr), Finland, Germany and Ireland) which have or are developing a distinct binary system want to keep it, but with a clear intention to build on the specific qualities and characteristics of each sector as well as to establish more flexibility, interlinkages and cooperation between the sectors. In a few other countries there seems to be a tendency to an even closer cooperation and integration of the two sectors. (e.g. Norway).

An OECD report on redefining tertiary education makes the same observations about a growing diversity in European higher education systems and states that it is less important whether countries have a unitary or a binary structure than that learners be provided with a diversity of learning structures, pathways and programmes sufficiently

interrelated to permit ready movement between them. Furthermore, the report recommends that credit transfer systems as well as the articulation of programmes and institutions be strengthened. The latter seems to be very important allowing for fair assessment of a degree regardless of its origin from a university or a non-university institution. One of the major obstacles to recognition today is that nationally as well as internationally non-university degrees sometimes have difficulties in being recognised or getting credits if recognition is sought in relation to a university degree.

Annex I and tables 1 and 2 describe in more detail the present higher education structures in the EU/EEA countries with indication of some major developments.

## ***2.2. Non-official and/or international/transnational higher education***

Another observation concerning diversification relates to the development of more and more non-official, private or international institutions and/or qualifications including franchising arrangements and corporate providers.

The various types and forms of private and international qualifications are growing, and lack of information on the official status of an institution or qualification in the country of "origin" often makes it difficult to recognise or place them in the context of national qualifications. It seems important when discussing a common framework of qualifications to find ways to incorporate these types of qualifications. There seems to be a tendency to doubt automatically the quality of a non-official/transnational qualification because of the existence of a number of not very serious institutions. This creates difficulties and it seems important to find ways to make a differentiation and to establish quality control mechanisms.

There are few data on the number and different types of non-official educational offers in different countries as by nature they do not belong to a national system and consequently are not registered in the same way as national qualifications. The European countries have very different types of legislation concerning the establishment and recognition procedures of these institutions. However, several national as well as international initiatives seem to be under way to cope with this development and to find ways to establish some kind of international regulations or quality control.

In 1998 a study was carried out by Panthion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece, on non-official education in Europe. The report deals with the growing evidence throughout the European Union, and southern European countries in particular, of the increasing non-formal educational provision at tertiary level and with the lack of adequate mechanisms of regulation and transparency in quality assurance and quality control as well as lack of criteria for establishing parity of the titles awarded with those of the formal higher education system in each country.

Within the framework of the Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES two different working parties have been established to investigate various aspects of transnational qualifications: One working party has prepared recommendations on international access qualifications, and another has been set up to deal with the issues of quality and

assessment of non-official and transnational education and to propose guidelines for the recognition of qualifications granted by these types of institutions.

In the UK, which is one of the major European providers of transnational qualifications, a code of good practice and quality control procedures has been agreed upon by the higher education institutions and the national Quality Assurance Agency.

### ***2.3. National higher education qualification frameworks and structures***

Along with the growing diversification of the institutional structures of higher education a parallel development is taking place concerning diversification of the types of degrees and qualifications offered by the various educational establishments.

The traditional differentiation between the "continental European" degree structure with fairly long, academically integrated university studies (one-tier) and the "Anglo-American" degree structure with shorter first degrees and many post-graduate possibilities often based on a more module-based system (two-tier) is being blurred.

In the university sector there is a push - most clearly from the political side - for the establishment of short and medium cycle university qualifications (first degree/bachelor level).

In some countries the shorter degree types have been/are being established in/integrated into the national degree structure (as e.g. in Denmark, Finland, Italy and Portugal). In other countries a system is being/has been established alongside the traditional degree structure (as e.g. in Germany and the Netherlands).

Also in the non-university sector, continuous diversification of the qualifications offered is taking place. Many new undergraduate programmes are being established to meet new labour market needs in specific professional fields, and at the same time a great variety of postgraduate courses are being developed either as part of ordinary programmes or as programmes aimed at recurrent education activities. These may lead to national or joint and double degrees. Non-university institutions which do not have the right to offer master's programmes in their own right may enter into co-operation with foreign institutions which have this opportunity, thus being able to offer their students international master's programmes.

So far non-university higher education institutions do not seem to be offering doctoral degrees in their own right, but this does not always exclude non-university candidates from passing on to a doctoral programme. In some countries non-university candidates may gain access to a doctoral (PhD) programme at a university either direct (e.g. Norway and the Netherlands) or through a kind of bridging course (e.g. Austria and Germany). In Norway, a few non-university institutions are seeking the right to offer research training and to award doctoral degrees.

In general, the growing diversification is considered an asset for higher education systems both in a national and in an international context. However, a price to be paid for the increased diversification has to some extent been a lack of transparency of the

qualification structure of a given country and difficulties in the mutual recognition of qualifications, due to the growing number of different levels and variations in the contents of qualifications. Therefore the increasing diversification calls for other instruments which can further understanding of and information on qualifications, e.g. credit systems such as the ECTS and the Diploma Supplement to make diplomas more transparent. Cf. section 4.

Annex I and table 2 illustrate, tentatively, the degree framework and major qualifications of the EU/EEA countries according to length and types of institutions/institutional affiliations (university/non-university). It should be noted that neither the length of qualifications nor the type of institution/institutional affiliation say much about the level of the qualification, its contents and the learning outcomes. Degree titles also vary considerably and often they do not by themselves give an explicit indication of the type and character of a specific qualification. Thus they need to be put into the national framework of qualifications to be understood. Ideally comparison of qualifications should therefore not be done according to years of study but according to learning outcomes, predefined standards of learning and acquired competencies.

### **3. Access and admission requirements**

By and large *access* to higher education (*access* meaning general eligibility for higher education programmes) is in all countries subject to the completion of twelve to thirteen years of prior schooling. In a few countries there are slight differences in the required length of secondary education programmes giving access to respectively university and to non-university programmes (e.g. in Germany and the Netherlands). Furthermore, there are major differences in the actual requirements for being *admitted* to a programme (obtaining a study place). In some countries (e.g. Austria, Belgium, France and Germany) applicants with final secondary school qualifications have free access most university programmes, in other countries admission is fairly or highly competitive depending on, e.g., a special combination of the secondary school leaving examination subjects and whether other requirements are also being met, e.g. as to the level of the subjects studied and the grades obtained. Still, others admit students according to special national (Greece) or institutional (Finland) entrance examinations. In most countries, there is a difference in admission requirements between different types of institutions or different institutions, e.g. in France where the Grandes Ecoles are very selective, whereas there is nearly free access to university studies. Admission to the IUTs is also limited in numbers. In other countries or in specific fields in some countries special entrance examinations are needed.

Some countries have special procedures for *adult* learners wanting to be admitted to a full programme, others do not differentiate.

Countries have different procedures for admitting foreign students. EU regulations are, however, clear on this issue, stating that EU citizens should be admitted on the same conditions as national students.

Another important international instrument which most European countries have agreed upon is the Lisbon Convention from 1997 on recognition of higher education

qualifications. It states that parties to the convention shall mutually recognise qualifications giving general access to higher education in the home country unless substantial differences can be shown between the general access requirements in the countries in question.

Cf. table 3 for more information on admission systems for higher education.

#### **4. Quality assurance and accreditation/recognition procedures**

Procedures for recognising higher education institutions and degrees differ to a large extent from country to country. In all countries higher education institutions are autonomous, but the degree to which the State regulates and controls the institutions and the academic activities varies. This also relates to whether there are national standards for the various qualifications and degrees awarded by higher education institutions. At one end of the spectrum one finds e.g. the UK and Flanders where there are no national regulations concerning the contents of study programmes; at the other end Spain where about one third of the subjects of each degree programme are prescribed by the State. In between one finds a number of countries where each degree may be defined by some overall standards and/or subject areas which have to be met.

A very liberal approach to the regulation of degree programmes can be considered an asset as it allows for institutional and national variations and diversity, but such differences may also create uncertainty about the actual contents and the standards of a specific qualification, even if it has a recognisable title on the paper, e.g. bachelor.

There seems to be a European-wide general trend towards giving higher education institutions more and more institutional autonomy also in matters related to the organisation of studies and the contents of the programmes. State control seems to be transferred from input-oriented regulation to a more output-oriented control based on different types of quality control procedures and other mechanisms, e.g. in a number of countries funding has become partly dependent on the number of students that succeed in stead of the number of student enrolled. In others quality assessment results play a more direct role in allocation of the state funding(e.g. in the UK).

At the same time the increase in the diversification of institutions and qualifications and growing international competition also in relation to higher education seem to further a need at the level of the individual institution to improve information and documentation on the quality and standards of the institution and its qualifications both for the sake of the stakeholders, be they employers, governments or the general public, for the sake of the individual students moving from one country to another in order to study or work and having to decide on which programmes to follow and finally for the sake of international competitiveness.

These tendencies have resulted in the establishment of various external quality assurance procedures and arrangements. Apart from the quality assurance mechanisms which are in force or are developing at the institutional level, more and more countries establish external evaluation or quality assurance bodies or agencies. A study prepared by the Danish Centre for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of Higher Education and the

French Comité National d'Évaluation in 1998 notes that evaluation procedures have been established at the national level in eleven EU member countries. The level and scope of the evaluation procedures vary from country to country. In a few countries the evaluation procedures include both the university and the non-university sector, others have set up separate procedures for each sector. Three countries are in the process of establishing some procedures and according to the report only the French-speaking community of Belgium, Greece and Luxembourg seems not to have introduced systematic national evaluation procedures.

