



# The Diploma Supplement

## Current European Situation

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# Structure of presentation

- ❑ The history of the Diploma Supplement
  - ❑ From Diploma Supplement to Europass
- ❑ Diploma Supplement and Bologna
  - ❑ Summary of where Europe is with Bologna
  - ❑ Diploma Supplement as one of the Bologna instruments
- ❑ Experiences with the Diploma Supplement from different stakeholder perspectives (preliminary survey results)





# A brief history

- ❑ The original concept initiated by UNESCO during its work on degree and qualifications recognition (1979)
- ❑ Revised by UNESCO, EC and Council of Europe as both recognition and mobility tool (1990s, formalised 1997)
- ❑ Incorporated as one of the Bologna Process instruments
- ❑ Now part of the Europass system
- ❑ Recognition -> Mobility -> Competences





# The Europass

- ❑ The establishment of a **single community framework** for the **transparency of qualifications and competencies** by means of the creation of a **personal, coordinated portfolio** of documents



Decision No 2241/2004/EC dd 13.12.2004



# The Europass

- ❑ Europass-CV
- ❑ Europass-Mobility
- ❑ Europass-Diploma Supplement
- ❑ Europass-Language Portfolio
- ❑ Europass-Certificate Supplement
  
- ❑ Internet-based information system, managed at Community and National level





# Europass-CV

- ❑ To provide citizens with the opportunity to present in a clear and comprehensive way information on all their qualifications and competences
- ❑ Self-declarations written by individual citizens, and thus a personal document
- ❑ Detailed template, individuals to choose what to include
- ❑ Electronic form to allow linkage with other Europass elements







# Europass-Mobility

- ❑ To record periods of learning attended by its holders in countries other than their own
- ❑ Aimed at helping the holder to better communicate what has been gained by this, especially in terms of competences
- ❑ A personal document, completed by both sending and host organisation, and awarded to the individual
- ❑ Only released to record European learning pathways



# Europass-Diploma Supplement

- ❑ Provide information on its holder's educational achievement at higher education level
- ❑ Personal document, attached to an HE diploma, with similar authentication
- ❑ Produced by the competent national authorities, based on common template
- ❑ Adaptable to local needs, but 8 categories that should be filled or explained why not





# Europass-Language Portfolio



- ❑ Provide citizens with the opportunity to present their language skills, cultural experiences and competences
- ❑ Pedagogical: enhance motivation for language learning and intercultural experiences
- ❑ Reporting: documents language proficiency and takes stock of competency levels
- ❑ Both formal and informal experiences
- ❑ Self-written, based on guidelines



# Europass-Certificate Supplement

- ❑ To describe the competencies and qualifications corresponding to a vocational training certificate
- ❑ Like the DS, attached to certificate, awarded to individual by competent national authorities
- ❑ Hence the vocational equivalent



# Europass

## Financial arrangements

- ❑ Costs carried by EU and member states
- ❑ Co-financing of implementation
- ❑ EU-support for national implementation through the National Europass Centres (established as legal persons)



# “Bologna”

## The beginnings

- ❑ For all matter and purposes indeed “a process” that has expanded over time
- ❑ Started in 1999 on a voluntary basis by 29 ministers of education to achieve:
  - ❑ Common framework for readable and comparable degrees
  - ❑ Introduce undergraduate-postgraduate levels in all countries
  - ❑ Introduce ECTS-compatible credit systems
  - ❑ Achieve an European dimension in QA
  - ❑ Eliminate free student mobility obstacles



