

# Putting the Baltic Sea Region on the map

Towards a global promotion strategy for higher education in  
Northern Europe  
Humboldt University of Berlin, November 16-17, 2006

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Education and Culture

**Leonardo da Vinci**  
Pilot projects

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1. The share of the national student population enrolled in the BA-MA-Phd framework of higher education
2. Structure of higher education  
(duration of BA, MA and Phd programmes)
3. Higher education institutions
4. The system of programme accreditation
5. English-taught programmes

**The share of the national student population  
enrolled in the BA-MA-Phd framework  
of higher education**

**Total amount of students in Latvia 129000**

**In 6 years study programmes in medicine  
2000 (RSU, LU) - 1.55%**

**In the BA-MA-Phd framework 127000  
students – 98.45%**

# Higher Education in Latvia

**Doctor Study Programmes (3-4 years)**

**Academic Master**

*(2 or 1 year )*

**Professional Master**

*(at least 1 year)*

*(Whole length of studies at least 5 years)*

- **Academic Bachelor**

*(3 or 4 years )*

**Professional Bachelor**

*(Whole length of studies at least 4 years)*

**Professional Higher  
Education**

**1<sup>st</sup> level Higher Professional Education**

*(2 - 3 years)*

**General Secondary Education or Secondary Professional Education**

# Higher education institutions

**Universities** (>50% of academic staff should have PhD)

**Higher Schools** (>30% of academic staff should have PhD)

**Colleges**

*The institution should have permanent full-time academic staff >50%*

# English-taught programmes

6 English-taught programmes in  
4 HEI

Euro Faculty

Guest Professors

# Accreditation

The aim of accreditation is to ensure that the degree programme or educational institution meets **the established standards**. Accreditation contains the following elements:

- *it is based on a definition of some kind of **threshold** value;*
- *it contains a **yes-no** setting;*
- *requirements are set **externally**, and*
- *the emphasis is on **accountability**.*

# Experts for evaluation

## Experts' selection and team composition

- *Higher Education Institutions are allowed to suggest **expert candidates** for their own, or **other** higher education institution evaluation.*
- *There shall be at least one expert with **previous experience** in quality evaluation process.*
- ***Leader** of the team takes responsibility for the **methodology** of the evaluation process.*

## Experts for evaluation (2)

- *Experts, which do not possess the highest scientific degree of his/her own state, might be employed with special reasoning.*
- *Experts from the other foreign states with knowledge about national features are preferred.*
- *The representatives of the Higher Education Institution should agree with the National Quality Assurance Agency on the position about the experts.*

# The main aspects of the judgment made by Assessment Commission

To assess the activities and the delivery of education by the institution  
in the **context of aims and objectives**.

*The activities of higher education establishments and their long-term plans should comply with recommendations of the **European Union**.*

Experts should **not** undertake detailed investigations concerning **legal** and **financial** problems.

## 5. National aspects of quality evaluation in Latvia

- According to the *Declaration on Co-operation in Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Baltic States* of October 25, 1994, the quality assessment in all the three Baltic States is carried out using international peers
- Accreditation of higher education institutions (HEI) takes place according to the *Law on Higher Education Establishments*, adopted by Saeima on November 2, 1995.
- The first assessment in Latvia took place in **1996** when the study programme at the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga was assessed with a support of *British Council*.

# National aspects of quality evaluation in Latvia (2)

- Only those higher educational establishments who have been accredited and which offer accredited study programmes have the right to issue **certificates of higher education recognised by the state**. Study programmes are accredited no less often than **once in six years**.
- The decision on accreditation is made by the **Council for Higher Education** (for **higher education institutions'** accreditation) or the **Accreditation Commission** set up by the Ministry for Education and Science (for accreditation of **study programmes**) after hearing the recommendations of the Evaluation Commission.

## National aspects of quality evaluation in Latvia (3)

- The regulations for the higher education quality assurance is **the same in the university and non-university, public and private** sectors.
- The self-assessment report not exceeding 30 pages must be prepared by the HEI. *The CVs of the academic staff and at least short description of all study courses must be appended.*
- *Documents describing the premises and facilities, the governance of the institution et.c. can be appended, but it is suggested to add a list with names of these documents.*

## National aspects of quality evaluation in Latvia (4)

The self evaluation report must contain a comparison with at least 2 similar programmes in the EU states, thus providing a space for some kind of benchmarking.

Government has adopted regulations setting the *education standards for all programmes and professional standards* for **professional** programmes. The standards provide a general outline of the structure and **results** of the studies.

- All self evaluation reports and Evaluation Commission final **reports are available** at Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre and in Internet : *www.aiknc.lv*

# Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre

In order to organize the assessment a specific higher educational establishment and study programme a non-governmental organization "*Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre*" (*HEQEC*).

Now the personnel of the HEQEC consists of 3 full time employees, including Chairman of the Board of the HEQEC, and 2 part time employees.

# Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (2)

The shareholders of HEQEC are **Ministry of Education and Science** and five HEI: **University of Latvia, Riga Technical University, Riga Stradina University, Daugavpils University and *Business Institute "Turība" (private)***.

The activities of the HEQEC are supervised by the 7 persons strong **Board**, elected by the meeting of the shareholders. The activities of the HEQEC are entrusted to the **Chairman** of the Board.

# Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (3)

The HEQEC has following objectives:

- *to work out and co-ordinate the procedures aimed at quality assessment of HEI and study programmes;*
- *to **organize the quality assessment of HEI and study programme;***
- *to **sum up** and to make **public** the experience obtained.*

# Problems

Accreditation decision makers

Choice of experts (Language)

Consequencies of accreditation

*Publication (dissemination)*

Use of indicators and questionnaires

Cooperation with *Inspectorate*

# Problems (2)

Evaluation of *Distance Education*

Evaluation of *Informal Education*

Evaluation of Branches

Internal and external evaluation of QAA

Financing of QAA and of QA

Cooperation with ENQA, *ENIC/NARIC*