In countries where there have been no national standards for qualifications so far, e.g. the UK, a national framework of qualifications is being discussed. The Dearing Report recommended that higher education institutions and the Quality Assurance Agency work together to produce a national framework for higher education qualifications in which all higher educational awards would have a consistent terminology. The academic community should develop benchmarks standards in each subject for the achievements expected at various levels of award.

Other countries, which have a well developed framework for recognition and standard control of their traditional national degrees, have had some concern in relation to the standards of international degrees (bachelor/master) awarded by their home institutions, as for instance Norway and Germany.

Norwegian universities have had the right to award master's degrees since 1991 alongside the national degrees. In 1999 the same right was given to the state colleges. New programmes must be approved by the Ministry of Education. Prerequisites for university master programmes include that they are in English, that they are part of the institution's internationalisation strategy and that the access requirement is a bachelor-level qualification. Last year the Norwegian University Council published a report in which it was noted that due to lack of national regulations concerning the contents and organisation of master studies a number of quite different qualifications had emerged - some of which have been difficult to place in the national degree structure. The University Council recommends that national standards and national co-ordination be established both in relation to quality and to quantity.

In Germany a general possibility of awarding bachelor and master degrees was introduced by the University Act in 1998, and it has also been decided to introduce an accreditation system for bachelor and master programmes and to set up an accreditation council closely linked to the German Hochschulrektorenkonferenz in order to ensure common standards for these programmes which, so far, have not been subject to the same procedures for recognition as the traditional national degrees.

## **5. International credit transfer and recognition systems**

Table 4 shows that a national or institutional credit system is in use in many countries, and that the ECTS system is emerging as an instrument for international credit transfer either in its own right or parallel to a national system. However, there are major differences in the actual implementation of credit systems. Not all countries use national credit systems (e.g. Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece). In most countries with credit

systems they are relatively easily used as a means of credit transfer from one programme to another or from one institution to another and/or they be used as well-developed credit accumulation system (e.g. Scotland, Sweden and also many institutions in the UK).

Relatively large national differences are also to be found in relation to recognition of prior learning and exemption from studies when changing from one institution to another. Especially, there seems to be problems in some countries to obtain any credit transfer (or only very little) when transferring from a non-university programme to a university programme. This is the case in e.g. Denmark and Greece, the reasoning of universities in both countries being that the contents, methodology and academic progression in university programmes are different from non-university programmes. In February 1999 the Danish Minister of Education proposed the introduction of a national credit system and recommended procedures which can ease the passing from one sector to the other, e.g. through bridging courses. Bridging courses are already in use in some countries, e.g. in the French-speaking community in Belgium (*Passerelles*) and in Flanders (e.g. for holders of an engineering degree from a Hogeschool to engineering studies at a university)

ECTS has facilitated international credit transfer considerably and a further development of its application is to be expected. However, there are still major problems to be overcome, e.g. differences between systems made up of modules compared to systems where studies are organised according to a philosophy of integrated studies and continuous academic progression in subsequent, obligatory courses which have to be followed over more than one semester.

Another instrument which has been developed internationally to ease transparency and international recognition of final qualifications is the *Diploma Supplement*. The purpose of the supplement is to provide sufficient independent data to improve the international transparency and fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications. It is designed to provide a description of the nature, level, context, contents and status of the studies pursued, preferably by giving information on the learning outcomes. It should be free from any value judgement and equivalence statement but provide objective information to allow the recipient to make his or her own judgement.

A third important instrument for international academic recognition and mobility is the national information centres which have been established in the contexts of the EU (the NARICs) and the Council of Europe/UNESCO (the ENICs) which can provide official information on higher education systems, the status of institutions and studies, and recognition procedures. Some of the centres also have as an obligation to provide credential assessments or recognition of foreign qualifications.

Finally, *the Lisbon convention on recognition of higher education qualifications* (1997) should also be mentioned as it establishes a new and more comprehensive legal framework and obligations for states and higher education institutions for furthering fair academic recognition and transparency of qualifications.

## **6. Organisation of the academic year**

The organisation of the academic year is often fundamentally rooted in national, social and cultural traditions. Earlier studies have shown that these differences may to some extent create an obstacle to smooth and easy student mobility. In 1993 the former Liaison Committee (now: the Confederation) undertook a study on the organisation of the academic year in order to examine the feasibility of harmonising the academic years. The study showed a wide diversity both in relation to the start of the academic year and the organisation of studies in semesters, terms or even more modulised structures. In the majority of countries the academic year begins during the first two weeks of October, in the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands the academic year begins much earlier. In Italy, the academic year does not start until early November (in some institutions). Examination periods and vacation periods also differ considerably. The Liaison Committee found it difficult to establish a common system due to the diversity of the existing situation and limited its recommendations to the start of the academic year: the first semester is recommended to start no later than the second week of October and the second semester should not start before 1st of February.

## **7. Tuition fee systems**

The system of tuition fees varies, and it may have consequences for the further development of a European higher education space as it may be financially more attractive to some students to go to countries with no tuition fees than to countries with high fees. Such fees are usually not a problem for exchange students because exchanges normally include agreements on fee waivers, whereas tuition fees become a problem for regular students who decide to take a full study programme in another country. So far, there are ten countries where no tuition fees are charged for regular studies. They are Austria, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and the Scandinavian countries. The countries with the highest tuition fees seem to be the Netherlands and the UK. However, both in the case of these countries and countries with lower tuition fees, the means are tested and may either be reduced or the student may get full or partial support for meeting the fee requirements. Cf. table 6.

## **8. Student support systems**

A study by the Deutsches Studentenwerk from 1997 on current developments in the educational assistance systems in Western Europe shows considerable differences between national student support systems and criteria for eligibility and capacity. The survey also shows that comparisons between the different systems are fairly complicated as it is necessary to include analyses of the actual grant and/or loan systems as well as of their interaction with family burden equalisation systems and taxation systems. When comparisons are made only of the actual amount of direct student grants, the study shows that the highest levels for support are to be found in the Scandinavian countries, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands. In all countries the support is means tested in relation to the students' own income and for relatively many countries also in relation to parental income, at least up to a certain age.

Looking at parental maintenance obligations, two distinct groups of countries can be identified: 1) Countries where parents do not have any statutory maintenance obligation for their children during higher education (e.g. the Scandinavian countries, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom). Student support in these countries is relatively high, but is for some of the countries (Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK) either partly or fully dependent on parental income. 2) Countries in which there is a statutory maintenance obligation during a child's education including higher education (e.g. Austria, Belgium, France, Germany and Italy). In these countries parents with children in higher education are granted an economic relief by the state, e.g. taxation relief and/or child benefits. Apart from the economic relief in relation to parents, students also have some possibilities of applying for means tested grants and/or loans.

Substantial national differences are also to be found when comparing possibilities for obtaining national student grants for study abroad. Table 6 gives a brief indication of possibilities of **national** support (not EU support) both for study periods abroad and for full degree courses. There seems to be a development towards extending the possibilities for using national grants for studies abroad, either for study periods or for full degree programmes. The Scandinavian countries, Austria, Greece and the Netherlands have introduced or are introducing educational assistance systems for national students going abroad for full degree programmes. In Flanders it is possible to receive national support for full programmes offered by recognised institutions of higher education in the Netherlands and for studies not offered at Flemish institutions. In countries where support is partly based on parental support or student support in the form of e.g. board and lodging, the same opportunities do not always exist.

## **9. International student and career guidance systems**

Students as well as universities and employers' organisations seem to attach more and more importance to European employability of higher education candidates. National and international career guidance systems with increased focus on international career possibilities and conditions seem to be under development. The EU initiative with the EURES system (the **EUR**opean **E**mployment **S**ervices), the establishment of which was formally decided upon in 1993, seems to be the most developed system so far. The EURES is a co-operation network which bring together Public Employment Services of the countries belonging to the European Economic Area as well as other regional, national and international bodies concerned with employment issues. The main tasks of the system is to facilitate access to information and guidance on job opportunities as well as job and living conditions in other countries. The driving force behind the system are the euroadvisers. They are located in employment services of EU/EEA countries to provide information, advice and guidance for job-seekers and employers interested in the international job market. A pilot project has investigated the possibilities of extending the euroadviser system to universities, but so far this has not been possible and the pilot project has ended.

## **ANNEX I**

## Country profiles on higher education systems

### 1. Introduction

Tables 1 and 2 intends to give a condensed overview of the present structures of higher education systems and qualifications offered. However, in schematic overviews it is only possible to show main tendencies, whereas details, varieties and exceptions cannot be exposed. Thus the tables should be read with some caution and only considered as a somewhat simplified generalisation of present degree structures. Furthermore it should be noted that an overview according to years cannot show the differences in contents, level and learning outcome of the various qualifications, but can merely give a structural impression of existing possibilities. For further information, please refer to the accompanying brief country profiles on the present structures of higher education of each country and some of the main developments expected.