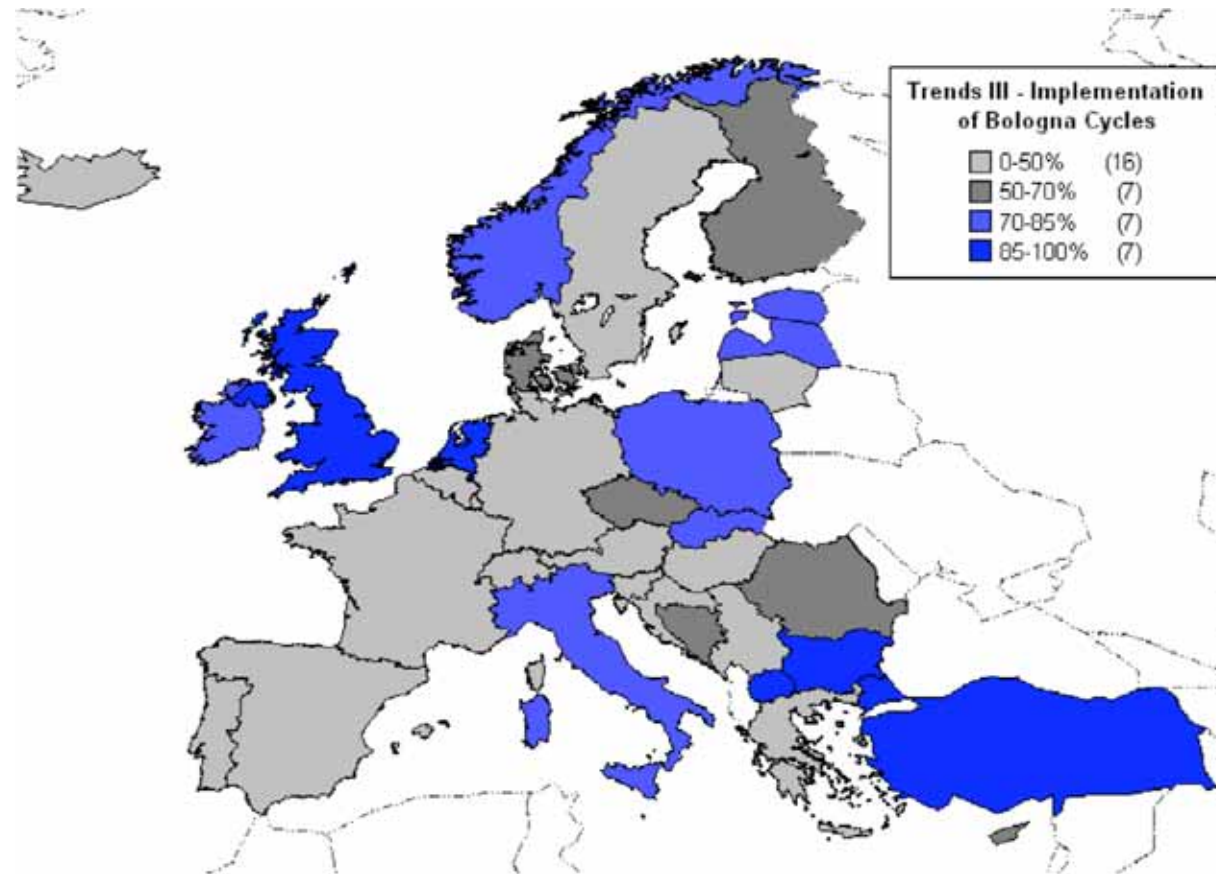
# Bologna

## The evolution

- ❑ Integral part of the Lisbon strategy
- ❑ Inclusion of doctoral education as third cycle
- ❑ European Qualifications Framework
- ❑ From 29 to 45 signature countries
- ❑ From structure to content
  - ❑ Student-centred learning
  - ❑ Problem-based learning
- ❑ And outcomes: employability



# Mixed expectations - great performance



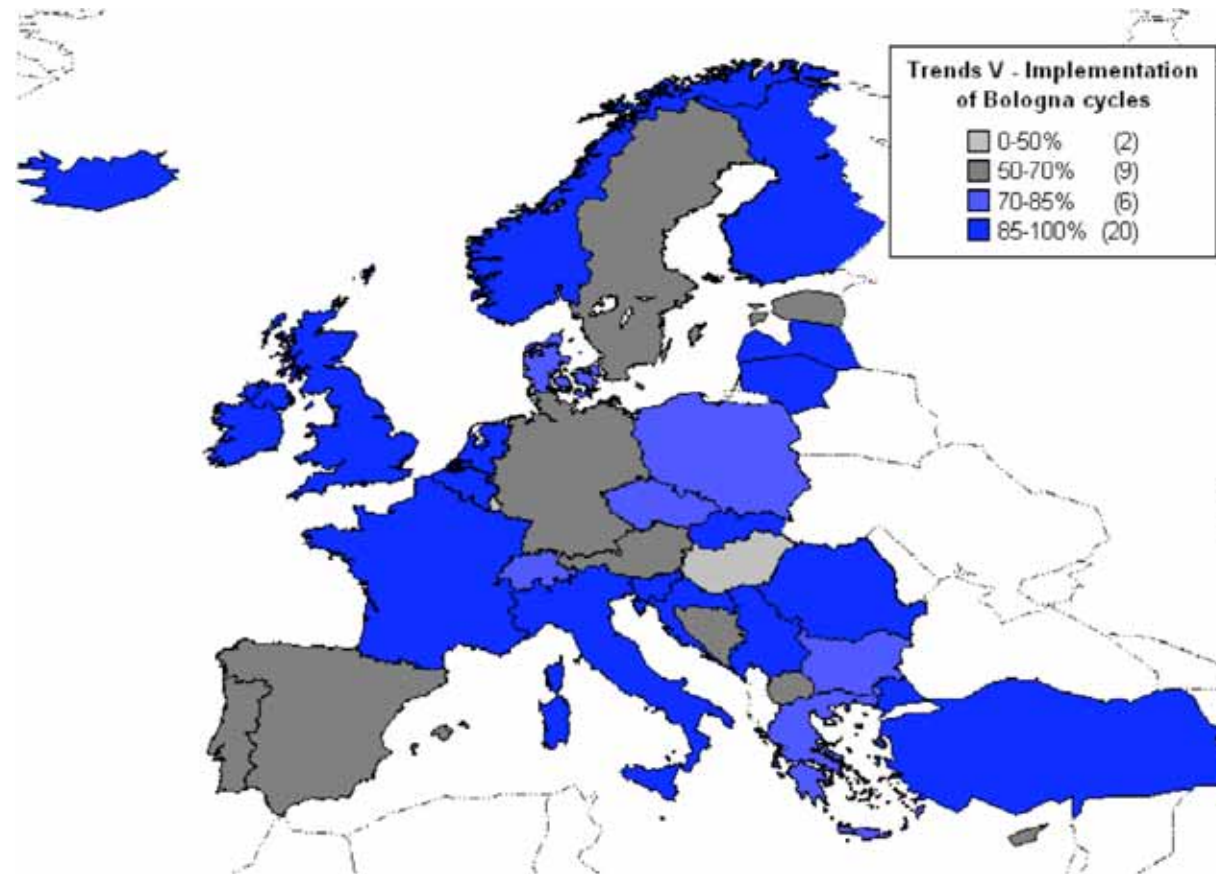
Source: EUA, Trends V, 2007



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# Mixed expectations - great performance

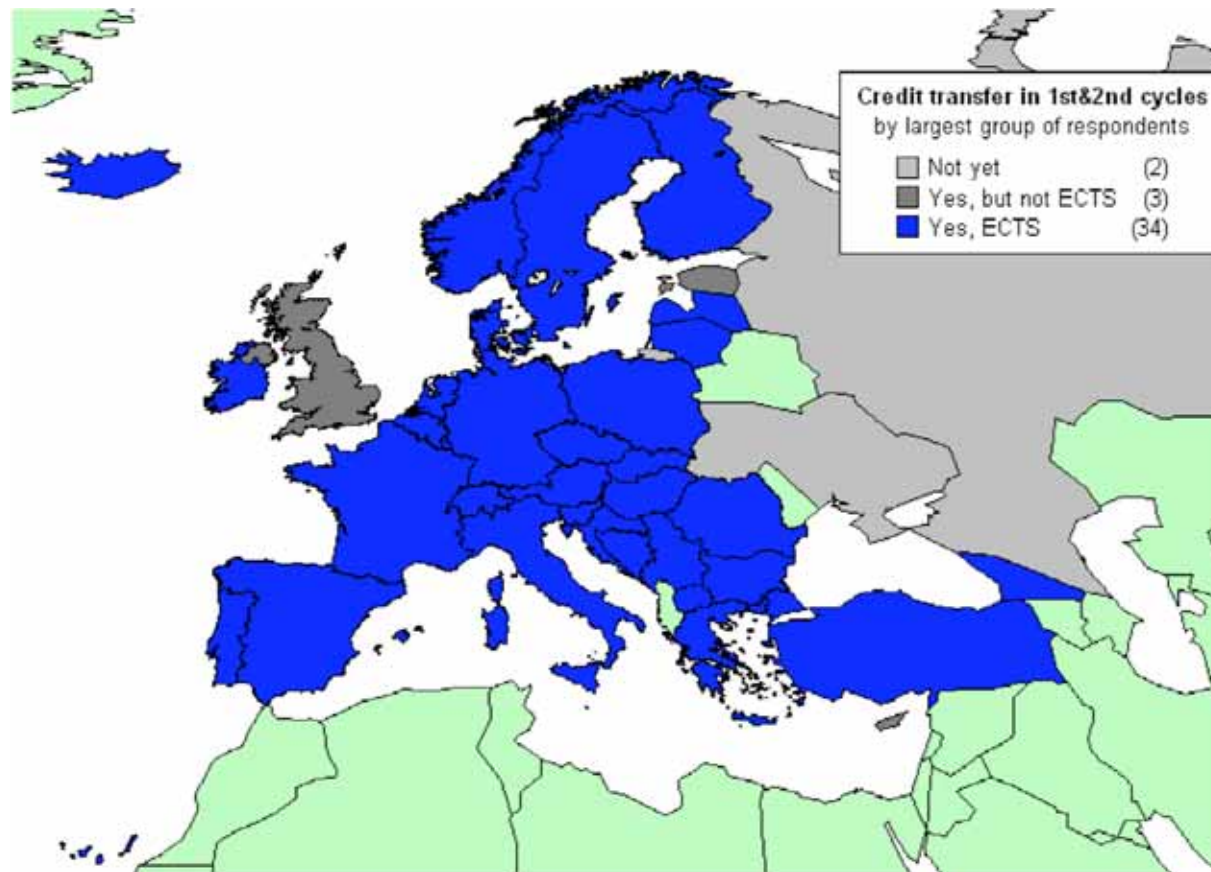


Source: EUA, Trends V, 2007



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# Adoption of ECTS Credit transfer