#### Terminology used:

**Unitary higher education system:** A higher education system with one main type of higher education institutions encompassing all types of study programmes leading to a variety of qualifications at different levels - e.g. diploma qualifications, undergraduate and post graduate degrees. Some may be research oriented, others more professionally oriented or of a rather general academic nature.

**Binary higher education system:** The binary or dual system consists of two different types of higher education institutions: Type A which is the classical university education combining higher education and research and type B presenting more professionally oriented higher education with or without a more applied research profile.

**One-tier degree structure:** It is a degree system which consists of only one integrated cycle of higher education leading to a degree that gives access to the doctorate. One-tier degree structures can be found both in unitary and in binary higher education systems.

**Two-tier degree structure:** It is a degree structure which consists of at least two stages of higher education. Each stage ends with a final award which may be used either for a professional career or for further studies. The second stage gives, in any case, access to the doctorate. This structure may be found both in unitary and binary higher education systems.

**One-tier doctorate structure:** A doctoral degree structure with one level of doctoral degrees. (international PhD level).

**Two-tier doctorate structure:** A doctoral degree structure with two different levels of doctoral degrees (an international PhD level and a higher doctorate). Access to the second doctorate is not always dependent on having the first doctorate.

### 2. Country profiles

**Austria:** Currently, higher education in Austria follows the model of a *binary one-tier system* for studies up to doctoral level. A new non-university Fachhochschulsystem began with the establishment of 10 new Fachhochschule programmes (*Fachhochschul-Studiengänge*) in 1994. By now (spring 1999), fifty programmes have been established. So far no private universities have been admitted in Austria, but a new law is in preparation which will change the situation.

**The university sector:** The first final degree at Austrian universities is the *Magister or Di-*

*plom-Ingenieur* which is normally awarded after at least four to five years of study, but often much more. The studies are divided into two (three) successive phases each ending with an examination (*Diplomprüfung*), and the second phase also includes the writing of a thesis (*Diplomarbeit*).

The doctoral programme requires at least two years of further study, the writing and defence of a thesis (Dissertation), and the pass of a final examination (*Rigorosum*). The Habilitation, i.e. the right to teach in a certain scientific discipline, is not an academic degree, but an additional academic qualification for which a specific procedure has to be undergone which by far exceeds the requirements for an ordinary doctoral degree.

Some universities offer a MAS (*Master of Advanced Studies*) or a MBA (*Master of Business Administration*) on the basis of courses given in German and/or English. Both programmes are at post-graduate level aiming at professional specialisation. Since 1997 the introduction of a bachelor level degree in the official degree structure has been discussed. The reasoning is to internationalise, i.e. to make Austrian degrees more compatible to other countries' degree systems and to ease mobility. A new law is in preparation which will give the universities the opportunity to introduce a two-tier degree.

**Fachhochschulen:** The minimum duration of a Fachhochschule programme including practical periods in enterprises and preparation for a final paper is four years. The title is the same as for university qualifications but a "(FH)" has to be added to the title. FH graduates may continue for a doctoral programme at a university provided that a number of additional exams are passed within two bridging semesters.

**Belgium (Fr):** Higher education up to doctoral level follows a *binary, primarily one-tier model*. Doctoral studies: A one-tier model.

**The university sector:** The first intermediate university degree is the *Candidat(e)* after two (in some fields three) years of study. It comprises a number of general subjects in the chosen main field of study. The *Candidat(e)* is a prerequisite for continuing in the second cycle. The second cycle takes two, three or four years. Depending on the study programme followed, students are awarded, upon completion of the second cycle, the academic degree of *Licencié, Pharmacien, Ingénieur, Maître* (in computer science, economic sciences and applied economic sciences), *Docteur en Médecine et Docteur en Médecine Vétérinaire*. The study programmes of the second cycle are more specialised than the first cycle. Most studies include the writing of a thesis. The postgraduate

training programmes comprises the *Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (DEA)* and the *Diplôme d'Etudes Spécialisées (DES)*. No specific training programme is required for doctoral studies, but a decree from 1994 provided the possibility for the universities to organise a preparatory training programme of at least one year – the *DEA*. Some faculties are preparing such programmes. The doctorate is formally awarded after writing of a thesis and a public defence, usually after at least four years of independent studies and research.

**Hautes Ecoles:** Non-university qualifications are divided into the following types: a) Short one-cycle studies of three or four years' duration (*e.g. Gradué*) and b) longer two-cycle programmes - each of normally two years' duration (*Licencié, Ingénieur*). According to the law, the long-cycle non-university studies are also called *university-level* studies. Graduates from the long type non-university programmes may under certain conditions follow doctoral programmes at universities.

There is also a postgraduate possibility (of max. two years duration) from the Hautes Ecoles the *Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS)* encompassing applied research studies.

**Belgium (NI):** Higher education prior to doctoral level follows a *binary, primarily one-tier model* but with an intermediate degree after two years. Doctoral studies: A one-tier model.

**The university sector:** The first *intermediate* university degree is the *Kandidaat* after two or in some fields three years of study or in a few cases the *Baccalaureus*. It comprises a number of introductory courses in the chosen subject field, methodological subjects and others.

The most common final university degree is the *Licentiaat* after two to three years of study after the *Kandidaat*. The *Licentiaat* is a more specialised degree than the *Kandidaat*. The aims of the programmes are to prepare for independent practise of science or the application of scientific knowledge. Most programmes include a final thesis. Other final degrees are in civil engineering, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary science and medicine.

Third-cycle studies comprise a doctoral programme which includes the writing of a thesis and a public defence. The studies may either be organised without any fixed study programme or according to a more structured research training programme. Some universities require participation in additional doctoral training for admission to the public defence of the doctoral thesis. A certificate is issued at the end of the training.

**Hogescholen:** Non-university qualifications are offered by the *hogescholen*. They are divided into two types: a) Short one-cycle studies of three years' duration (*e.g. Gegradueerde in ...*) which prepare students for specific professional skills in *e.g.* industry, commerce, agriculture, health and rehabilitation social work. b) The two-cycle programmes where each cycle is normally of two years' duration. After the first cycle, the title *Kandidaat in ...* is awarded. After the second cycle, the title *Licentiaat in ...* is awarded. Studies cover more or less the same sectors as one-cycle higher education.

The programmes include lectures as well as practical exercises and also applied research.

**Germany:** Higher education follows a *binary one-tier structure* up to the doctoral level and a one-tier doctoral level model.

**The university sector:** Degrees from universities are the *Diplom, Magister or Staatsexamen* of four to six years' study including a thesis with a duration of a half to one year. Diplom studies are characterised by concentration on the broad range of the main subjects aiming at a specific professional field. Magister studies concentrate on two or three subjects, primarily in the arts. Staatsexamens relate to fields of regulated professions.

Until recently, doctoral degrees have primarily been awarded after independent research under the supervision of a lecturer and the defence of a thesis. The time stipulated for this award is two to four years. The organisation of the doctoral studies in graduate schools is an alternative way which is becoming more and more common. (In 1998 around 300 graduate schools – *Graduiertenkollegien*- were established). One university has introduced a PhD programme as a pilot project. As a rule, the *Habilitation* (post-doctoral lecturing qualification) is necessary in order to qualify for a professorship. The *Habilitation* gives proof of the candidate's teaching qualification, but does not constitute an academic degree as such. In a number of Länder (Federal States), the *Habilitation* entitles academic research staff to supplement doctoral titles with "*Habilitatus*" (e.g. *Dr. Med. Habil.*). Since two to three years the *Habilitation* as a prerequisite for a professorship is under discussion.

**Fachhochschulen** (universities of applied sciences), offer primarily professionally oriented courses in engineering, economics, social professions, administration and design. The standard study period is four years including one or two practical semesters and a *Diplom* thesis of three to six months' duration. Students are granted the title *Diplom (FH)*. Graduates from *Fachhochschulen* may, under certain conditions and eventually after extra exams, be admitted to doctoral studies.

There is a number of bachelor's/master's programmes offered in Germany by foreign institutions. The formal regulations for such arrangements have not yet been fully developed. The amended University Act of 1998 provides for the national introduction of first and second degrees leading to Bachelor's degrees (three to four years) and a following Master's degrees (one to two years) as well as an accreditation system at universities and at the *Fachhochschulen*. These degrees may be offered alongside the regular above-mentioned traditional degrees. Some institutions have already started to offer bachelor and master programmes (at present more than 190 programmes). Their introduction on a broad scale is, however, still under development.

**Denmark:** Higher education in Denmark is structured according to a *binary two-tier model* for studies up to doctoral level. Doctoral degrees are awarded at two levels.

**The university sector:** At university level the degree structure follows a so-called 3+2+3 model: The first degree in most academic fields is the *Bachelor* degree (three to three and a half years), the second degree *Candidatus(a)* after two to two and a half years of further studies. Study programmes in medicine, pharmacy and veterinary science are exceptions from the bachelor structure, as they comprise integrated studies of five to six and a half years' duration. The PhD degree is awarded after three years of study/research after the *Candidatus*. Already at bachelor level the studies are fairly specialised in one to two subjects or a subject field and the specialisation continues at *Candidatus* level. The *Candidatus* programme includes a thesis of a half to one year's duration.

Alongside the ordinary national qualifications, more and more universities also offer Master programmes and Master degrees - some taught in Danish some in English. Some are regulated by a Ministry of Education decree, others are offered within the autonomy of the institutions. Some institutions also offer joint or double degrees in co-operation with foreign institutions. The *PhD* requirements are three years' work on a thesis, including some coursework, teaching and research co-operation. More and more research schools are being established. The Doctor degree is a higher doctorate awarded to mature researchers after major, independent and original research and a dissertation.

**The non-university sector** in Denmark is very diversified with many fairly small institutions offering only one or a few study programmes of two to four years' duration aiming at one professional field as e.g. teacher training, social work, nursing etc. Students receive a Diploma in the specific professional field and with the professional title "nurse", "physiotherapist".

Non-university higher education institutions are not allowed to award Danish bachelor degrees, but some of the institutions enter into co-operation with foreign higher education institutions and offer foreign bachelor or master degrees. Some of the institutions offer various post graduate diploma courses.

Proposals have been put forward by the Government to change the institutional structure, especially in the non-university sector, e.g. by merging some of the small institutions and intensifying co-operation between the non-university and the university sector. Another proposal concerns the introduction of a professional bachelor degree at the non-university level.

**Spain:** Higher education up to doctoral level is structured *primarily* according to a *unitary one-tier system*. There is one doctorate level. Reforms in the university system during the 70s and 80s have integrated more and more former non-university studies in the universities, and many new universities have been established to cater for a growing demand. Higher education outside universities is limited to art and music. Universities are structured in *Escuelas Universitarias (ES)*, *Escuelas Tecnicas Superiores (EST)* and *Facultades (F)*. There are two types of first degrees: The *Diplomado, Ingeniero or Arquitecto Técnicos* awarded after normally two to three years in primarily professional fields of study. The *Licenciatura* is awarded usually after a consecutive two-cycle programme of normally four to five years of study. The first cycle is not a final one; it forms a basic, generalised curricular module in which the basic subjects are taught.

Only the *facultades* of a university have the right to award *Licenciatura* degrees. Universities in Spain are characterised by very course-intensive programmes and many compulsory subjects. Around one third of the subjects are defined by the government and they are the same for all universities. Recent reforms include a higher degree of choice and more individual student work. The *Pasarela* systems makes it in many cases possible to pass from a first cycle qualification to a second cycle of different studies. Universities may also organise studies outside the officially regulated system - the so called *titulos propios*. These degrees do not have official status. Doctoral studies for the *Doctorado* requires three to four years.

**Greece:** Higher education follows a *binary one-tier* higher education system for studies up to doctoral level and a one-tier doctoral structure.

**The university sector** award the *Diploma* (engineering and architecture) or the *Ptychio* after studies of normally four to five years' duration. The curriculum consists of a number of compulsory and elective subjects. In some departments a final project thesis is required. In the academic year 1997-98 a project with 30 optional study programmes was launched. The programmes are characterised by greater flexibility and the possibility of attendance at individual courses or a combination of courses. The programmes are developed in order to better meet the constantly changing needs of the labour market.

The diploma *Metaptychiakon Spoudon Exidikefsis* is a postgraduate intermediate specialisation of minimum one to two years' duration, including research and a thesis. It is required in certain subject fields before access to the doctoral programme. The *Didaktoriko* is the doctoral degree after a minimum of three years' studies, research and public defence of a thesis.

**Technologika Ekpaideftika Idrymata (TEI)** - the non-university higher education institutions also award qualifications called the *Ptychio* after studies of three and a half to four years' duration in specific professionally oriented fields. The possibilities of transfer from a non-university to a university course with credits are fairly limited. In co-operation with foreign universities the *TEI* may establish joint postgraduate programmes leading to master degrees.

**France:** Higher education before the doctoral level follows primarily a *binary two-tier system*. However, the system of higher education is characterised by the coexistence of a large number of different types of higher education institutions, each with its own admission requirements and offering a wide range of degrees.

**The university sector** consists of *traditional universities* including various more specialised faculties, e.g. *Instituts Universitaires de Technologie (IUT)*, *Instituts Universitaires Professionnalisés (IUP)* and others.

The general degree structure at universities encompasses a first intermediate degree of two years, the *DEUG*, and a first final degree the *Licence* after one extra year and the

*Maitrise* after still another year. The *DESS* is a one-year postgraduate specialisation after the *Maitrise*. The *DEA* (*the Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies*) is a one year programme after the *Maitrise*. It is considered as a starting point for doctoral research. The programmes include, research activities, a written final exam. and public defence of a short thesis. The establishment of graduate schools is developing.

The degrees at the *IUT* comprise a two-year final degree, the *DUT* (university diploma in technology). Admission to the *IUT* is selective as opposed to the universities. The Ministry of Education has proposed the introduction of a *professional three year Licence* allowing students to leave university after three years and find jobs at intermediate level. Within the third year of a *professional Licence*, students should have a compulsory placement. The Ministry also proposes a *master level qualification* (the *Mastaire*) after two extra years. The new degrees should not suppress but exist alongside the existing degree structure.

**Other types of higher education institutions:** There are various other types of institutions of higher education, such as the *grandes écoles* of management and engineering institutions. Admission to these institutions is selective and highly competitive. They offer specific types of qualifications. Most *grandes écoles* are public institutions, but there are also a number of private institutions with state recognition.

**The non-university sector** includes, among others, the *Sections de Techniciens Supérieurs* offering two-year advanced technical training programmes leading to the *BTS /Brevet de Technicien Supérieur*. The non-university sector also includes various institutions for health training.

**Finland:** Higher education follows a *binary (dual) model*.

**The university sector:** Between 1994 and 1996 a new *two-tier degree structure* was adopted in most university disciplines. The aims were to allow students to complete the first degree the *Kandidaatti* in three years and the *Maisteri* after two years' extra studies and that at least 75 per cent of the students should continue to do a *Maisteri* programme after the *Kandidat* degree. The purpose of the degree reform was to establish an internationally compatible degree structure providing students with the opportunity to combine studies across disciplinary and institutional boundaries, and the reform has given room for more flexibility in the choosing of subjects and study fields. In medicine, dentistry and veterinary science the degrees take six years of full-time study to complete. The degree is called *Lisensiaatti*. Doctoral awards are offered both in the form of an intermediate doctoral degree (in some subject fields) after two years of study or the final doctoral degree after three to four years of study and defence of a thesis. Doctoral studies are to a large extent now being organised in graduate schools.

**Ammattikorkeakoulu** (polytechnics): The non-university sector in Finland has undergone a major reform in the 1990s. So-called *ammattikorkeakoulu* are being formed by upgrading the specialised institutions which previously offered vocational higher education and by merging them to form new multidisciplinary institutions. The aim is to raise standards of education, to make vocational education more attractive and to improve the international compatibility of vocational education. Degree programmes are

of three to four years' duration. The aim of studies is to provide and may include different specialisation lines.

**Italy:** Higher education is organised after a *primarily binary one-tier model* with a fairly extensive and developed university sector which to some extent resembles e.g. the Spanish structure.

**The university sector:** University degrees are offered at three levels according to length of study each conferring final degrees. The short degree (the *Diploma Universitario (DU)*) aims at a variety of professions such as skilled technicians. Studies integrate theory and practical training. The longer degree is the *Corsi di Laurea* (four to six years) which aims at a high academic level also including research activities. The programme also requires a thesis work of six months' to two years' duration. Holding the *Laurea* gives the right to use the title *Dottore/Dottoressa*.

Access to third level studies - the doctoral studies - is a *Laurea* or a similar degree.

There are two types of third level studies, either a specialisation (*Scuola de Specializzazione*) or the more general doctoral degree programme (*Dottorato di Ricerca*). The title is awarded after supervised research activities and defence of a thesis.

Universities may also offer *Master degree programmes*. However, even though they are adapted to the Italian educational context and needs, they are considered unofficial study opportunities and the degrees have no legal validity.

**Non-university education** comprises, according to the Italian terminology, all kinds of artistic education and a number of vocational education and training programmes, e.g. regional programmes and higher technical education and training programmes. A third category, physical education and sport, is being transformed from non-university to university level studies.

New university legislation is preparing a reform of the overall framework of university education and curricula. According to the proposal, the future degree structure will be as follows: Three-year first degree, and a second degree, after two more years of study, and the third level after no less than 3 years, the *Doctorate* level. Degree courses are to be unified in homogeneous disciplinary areas, indicating the educational aims and courses. The courses shall be expressed in work load credits.

**Ireland:** The higher education system follows a *binary two-tier system* and a one-tier doctoral level. The Minister for Education and Science has given strong policy signals which favour maintaining the binary system, considering it to be of vital interest to Ireland to have institutions to cater specifically for sub-degree studies.

**The university sector:** The first degree at universities is the Bachelor or primary degree which provide basic knowledge in a particular subject or field of study. The duration of

primary degree courses varies according to faculty. The Bachelor of Arts (BA) requires three or four years of study, while primary degrees in medicine and dentistry take six years. The degree of Master can be obtained through course work and examinations or through research or through a combination of the two methods. The normal duration of study is from one to three years following the Bachelor degree. PhD studies may follow directly after a good Bachelor degree or a Master programme. The duration is usually three to four years, and the studies include course and thesis work.