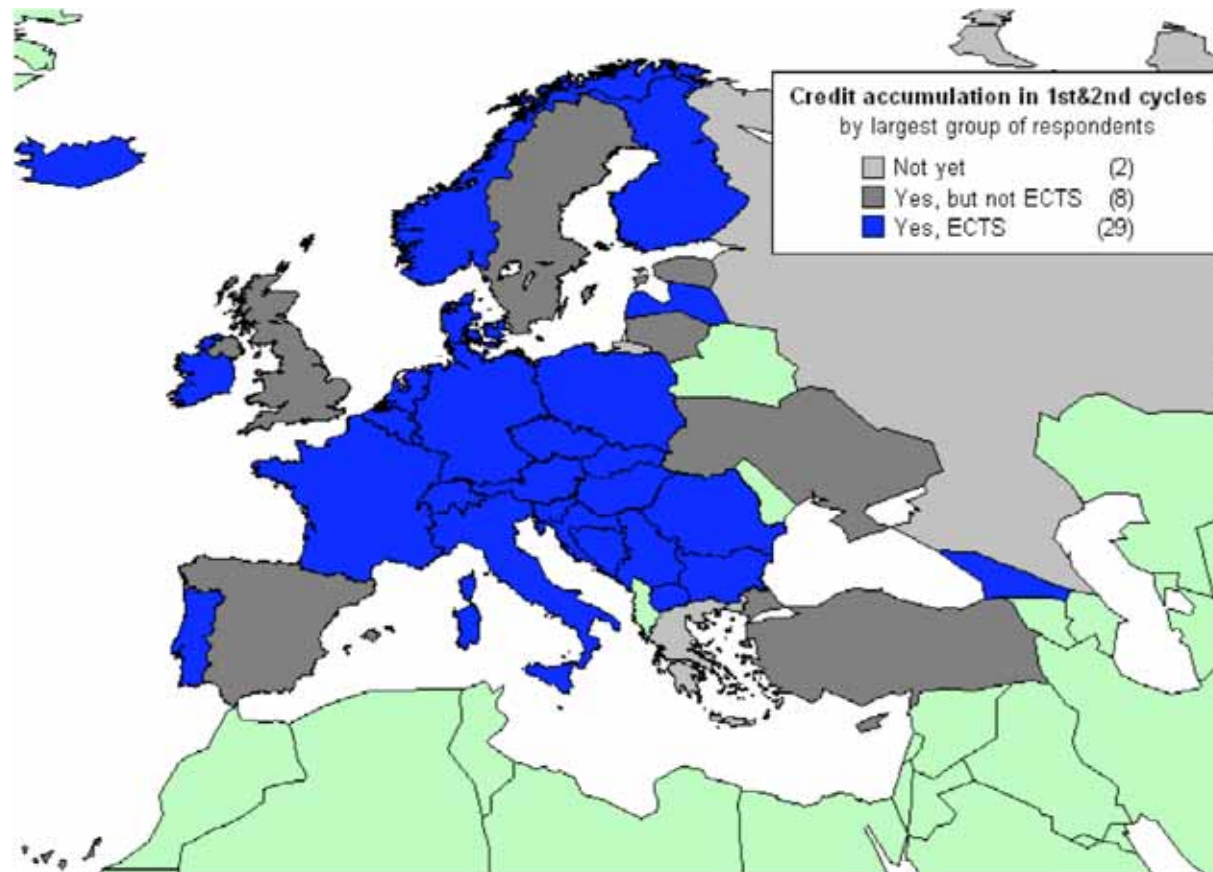


Source: EUA, Trends V, 2007



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# Adoption of ECTS Credit accumulation



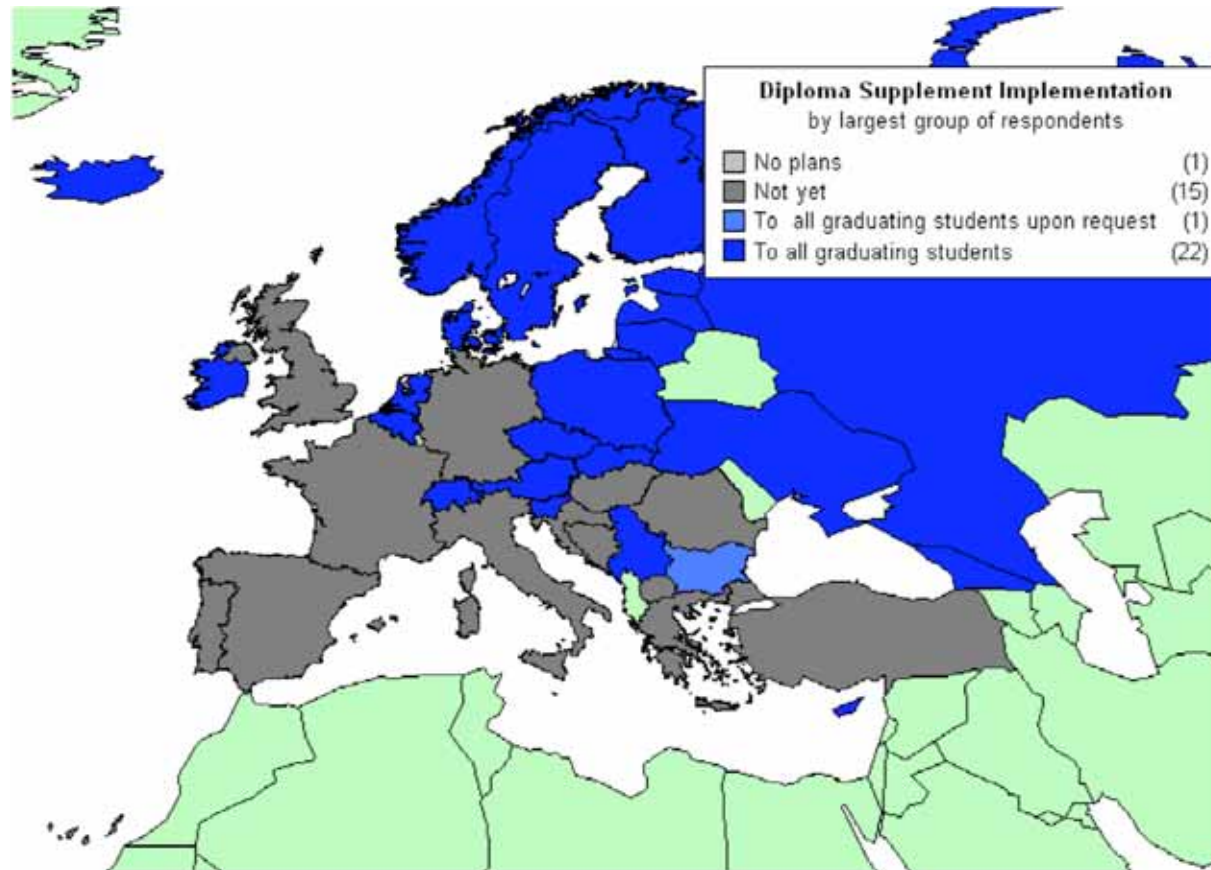
Source: EUA, Trends V, 2007



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# Diploma Supplement Implementation

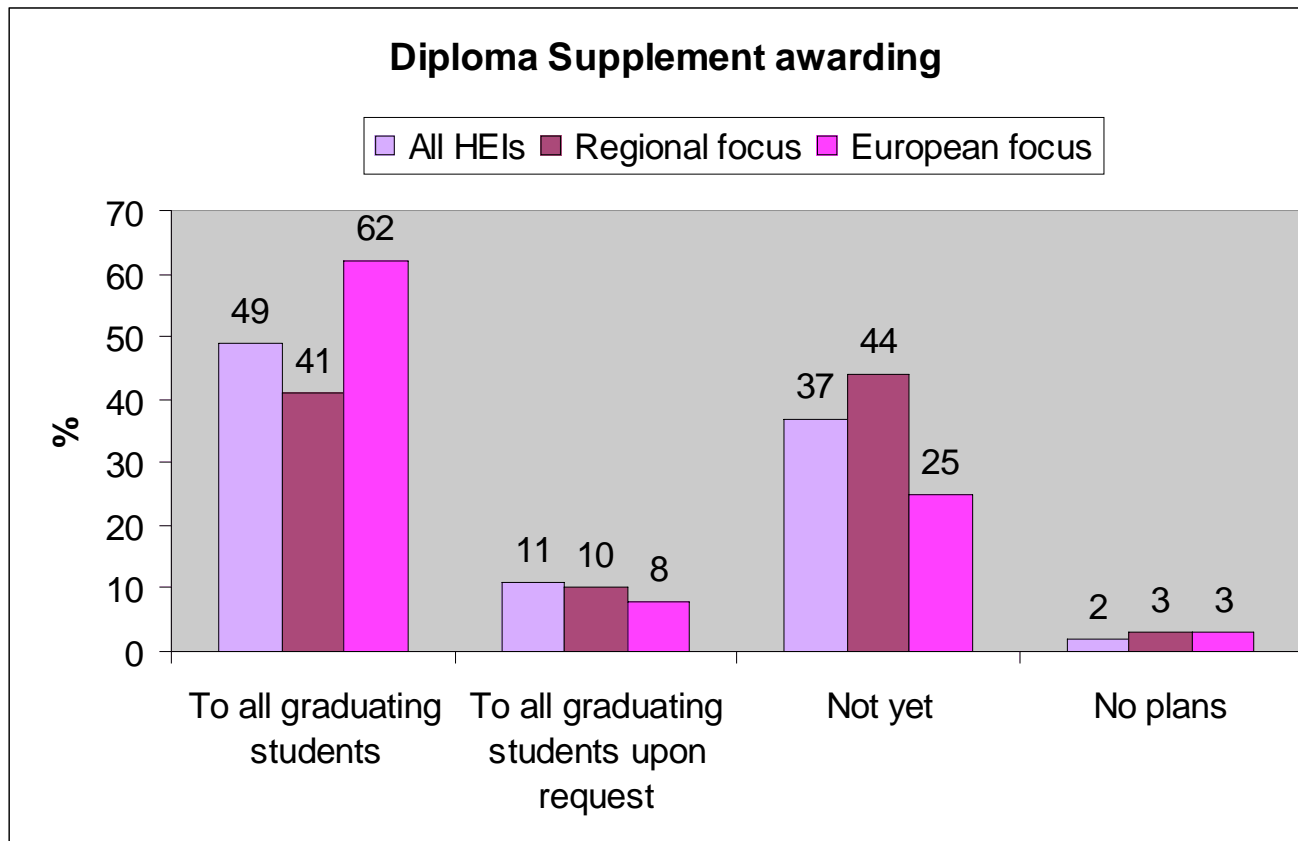


Source: EUA, Trends V, 2007



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# Diploma Supplement Awarding