**Institutes of Technology:** The former Regional Technical Colleges have been redesignated Institutes of Technology. Awards from the Institutes are generally made by the National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA). These awards include the *National Certificate*, the *National Diploma*, and to a certain extent also bachelor, master and doctoral level awards. The Dublin Institute of Technology has bachelor degree awarding authority. The other Institutes provide ab initio stepped bachelor courses validated by the National Council for Educational Awards. The stepped awards generally are of the pattern: *National Certificate* + *National Diploma* + degree = *Bachelor award* (2 years + 1 year + 1 year). Many of the Institutes have gained, or are seeking, devolved awarding authority for the sub-degree levels. In March 1999 new legislation concerning the granting of further and higher education awards was published, entitled the Qualification Bill. It intends to promote quality and assist students in their choice of courses and institutions. The legislation will establish an overall National Qualification Framework for all non-university further and higher education which would replace the NCEA. The principal objective is to develop a framework for the structured development of institutions in the technological sector.

**Iceland:** The higher education structure follows a *binary two-tier system*.

**The university sector:** The university level institutions offer the following first degree programmes of three to four years' duration: the *BA*, *BS* or the *BEd*. The courses may be purely academic or more professionally oriented. All degrees require a final thesis or project work.

The University of Iceland also awards higher degrees such as the *Kandidatspróf* which is an integrated four- to six-year study in certain disciplines and the Master degrees programme of two-three years after a *BA/BS*. The University of Iceland also has the right to award doctoral degrees, both the PhD degree and the higher doctor degree.

**Non-university courses** are taught at a number of different educational institutions and have a prescribed duration of two to four years.

**Luxembourg:** Higher education in Luxembourg is basically limited to:

- a first year intermediate university course at the *Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg*;

- non-university courses of two to three years' duration at various non-university institutions in different professional fields, e.g. technology, commerce and education;
- postgraduate training at the *Institut Universitaire International de Luxembourg* as well as postgraduate courses for secondary school teachers.

**Liechtenstein:** Higher education courses in Lichtenstein are offered by one university-type private state-recognised institution (*Internationale Akademie für Philosophie*) and are Fachhochschule (*Fachhochschule Lichtenstein*).

The IAP offers three-cycle degree programmes in Philosophy consisting of a two-year *baccalaureate*, a two-year *Master* programme including thesis work and a *doctoral* programme of at least three years' duration.

The Fachhochschule programmes comprise four-year programmes in architecture, engineering and informatics and a few postgraduate programmes of one and a half year's duration).

**The Netherlands:** Higher education up to the doctorate follows a *binary one-tier model* at universities and *hogescholen*. Doctoral training also follows a one-tier model.

**The university sector:** The first degree at universities is the *Doctoraal* accompanied by the title *Doctorandus*, *Meester* or *Ingenieur*. The degree is awarded after usually four to five years of study in a doctoraal programme. Programmes in medicine, veterinarian science, pharmacy and others last longer. The first year of study includes a number of courses necessary for the chosen subject area; it is concluded by a *Propedeuse* examination. Programmes integrate research and training and they also require writing of a thesis (*Scriptie*) of at least 60 pages. Universities also offer some postgraduate qualifications, e.g. a one-year teacher training programme for upper-level secondary education and HBO. All universities provide the four year research training programme leading to the *doctorate* (Dr.) award.

Since 1998 universities can also award *the Kandidaats* degree after 3 years full time study. It is to be considered as a first degree on top of which the *Doctoraal* may be awarded after one to two years of further studies. No information have been available on how many programmes of this type are being developed. The first graduates to obtain a *Kandidaats* are expected in year 2001/2002.

**Hogescholen** (universities of professional education) offer professionally oriented programmes (*HBO*) in all fields and award the title *Ingenieur* or *Baccalaureus (bc)* after 4 years of study. Access requirements are theoretically one year less than the requirements for universities.

According to the Higher Education and Research Act, a HBO graduate has access to research programmes leading to a PhD degree.

Many Dutch institutions, both universities and *hogescholen*, offer international degrees, especially Masters. There are no legal obstacles to do so as the Master title is a non-protected title in the Netherlands. Since 1996 the independent Dutch Validation Council validates master programmes offered at *hogescholen*. Many institutions also co-operate with British universities in offering a British recognised Master degree. Graduates with a *Doctorandus* are also allowed to use the title *Master*, and graduates from the *hogescholen* may use the title *Bachelor*.

According to the four-year plan of the Ministry of Education (HOOP2000) some of the topics related to internationalisation are more flexibility, the degree structure (bachelor/master), the Sorbonne declaration, tuition fees and quality control.

**Norway:** Higher education follows a *primarily binary two-tier model* before the doctorate and a *one-tier doctorate model*. The present structure was introduced in 1994 with the merger of 98 public colleges into 26 *statslige høyskoler* (state colleges) and in January 1996 with a new common act regulating both universities and colleges. The differences between the universities and the non-university sector are not as clear as in other countries which have a binary system, e.g.

- state colleges have been given the formal right to award doctor's degrees depending on individual recognition by the Ministry of Education,
- some of the degrees awarded by universities and the state colleges are similar, e.g. the *Cand. Mag.* degree. State colleges may also be given the right to award higher degrees.
- credit transfer from non-university to university programmes is fairly easy.

**The university sector:** The usual first degree from a university is the *Cand. Mag.* after normally four years of study (three and a half years in Maths and Natural Sciences). Studies are usually concentrated on two to three subjects including a major of at least three semesters. The programme starts with half-a-year *Philosophicum*. The second degree is the *Candidatus* degree after normally two years of further studies in one of the subjects of the *Cand. Mag.* The writing of a thesis based on independent research activities (normally of one year's duration) is a requirement for the degree. Professional university degrees in e.g. medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, psychology, theology and law require six to seven years of consecutive studies. The university colleges normally offer special professional programmes of four to six years' duration, e.g. in architecture, veterinary science, agriculture, business administration, music and physical education and sports.

There are two different doctoral pathways: A totally independent programme with no special study programme except for the thesis and the public defence (the *Dr. Philos.* degree) and a more structured research training programme over a three to four year period also including the writing of a thesis and public defence (*Dr. Art.*, *Dr. Scient* etc). The two doctoral degrees have the same academic level.

Parallel to the official degree system, Norwegian universities have for the last ten years been offering master degree studies in English. State colleges have recently been granted permission to develop Master programmes in the Norwegian or English language.

A state commission has been established to make an analysis of various aspects of the higher education sector, including the degree system and make proposals for possible changes. There seems to be some interest from the side of the Ministry of Education to adapt the present system to a more an Anglo-American model.

**Statslige høyskoler:** (The state colleges). The majority of the shorter, non-university courses consist of an integral study period and aim at a particular profession: Candidates get a *diploma with the professional title*. Most of these programmes are of three to four years' duration. It is also possible to follow programmes which correspond to university programmes, i.e. in arts, social science, maths, natural sciences and leading to the *Cand. Mag.* degree. The *Philosophicum* is not required for the *Cand. Mag.* degree from the state colleges. *Høgskolekandidat* (studies of two to three years' duration) is a lower academic qualification - not obtainable from universities.

**Portugal:** Higher education follows a *primarily binary two-tier system* up to the doctoral level, and a one-tier doctoral system. Some universities are beginning to integrate non-university type institutions and qualifications.

**The university sector:** So far the most common first degree at universities follows after a study programme of four to six years' duration. The *Licenciatura* gives access both to postgraduate programmes and, on certain conditions, to a doctoral programme. The *Mestrado* study programme usually lasts two years and requires, apart from coursework, the writing and public defence of a thesis. The *Mestrado* gives exemption from all examinations except presentation and defence of a thesis for the degree of *Doutor* in the same specialisation. Since 1997 universities have also been allowed to offer three-year study programmes for a *Bacharelato*, and consequently more and more two-tier *Licenciatura* programmes are being recognised by the Ministry of Education both at universities and in the non-university sector.

There are no specialised courses leading to the award of the *Doutor*, but some examinations are required apart from the preparation and defence of a thesis.

**Instituto Politécnico:** Non-university higher education institutions in the form of polytechnics started to become introduced already in 1973. The programmes are professionally oriented. They are offered at special schools in the areas aiming at e.g. business, engineering, tourism, nursing, the paramedical field, teacher training. Courses are often related to the professional needs of the region in which they are located. The *Bacharelato* degree is awarded after a study programme of usually three years' duration. The polytechnics may also award the *Licenciatura*.

**Sweden:** Higher education follows a *unitary two-tier model* up to the doctoral level. There are two different doctoral degree levels.

Higher education is organised according to a modular credit basis allowing students to build up their degree or other qualifications by selecting self-contained modules. The appropriate degree is awarded after accumulation of the required number of credits in appropriate combinations and after the student has passed the required exams for each module. There is normally not one final exam for a specific degree. Study periods are not expressed in years but in credit points.

*General academic degrees:* There are three types of first final degrees: *The Högskoleexamen* which requires at least two years of full time study. The *Kandidatexamen* which requires at least three years of full-time study and at least one and a half years of study in the major subject including a thesis of at least ten Swedish credit points (one point – one week) The *Kandidatexamen* can be of a general academic nature or it can be of a professionally oriented degree. The *Magisterexamen* requires four years of full time study including two years of study in the major subject and a thesis work of normally half a year's full-time work (twenty credit points).

*Professional degrees* (medicine, teaching degrees' and engineering etc.) are organised according to a somewhat different structure. There are more than fifty professional degrees varying from four to five-and-half years' duration.

Doctoral programmes include a two-year *Licentiatexamen* in some fields and a four-year *Doktorexamen* in all academic fields. Course work and the writing and public defence of a thesis are the main components of a doctoral programme. Access requirements are at least a *Kandidatexamen* or equivalent qualifications. Up to one year of a *Magisterexamen* may count in the *Doktorexamen*.

Higher education institutions offer more and more master programmes in English both for national students and for international students, some of these master courses are just translations of the regular university courses, other of these are specially designed programmes.

**United Kingdom:** Higher education follows a *unitary two-tier model* up to the doctoral level. There are several doctoral level possibilities, the *PhD* being the most predominant. The former polytechnics were integrated into the university structure in 1992 and given full university status and degree-awarding power. There are no central or official regulations regarding the duration of studies in universities, and thus both the nomenclature and the structuring of qualifications may differ between universities. There are also some differences between England, Scotland and Wales.

According to the UK nomenclature, qualifications can be grouped into two major categories:

undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications.

*The undergraduate level* includes both sub-degree qualifications and all first degree qualifications irrespective of the length of the programme:

Sub-degree qualifications include the *Higher National Diploma* (two years) and the *Higher National Certificate* (one year).

*Bachelor* degrees are usually awarded after a study programme of three or four years (the bachelor programmes for a degree in medicine and veterinary science last five years).

Bachelor degrees are classified according to programme requirements as well as student performance. The classification goes from an ordinary non-honours degree, a third class honours, a second class honours (with two divisions) to a first class honours.

The degree classification system is being discussed.

Courses are increasingly being offered on a modular and credit accumulation basis.

Some qualifications which are at undergraduate level, but taken by students with bachelor degrees for conversion to another subject lead to Master's degrees at present.

*The postgraduate level* includes a wide variety of *Master* programmes, course programmes as well as research programmes, usually of one to two years' duration, and a number of postgraduate diplomas and, finally, the doctorate programmes leading to a *PhD degree* are the most common.

There are a growing number of undergraduate degrees offered in Further Education Colleges. These include arrangements whereby all or part of the course may be taught in a FE-College with the course being validated by a university. These arrangements contribute to a considerable widening of access as FE-Colleges are local institutions. A high number of FE-Colleges offer Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and Higher National Certificates (HNC's). There are a growing number of higher education national vocational qualifications.

One of the recommendations of the Dearing Report from 1997 was the establishment of a national framework for higher education qualifications. This is being discussed, and the Quality Assurance Agency has put forward a discussion paper on a national framework for qualifications as well as a system for assuring the standards of awards.

In recent years there has been an enormous expansion of international activities at UK universities and colleges and especially of study programmes delivered in co-operation with overseas institutions. To a certain extent there has been doubt about the standards and quality of such arrangements. In order to assure quality, special provisions and procedures have been established on a voluntary basis to ensure that UK overseas activities meet the same standards as the study programmes at home.

## **Table 1: Higher education systems and degree structures**

(Cf. Annex one for definitions of unitary/binary and one-tier/two-tier systems)

Country	The HE System		Degree structure at universities		Doctoral degree structure	
	Unitary	Binary	One-tier	Two-tier	One-tier	Two-tier
Austria		x	x		x (c)	
Belgium (Fr)		x	x (d)		x	
Belgium (NI)		x	x (d)		x	
Germany		x	x (e)		x (c)	
Denmark		x		x		x
Finland		x		x	x (b)	
France		x		x	x (b)(c)	
Spain	x		x		x	
Greece		x	x		x (b)	
Italy		x(a)	x		x	
Ireland		x		x	x	
Iceland		x		x		x
Liechtenstein		x		x	x	
Luxembourg		x	Not applicable	Not applicable		
The Netherlands		x (f)	x		x	
Norway		x		x	x	
Portugal		x		x	x	
Sweden	x			x	x (b)	
United Kingdom	x			x	x	

a) The higher education system is primarily a binary system, but the non-university sector is relatively small.

b) An intermediate research oriented degree is offered. In Finland and Sweden the degree is an optional choice for having a lower doctorate; it is not a prerequisite for continuing for a doctor degree. In France and Greece the "intermediate" degree is a condition for the doctoral programme.

c) Apart from the award of the doctoral degree the possibility of Habilitation exists.

d) The degree structure of B (Fr) and B (NL) may be characterised both as a one tier or a two tier system. Most university degrees consist of two cycles and after the first cycle of two-three years the award of a *Candidat/Kandidaat* is given. The award is primarily considered as an intermediate degree as it has academic implications but no civil effects.

e) A possibility of a bachelor as a first degree and a master as a second degree is being introduced.

f) A possibility of a three year first degree - a *Kandidaats* -is being introduced.

**Table 2: Higher education qualifications in the EU/EEA countries \*)**

	Higher education qualifications before PhD/doctoral studies according to total number of years of h		
Country/ Type of institution	1-2 years+	3 years+	4 years+
<b>Austria</b> <i>University</i>			Magister/Magistra
<i>Fachhochschulen</i>			Magister/Magistra (FH) Diplom-Ingenieur/in (FH)
<b>Belgium (fr)</b> <i>University</i>	Candidat (a)	Candidat (a)	Licencié

<b><i>Hautes Ecoles</i></b>	Candidat (a)	Professionally oriented titles, e.g. Gradué /in	Licencié or professionally oriented titles, e.g. ingénieur
<b>Belgium (nl)</b> <i>University</i>	Kandidaat (a) Baccalaureus (a)	Kandidaat (a)	Licentiaat
<i>Hogescholen</i>	Kandidaat (a)	Professionally oriented titles, e.g. Gegradueerde in...	Licentiaat
<b>Germany</b> <i>University</i>		Bachelor b)	Diplom Magister Artium Staatsexamen Bachelor b) Master b)
<i>Fachhochschulen</i>		Bachelor b)	Diplom (FH) b) Bachelor b) Master b)
<b>Denmark</b> <i>University</i>		Bachelor	
<i>Non-university institutions</i>	Professionally oriented qualifications, e.g. market economist	Professionally oriented qualifications, e.g. nurse	Professionally oriented qualifications, e.g. teacher
<b>Spain</b> Unitary university system		Diplomado	Diplomado Licenciatura
<b>Greece</b> <i>University</i>			Diploma Ptychio

<i>Technologika Ekpaideftika Idrymata (TEI)</i>		Diploma Ptychio	Diploma Ptychio
<b>France</b> <i>University</i>	DEUG DEUST DUT	Licence Licence-professional f)	Maîtrise
<i>Grandes Ecoles and other higher education establishments d)</i>			Diplôme des Ecoles de Management
<i>Non-university institutions</i>	BTS		
<b>Finland</b> <i>University</i>		Kandidaatti	
<i>Ammattikorkeakoulu</i>		Professionally oriented qualifications	Professionally oriented qualifications
<b>Italy</b> <i>University</i>	Diploma Universitario (DU)	Diploma Universitario (DU)	Diploma di Laurea Titles: Dottore/Dottoressa
<i>Non-university</i>			Diploma (in the artistic sector)
<b>Ireland</b> <i>University</i>		Bachelor (general or honours)	Bachelor (honours) Master
<i>Institutes of Technology</i>	National Certificate	National Diploma Bachelor	National Diploma Master

<b>Iceland</b> <i>University</i>		Bachelor	Bachelor
<i>Non-university institutions</i>		Professionally oriented qualifications	Professionally oriented qualifications
<b>Liechtenstein</b> <i>University</i>	Baccalaureate		Master
<i>Non-university</i>			Qualifications in engineering, architecture, information
<b>Luxembourg</b> <i>University</i>	A one-year intermediate qualification		
<i>Non-university</i>		Professionally oriented qualifications	Professionally oriented qualifications
<b>The Netherlands</b> <i>University</i>		Kandidaats	Doctoraal Diploma. Titles: Doctorandus, Meester, Ingenieur, Master
<i>Hogescholen</i>			Getuigschrift Hoger Beroepsonderwijs c). Titles: Baccalaureus, ingeneur Bachelor
<b>Norway</b> <i>University</i>			Candidatus magisterii
<i>Statslige høyskoler</i>	Høgskolekandidat	Høgskolekandidat Professionally oriented qualifications	Candidatus magisterii (state colleges) Professionally oriented qualifications
<b>Portugal</b> <i>University</i>		Bacharelato	Licenciatura

<i>Instituto Politécnico</i>		Bacharelato	Licenciatura
<b>Sweden</b> <i>Unitary university system</i>	Högskoleexamen Professionally oriented qualifications	Kandidat  Professionally oriented qualifications	Magister  Professionally oriented qualifications
<b>United Kingdom</b> <i>Unitary university system</i>	Various university certificates and diplomas and  BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Diploma (HND)	Bachelor (O)  Bachelor (Hon)	Bachelor (Hon)  Master (taught)

\*) This table should be read together with the supplementary information on each country in annex one. The aim is to indicate some of the main degree possibilities in each country. It should be noted that years of study do not in itself say much about the level and contents of the qualifications. It should also be noted that the table does not illustrate the various possibilities of progression from one qualification stage to another. E.g. the requirements for access to doctoral level studies vary from three to five years of previous higher education. Neither has it been possible to illustrate all degree possibilities – especially not at postgraduate level.

a) The degree is considered to be an intermediate degree

b) Permission to establish bachelor and master programmes has been granted with the latest University Act (1998).

c) Entrance requirements are one year less secondary schooling than for university programmes.

d) Admission to the Grandes Ecoles is highly selective and includes preparatory classes and entrance examinations.

e) In all countries the longer degrees of 6-7 years' duration include degrees for professional qualifications in such fields as medicine, veterinarian science and in some countries also pharmacy and others. Usually these degrees do not follow the degree structure for the more general academic degrees, e.g. there is very seldom a first intermediate degree possibility.

f) The Ministry of Education has initiated the introduction of a three-year professional Licence and a five year Mastaire with three sections, professional, research-oriented and general as a follow-up to the Sorbonne declaration.

g) The Licentiate is an optional degree and not a condition to obtain the Doktor degree.

h) Apart from the PhD degree Denmark and Iceland also have a higher doctorate which is obtained after several years of independent research and a dissertation the *Doctor in...* In the UK there are also several higher doctorate possibilities.

i) Candidates who do not hold a postgraduate research qualification are usually registered initially for the MPhil. If progress is satisfactory they may then may be transfer to a PhD programme.