Source: EUA, Trends V, 2007

# Bologna and the DS

## A commentary

- ❑ Impressive reforms; voluntary
- ❑ Wide adoption, but not uniform
  - ❑ Bachelor ≠ bachelor, master ≠ master
  - ❑ Learning outcomes not always central in the use of the Bologna instruments ECTS and DS
  - ❑ Limited use of DS by employers - better communication and links with labour market crucial







# DS and Diversity

- ❑ European HE still characterised by great diversity
  - ❑ Bologna has had a harmonizing effect, not a homogenizing effect
- ❑ Within this diverse context, DS becomes even more relevant
  - ❑ Evidenced by the variety in which the common format is used by different countries
  - ❑ Strong potential to link it with student portfolios (Europass system)



# Practical Experiences of DS Implementation

- ❑ E-mail questionnaire sent to key DS-relevant people in 46 countries
- ❑ Replies from 10 – a 22% response rate
- ❑ Replies from DS countries Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK
- ❑ Replies from non-DS countries Canada, New Zealand, USA





# How effective is the DS?

- ❑ No scientific studies on it yet
- ❑ Impression that employers generally not familiar with it yet – UK targeting employers in 2007 as key audience for DS and Europass
- ❑ Many say that students are very happy to receive them, especially for studies abroad



# Is it used mainly for internal or international purposes?

- ❑ Mostly it is used for international mobility purposes
- ❑ Where employers are familiar with the national system, it is not likely to be of obvious utility to them
- ❑ Where the national system has undergone several reforms (e.g., Sweden), then DS more useful for employers



# DS: practical tool, or symbol of European project

- ❑ Very much practical tool for international student mobility
- ❑ Suggestion that DS particularly important for small countries with systems that are not widely known
- ❑ “We do not like plain symbols” (Czech Republic)



# What issues arose in getting to an agreed model?

- ❑ Amount of work involved
- ❑ Financing starting projects
- ❑ Integrating DS into electronic student registration system simple in some (Norway, Sweden) harder in others (UK)
- ❑ Existence of earlier similar initiatives in UK (HE Transcript) causing difficulties, electronic systems already set up for these earlier initiatives – costly to convert. Harder to see benefits.





# Difficulties in agreeing description of HE system?

- ❑ No real difficulties reported



# New system description or use existing one?

- ❑ Mostly new description
- ❑ Norway refined an already existing one to produce 4:
  - ❑ old system only
  - ❑ old system with elements from new system
  - ❑ new system only
  - ❑ new system with elements from old system



# DS implementation driven by HEIs or by government?

- ❑ Government (A [plus “opinion makers” at some HEIs], SF [cooperating with HEIs])
- ❑ HEIs (CZ [seen as proof of QA], CH [but some saw it as superfluous])
- ❑ Both (S, N, UK)



# How long from initial idea of the DS to implementation?

- ❑ Three years (S, N)
- ❑ Two years (CZ)
- ❑ Three years to relevant laws, 1-2 years adaptation phase (A)
- ❑ Ongoing process (UK)





# An unexpected DS Effect

- ❑ “Introducing the DS ...makes [an] institution ... re-think th[e] whole structure of study programs and unifies the attitude of professors and other teaching staff” (Czech Republic)





# Ladok Computer System 1

<http://www.ladok.se/index.php?id=643>

- ❑ Sweden has centralised computer system called Ladok so DS easily produced:
  - ❑ LADOK is a computer based student admission and documentation system for a university or university college. It focuses on administration of undergraduate and graduate students. The system is locally deployed and managed by the institutions.



# Ladok Computer System 2

- The LADOK system has a mutual core, identical for all LADOK system installations in Sweden. The core consists of a structure of database tables and computer programs. Every institution decides what parts of the core to be used at the institution and it is also possible to use locally developed addendums. The LADOK-system can therefore be viewed upon as a large "smorgasbord" where the institution can choose which parts to use.







# Ladok Computer System 3

- ❑ The LADOK system is owned by a consortium of 37 institutions in higher education in Sweden. Software maintenance for the LADOK system core is conducted by a maintenance group at the university of Umeå. Local system usage is the responsibility of the institution, who pays for servers, networking, terminal equipment and local support.

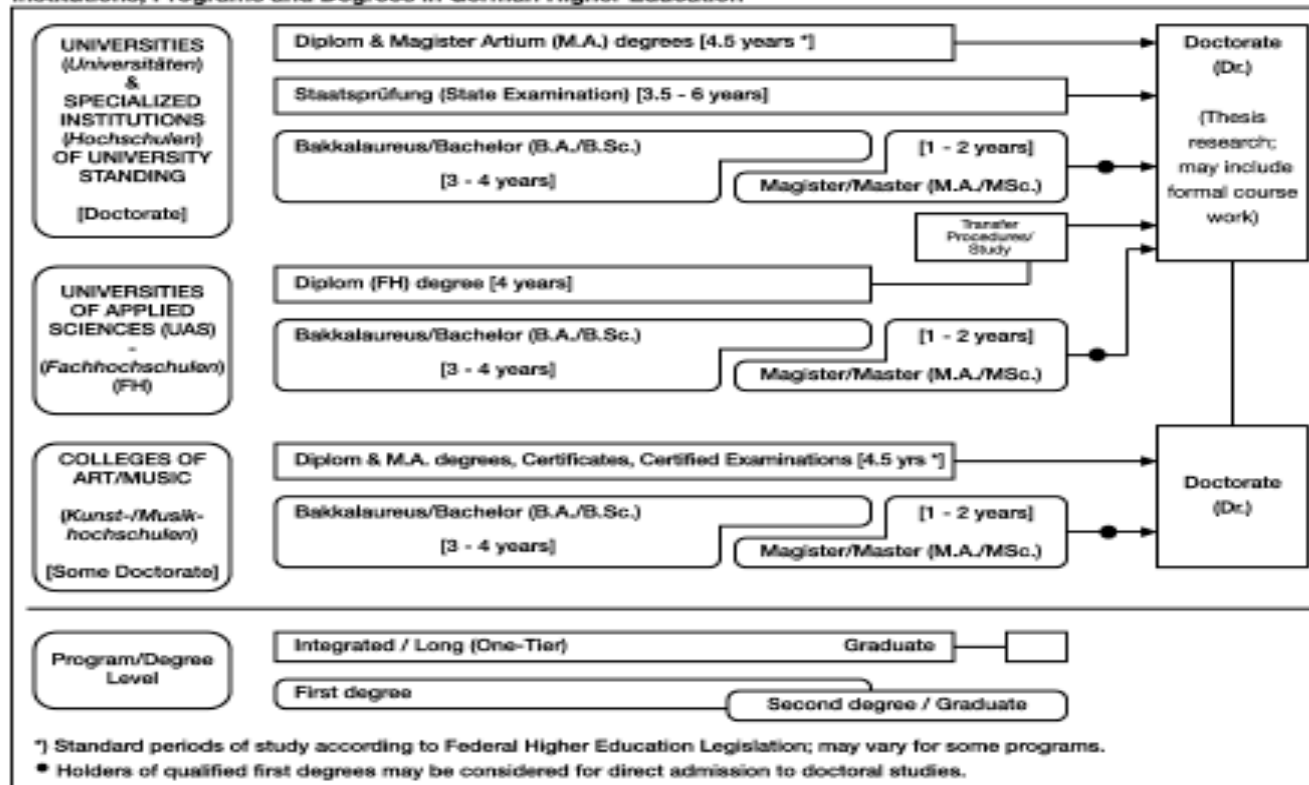


# Example of System Diagram

## Diagram 1



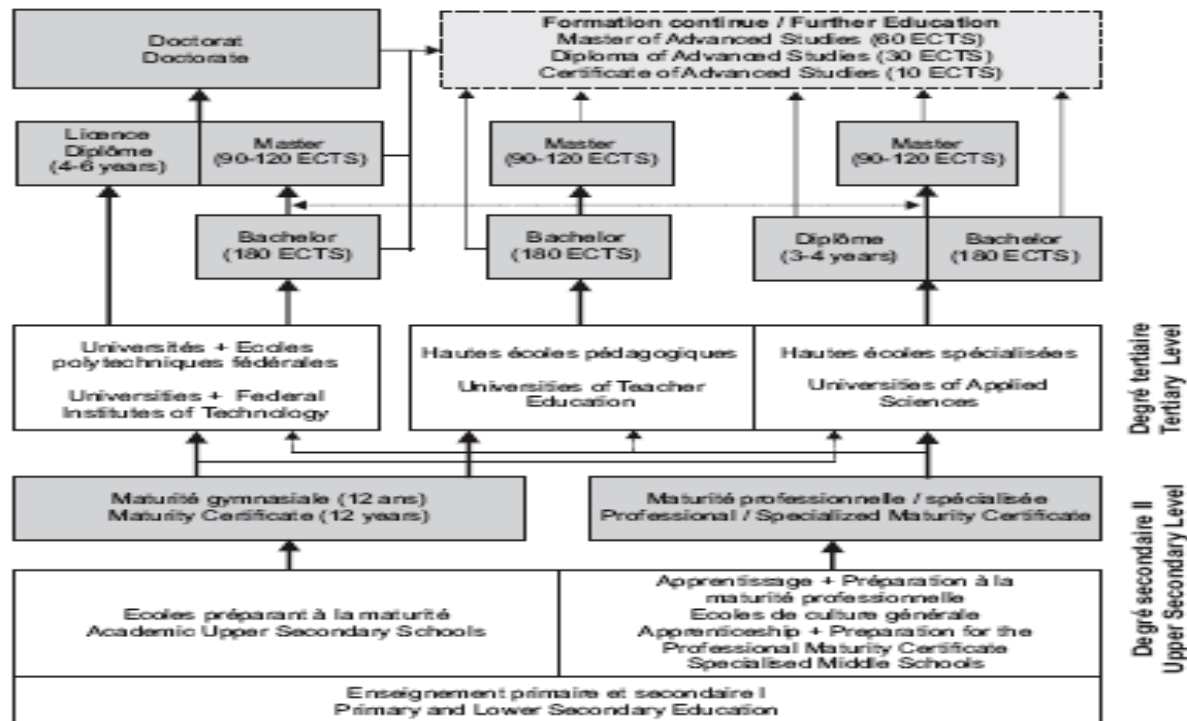
Institutions, Programs and Degrees in German Higher Education