**Table 3: Admission to higher education**

Country	Admission to higher education (a)	Numerus Clausus/Limitations in admission
<b>Austria</b>	Students have to meet the general access requirements (a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent) and the special requirements for admission to the chosen programme; depending upon the country of origin of the secondary school leaving certificate.	No numerus clausus for universities. Admission to Fachhochschulen is limited, and applicants have to sit for entrance exams.
<b>Belgium (fr)</b>	All students with a recognised secondary school leaving certificate are eligible for admission, except in a few fields with special requirement, (e.g. ingénieur civil) where an entrance examination must be passed.	No numerus clausus.
<b>Belgium (nl)</b>	All students with a recognised secondary school leaving certificate are eligible for admission, except in a few fields with special requirements. Entrance examinations must be passed by any student (Flemish or other) who wants to study civil engineering, civil engineering architectural, dental and medical sciences (university degrees) or nautical sciences and fine arts (Hogeschole degrees).	No numerus clausus.
<b>Germany</b>	<p>Access to universities requires an Abitur (12- 13 years of schooling) or equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>Access to Fachhochschulen requires a Fachhochschulreife (12 years of schooling) or equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>Special admission requirements for some programmes, especially in academies of music and fine arts</p>	<p>So far no overall numerus clausus for universities, except in certain fields.</p> <p>Admission to Fachhochschulen is limited in certain fields.</p>
<b>Denmark</b>	Students have to meet both the <i>general access requirements</i> (a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent) and the <i>specific requirements for admission</i> to the chosen programme.	<p>No overall numerus clausus except for a few fields (medicine, some paramedical fields and others).</p> <p>Institutions are free to set their own limitations, e.g. due to lack of places.</p>

<b>Spain</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent qualifications and the one year preparatory course (COU) or the <i>Bachillerato LOGSE</i> . Furthermore, there is an entrance exam for most studies.	There is a numerus clausus in certain fields.
<b>Greece</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate and the passing of the Panhellenic examinations.	So far admission to universities are highly selective with a numerus clausus in all fields. This will be changed according to a new reform "Education 2000" which will abolish the Panhellenic examinations and introduce another more flexible admission system.
<b>France</b>	The general access requirements for universities are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate. Usually there are no other admission requirements. Other types of institutions have various other admission requirements.	Universities do not apply a numerus clausus system. Other types of institutions (IUT and Grandes Ecoles) have selective or highly selective admission systems.
<b>Finland</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent qualifications and the matriculation exam. Admission is usually based on marks in the matriculation examination/school leaving certificate and on entrance tests.	There is a numerus clausus in most fields of study.
<b>Italy</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent qualifications.	There is a numerus clausus for DU courses and for a limited number of university courses.
<b>Ireland</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate. Students very often also have to meet some special admission requirements.	There is no overall numerus clausus, but universities are allowed to select students according to their own admission standards.
<b>Iceland</b>	Students have to meet both the <i>general access requirements</i> (a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent) and the <i>specific requirements for admission</i> to the chosen programme.	There is a numerus clausus in certain fields.
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent qualifications.	No information
<b>Luxembourg</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent qualifications.	No numerus clausus.
<b>The Netherlands</b>	The general access requirements for universities are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate (VWO - 13 years of schooling).  The general access requirements for the <i>Hogescholen</i> (universities of professional education) are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate (HAVO - 12 years of schooling).  Admission depends on meeting the <i>special requirements</i> for the	There is a numerus clausus in certain fields.

	chosen programme.	
<b>Norway</b>	Students have to meet both the <i>general access requirements</i> (a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent) and <i>the specific requirements for admission</i> to the chosen programme.	There is a numerus clausus in most fields.
<b>Portugal</b>	The general access requirements are a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent qualifications.	There is a numerus clausus in most fields. Students have a right to be offered a study place, but not necessarily in the chosen field.
<b>Sweden</b>	Students have to meet both the <i>general access requirements</i> (a recognised secondary school leaving certificate or equivalent) and <i>the specific requirements for admission</i> to the chosen programme.	There is a numerus clausus in all fields.  The limitations in the number of admitted students may be set by the individual institution.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	The general access requirements are two or more subjects passes at the advanced level or equivalent qualifications including vocational qualifications as GNVQs, NUQs and BTEC National Diplomas. Admission is determined by the fulfilment of both the general and the special course requirements.	There is a numerus clausus in certain fields, and institutions are free to set their own limitations.

According to the Lisbon Convention the terms access and admission are distinct, but linked. They denote different steps in the same process towards participation in higher education. Meeting the access requirements is necessary but not always sufficient for actually gaining admission to a higher education programme (getting a study place).

When comparing access and admission requirements one also has to look into the structuring of secondary schooling which in some countries is based on a high degree of streaming in academic and less academic tracks. These differences are only partially included in this table.

**Table 4: Credit transfer systems**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Credit systems</b>

<b>Austria</b>	<p>No national credit system.</p> <p>ECTS is used by some institutions.</p>
<b>Belgium (fr)</b>	<p>No national credit system.</p> <p>ECTS is applied by all institutions for international co-operation and to some extent also for national students. in use at some institutions.</p>
<b>Belgium (nl)</b>	<p>A national credit transfer system is applied. It can also be used as an accumulation system.</p> <p>ECTS is used by some institutions.</p>
<b>Germany</b>	<p>The University Act of 1998 provides for the introduction of a credit transfer and accumulation system. ECTS is already in use at many institutions.</p>
<b>Denmark</b>	<p>So far there has been no national credit system. However, many institutions apply institutionally based credit system or use the ECTS system. In a report from February 1999 to Parliament the Minister of Education recommends the introduction of a credit transfer system based on ECTS.</p>
<b>Spain</b>	<p>A national credit system based on contact hours must be applied by all institutions. ECTS is also used at some institutions. The two systems are compatible although with some difficulties due to the differences between contact hour based and student load based systems.</p>
<b>Greece</b>	<p>No national credit system, but many institutions apply the ECTS system.</p>
<b>France</b>	<p>No national credit system, but many institutions apply the ECTS system.</p>
<b>Finland</b>	<p>A national credit transfer and credit accumulation system is applied. The system is compatible with the ECTS system. Many universities also apply the ECTS system.</p>
<b>Italy</b>	<p>So far no national credit system, but many institutions apply the ECTS system for international co-operation. A new law introduces the ECTS credit system at higher education institutions.</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>In the university sector there is no uniform credit transfer system. The ECTS system is being applied in some institutions. In the non-university sector courses are structured on a credit basis which enables further access and progression.</p>
<b>Iceland</b>	<p>A national credit system, compatible with the ECTS system. Most institutions use ECTS in international co-operation.</p>
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	<p>No information</p>

<b>Luxembourg</b>	No information
<b>The Netherlands</b>	A national credit system is applied which is compatible with the ECTS system. Many institutions also use the ECTS system.
<b>Norway</b>	A national credit system compatible with the ECTS system is applied. Many universities also use the ECTS system in connection with international co-operation.
<b>Portugal</b>	No national credit system.  Some universities are applying ECTS.
<b>Sweden</b>	A national credit and accumulation system is applied. ECTS is used parallel to the national system used by many institutions.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	In Scotland the SCOTCATS system enables easy credit transfer between institutions. In England and Wales there is so far no national credit transfer system, but a majority of institutions use a credit system based on the former CNAAP point system. There are a number of credit accumulation and transfer consortia which progress the implementation of CATS in universities in England and Wales.. It is expected that proposals for a national credit accumulation and transfer system in England and Wales will be adopted in the wake of a report commissioned by the Department for Education and Employment – <i>A Common Framework for Learning</i> , September 1998. The ECTS system is also applied by many institutions.

**Table 5: Organization of the academic year**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Start of academic year</b>	<b>Organisation of the academic year/lecturing periods</b>
<b>Austria</b>	October.	The academic year is organised after a two semester system with tuition provided from October 1 to the end of January and from March 1 to the end of June.
<b>Belgium (fr)</b>	September/October.	Universities may have different organisation of the academic year.  a) A yearly basis with all examinations in June.  b) A semester basis with some exams after each semester.

<b>Belgium (nl)</b>	September/October.	Universities may have different organisations of the academic year:  a) A yearly basis with all examinations in June.  b) A semester basis with some exams after each semester or  c) A three term basis, also with some exams after each term.
<b>Germany</b>	September/October.	The academic calendar is based on a two semester system. There are some varieties in the calendar between to different Länder and between the universities and the non-university sector. The first semester normally runs from the start or from Mid October to Mid February and the second semester from Mid April to end of July. Examination periods after each semester.
<b>Denmark</b>	Mid August/First week of September.	For most programmes the academic year is divided into semesters: From September to end of January and from February to end of June. January and June are the main examination periods. A few non-university programmes are organised according to a yearly calendar with examinations at the end of each academic year.
<b>Spain</b>	The first/second week of October.	The academic calendar is primarily organised on a yearly basis. Some universities apply a semester system.
<b>Greece</b>	September 1.  Tuition starts Mid September.	The academic calendar is divided into semesters. The first semester start Mid September and ends with examinations January/February. The second semester states end of February and ends Mid June also with a period of exams.
<b>France</b>	October 1. The start of the tuition may differ somewhat.	The academic year is organised either on a yearly basis with examinations at the end of the academic year (June) or on a semester basis with exams after each semester – usually in January and June.
<b>Finland</b>	August 1. Tuition usually starts Mid August or Mid September.	The academic year is divided into two semesters. Each ending with a period of examinations.
<b>Italy</b>	Until recently the academic year in Italy began November 1. Lately some faculties have divided the year into semesters and begin earlier.	The academic year may be organised in one of the following ways:  - on a yearly basis,  - on a compact semester basis (a)  - on an ordinary semester basis.  The compact semester basis is the most frequently used.
<b>Ireland</b>	Usually in October, but occasionally in September.	Traditionally the academic calendar has been organised according to a three term system. However, in recent years a number of universities have changed from a three term academic year to a two semester year, and the question of semesterisation is under active consideration by others.

<b>Iceland</b>	Beginning of September.	The academic year is organised according to a two semester system. The first semester runs from September until December. The second semester from January until May.  December and May are examination periods.
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	End of October.	The academic year is divided into semesters. The first semester beginning no later than the end of October, the second beginning in April.
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Beginning of October.	Studies at the Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg is organised on a two semester basis.
<b>The Netherlands</b>	August/ Beginning of September.	The academic year is divided after one of the following two models:  a) Two semester model. One semester from September to end of December and the second semester from January/February to July.  b) A modular system. Usually consisting of five modules/blocks of about eight weeks each (two before Christmas and three after Christmas. Examinations are held at the end of each semester or block.
<b>Norway</b>	Mid August.	The academic year is usually divided into a two semester system. The first semester runs from Mid August to December and the second from Mid January to Mid June including examination periods.  A three term system may also be applied at some institutions.
<b>Portugal</b>	Beginning of October.	A semester-based system is becoming the most frequently used. Examinations periods are usually January/February and June/July.
<b>Sweden</b>	End of August	The academic year is not nationally regulated. Most institutions apply a two semester system. Courses and programmes may also start in January.
<b>United Kingdom</b>	End of September/Beginning of October.	The organisation of the academic year varies across institutions; the main types are term-based and semester-based. In some institutions the academic year is organised in semesters within a term-based structure. The organisation of examinations periods also varies as these are organised by the individual institutions. An increase in the number of institutions moving towards a semester-based academic year is expected.

Compact-semester courses correspond to an annualita because even if concentrated in a semester, they are equivalent to an annual subject-course in terms of contact hours and workload.

**Table 6: Tuition fees and student support systems for study abroad**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Tuition fees for regular study programmes (a)</b>	<b>Student support systems for studies abroad</b>
<b>Austria</b>	No tuition fees for home, EU/EEA of students and certain other groups.  Fees may be charged for students from countries which do not fall in one of the above categories.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised study periods. Students receiving a national grant are entitled to receive educational assistance for study abroad periods up to a maximum of 20 months.
<b>Belgium (fr)</b>	Means-tested registration and tuition fees depending on level of study. There is also a minor fee for participation in exams.  The fee for a basic year is around EURO 650.	Study abroad: In general no educational assistance for studies abroad, neither for full degree courses nor for study periods.
<b>Belgium (nl)</b>	Means-tested tuition fees are charged, dependent on the level of study.  The total fee for a basic year is around EURO 460.	Study abroad: In general no educational assistance for studies abroad, neither for full degree courses nor for study periods.
<b>Germany</b>	No tuition fees, neither for home/EU nor for foreign students.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for study periods for a period of max. one or one and a half year.
<b>Denmark</b>	No tuition fees, neither for home/EU nor for foreign students.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised courses (both study periods and full degree courses) for a period of four years. The limit is six years in the Nordic countries.
<b>Spain</b>	Means tested tuition fees for home/EU and foreign students.	Study abroad: No overall national educational assistance system for studies abroad.
<b>Greece</b>	No tuition fees for home and EU students. Students from other countries pay a fee.	No information
<b>France</b>	Means-tested registration fees for home/EU and for foreign students. The amount varies from EURO 100 to around EURO 230.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised study periods of max. one year.

<b>Finland</b>	No tuition fees, neither for home/EU nor for foreign students.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised courses abroad (both study periods and full degree courses).
<b>Italy</b>	Means tested tuition fees for home/EU and for foreign students. The amount differs dependent on the level of study.	Study abroad: No overall national educational assistance system for studies abroad.
<b>Ireland</b>	The tuition fee system was abolished in 1996 for first level degrees. Tuition fees are still charged for post-graduate degrees.	Studies abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised full degree programmes in other EU countries. Student assistance is also possible for study periods abroad both in other EU and other non-EU countries.
<b>Iceland</b>	No tuition fees, neither for home/EU nor for foreign students.	No information
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	No information	No information
<b>Luxembourg</b>	No tuition fees.	No information
<b>The Netherlands</b>	Means-tested tuition fees of about EURO 1200 are charged for home and EU students. Institutions are free to set different fees for foreign students.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised programmes abroad – both study periods and full degree programmes.
<b>Norway</b>	No tuition fees, neither for home/EU nor for foreign students.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised courses abroad (both study periods and full degree courses).
<b>Portugal</b>	Tuition fees for home/EU and foreign students. For undergraduate studies the amount is about EURO 294.	Study abroad: National students studying abroad for shorter periods keep their grants
<b>Sweden</b>	No tuition fees, neither for home/EU nor for foreign students.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised courses abroad (both study periods and full degree courses).
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Fees differ for home/EU and for students from non-member countries.  For full-time undergraduate studies the full tuition fee for UK and EU students is £ 1,025. The fee is means-tested and may be partially or fully met depending on income. Institutions are free to set the fees for part-time students, postgraduate studies and for students for non-EU countries.	Study abroad: Educational assistance may be provided for recognised courses abroad (both study periods and full degree courses).

a) Only registration and tuition fees for regular study programmes are included in the table, not mandatory fees for participation in student bodies, social care systems etc.

## References

Apart from Web-based information and the information collected from National Rectors' Conferences and NARICs the following publications have been main sources of reference:

*Academic Cooperation Association (ACA):* Internationalisation in the sector of new higher education institutions in Europe. Country essays presented at a workshop in Bonn, May 1999.

*CEPES: Studies on Higher Education:* The Doctorate in the European Region compiled by Dr. Oleg Kouptsov, 1994.

*Council of Europe:* Evaluation of higher education diplomas in Europe. Information report prepared by the NEED Working Party set up under the auspices of the ENIC Network, 1995.

*European Commission:* A guide to higher education systems and qualification in the EU and EEA countries, 1998.

*European Commission.* Key data in the education in the European Union, 1997.

*European Commission:* Strategies and policies on research training in Europe, DGXII-G-6 November 1998.

*Evalueringssenteret*: Evaluation of European higher education - A status report, prepared for the European Commission DG XXII by the Centre for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of Higher Education, Denmark in cooperation with Comité National d'Evaluation, France, September 1998.

*Deutsches Studentenwerk*: Current developments in the educational assistance systems in Western Europe in connection with the family burden equalisation systems, Bonn 1999

*International Association of Universities*: Higher Education Policy - The Quarterly Journal of IAU: Vol 9 No 2. 1996: The changing nature of higher education in Western Europe by Ulrich Teichler.

*Liaison committee of rectors conferences*: Organisation of the academic year. A report and policy recommendations to the European Community, May 1993.

*Norsk institutt for studier av forskning og utdanning*: Doktorgrader og forskeropplæring: Internasjonale erfaringer og perspektiver. En sammenlikning av 9 OECD-land, Rapport 2/96.

*Norwegian Council of Universities*: Mastergrader ved norske universiteter og høyskoler- Statusrapport 1998/99.

*OECD*: Redefining Tertiary education, 1997.

*Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences*: Non-official higher education in the European Union. General report by Nikos Kokosalakis, Athens 1998.

*The Text Consortium*: International higher education – Journal of the Text Consortium. Third issue – September 1996: European CATS - An Overview by Fritz Dalichow.

*The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: A Consultation Paper on  
Qualification Frameworks: Postgraduate Qualifications. 1998*

---

**First version published 7 June 1999**

**Final version: 18 August 1999**