# Example of System Diagram 2



Le système d'enseignement supérieur suisse / The Swiss Higher Education System



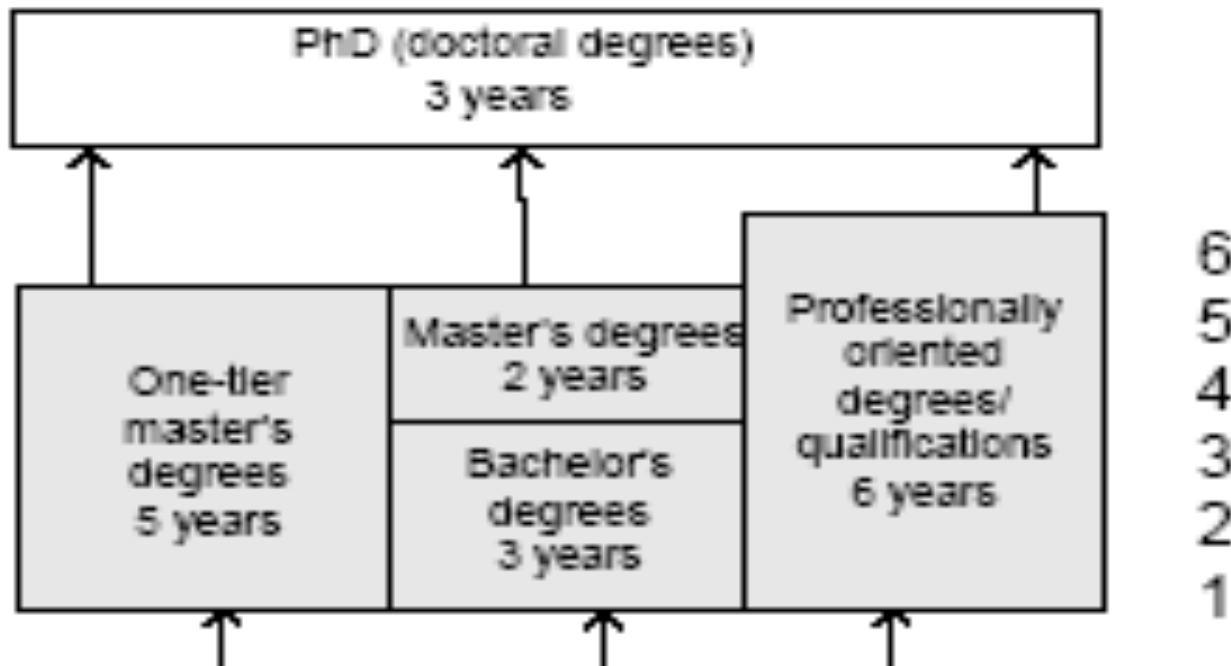
— Conditions supplémentaires requises  
Additional achievement required



# Example of System Diagram 3



The Structure of the Norwegian Educational System and Degrees





# Canada 1

- ❑ Provincially-mandated credential evaluation services inform us that they appreciate it when European students present their Diploma supplement. It is a very useful tool that allows the assessor to better evaluate the credentials and better understand the educational system or framework of the country where the studies were done.





## Canada 2

- We were told recently that the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) were discussing within a committee the Bologna process and the resulting degree structures in the countries of Europe. They may also be looking at Diploma Supplements







# New Zealand

- ❑ The lead in this matter in NZ has been taken by the Ministry of Education, which ran a very successful Bologna Day in February
- ❑ Nobody in New Zealand actually has had experience of designing and using a Diploma Supplement. Frankly, we are watching with interest what Australia does. You are ahead of us and we hope we might learn from your experience with this project.





# USA 1

- ❑ We do not make use of [the DS] within the USA. We can do quite nicely with transcripts and other academic documents.
- ❑ However, the U.S. institutions that receive large numbers of international students are well aware of the Diploma Supplement, encounter them frequently (including non-Europeans educated in Europe), and on occasion will create and issue a DS-style document for U.S. students who request one to use in the EHEA.





## USA 2

- ❑ The number of DS's issued to Americans is quite small and confined to a few institutions, and even the number of DS's brought here by international students is small in comparison to our total number of international students (only an average 11 percent of our annual intake is from Europe).



# USA 3



- ❑ Were Australia to develop and implement a DS-style document, we would probably use it about the same way we use European versions.
- ❑ The primary reason we make so little use of this kind of document is that our admissions process differs so much from what happens in other countries.





# USA 4

- ❑ The USA does not rely on national examinations (school leaving or university entrance, or bursary); does not have national framework laws or policies defining degrees, periods of study, or curricula; and our institutions and credential evaluation services have ready access to information about the status of both U.S. and international programs and institutions.

