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Foreword

‘Level 5-The Missing Link’ is an intriguing title for this new publication of EURASHE for those not versed in the qualifications terminology. It rightly points to an existing lack in the National Qualifications Frameworks, at least in some countries in the European Higher Education Area (formerly ‘Bologna’). The implementation of the two- (later three) cycle structure also had to incorporate the level that is the link between secondary and higher education, and this for reasons explained below.

It is a great merit of the two researchers, Magda Kirsch and Yves Beernaert, co-authors of the report, that they have taken up the challenge of mapping a sector of (higher) education in a variety of countries, which often have just this in common, that they are among the 47 that signed the Bologna Declaration, but otherwise have such different education systems and structures that make comparisons of levels and programmes extremely difficult. This certainly for a level that in many countries led an existence of its own, outside the remit of higher education authorities.

The authors had done so before, when in 2003 they made the Europe-wide survey of “existing tertiary short cycle (TSC) education in Europe” also on behalf of EURASHE, and similarly commissioned by the European Commission. Unlike with the previous publication they are now surveying those training courses that qualify as an intermediate step within the first cycle of higher education only, thus wisely leaving aside those other short qualifications that could not claim to be part of higher education.

Within the constraints of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission the authors had to limit the scope of the survey to those countries eligible for funding, thus leaving aside other countries, such as the Russian Federation, Georgia, Ukraine, etc. that would then be the object of another study, in order to make the picture of the state-of-art of ‘Level Five’ in the EHEA complete.

As the authors themselves point out, there are various reasons of an economic, social and personal nature which have made it obvious that this fifth level could not be overlooked in the national qualifications frameworks, after it had rightly found its place in the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. Indeed the Bergen Ministerial meeting of Ministers (2005) had enabled countries to embed ISCED Level Five in the first cycle, thus effectively integrating it into the Bachelor-Master structure, on the basis of a compromise phrase in the Ministerial Communiqué, which stated “within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications”. Besides which the economic agenda of the European Union contributed to the growing success of the intermediate qualification, by building upon a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (“ET 2020”), in order to meet Europe’s ‘many socio-economic, demographic, environmental and technological challenges’ in the years ahead.

It also became more and more clear that for an individual learner, the intermediate qualification could be a help for social advancement, through a qualification that enables a first entry in the labour market, and in addition may lead to a further qualification.

I am therefore confident that this comprehensive report will reach a variety of audiences, including our colleagues from the Bologna Follow-up Group, and all those who are looking for arguments that demonstrate the valuable contribution of intermediate qualifications to lifelong learning.

Stefan Delplace

Secretary General EURASHE

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Magda Kirsch & Yves Beernaert

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Executive Summary

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the present comparative study was to make a detailed analysis of existing Short Cycle Higher Education as an intermediate level of the first level of higher education (or at level 5 of the EQF) in 32 of the Bologna signatory countries: the 27 member states of the European Union, the EFTA countries and Turkey. One of the specific objectives was to find out what changes had taken place in the short cycle higher education landscape since 2003 when the former EURASHE study on SCHE was made. Another objective was to see to what extent the development and implementation of SCHE is contributing to the implementation of the strategic framework Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) of the European Union and the objectives outlined in the Leuven Communiqué of 2010 after the meeting of the ministers of higher education. Overall, the comparative study attempts to highlight the major developments in SCHE over the past 7 years, focusing on similarities and differences across Europe.

Some of the key questions addressed are: have more countries developed SCHE? Is it always seen as an intermediate level within the first level of higher education? Is it always situated at level 5 of the EQF? What is the profile of the students and the lecturers in SCHE? What is the contribution of SCHE to lifelong learning? Is SCHE seen as a means of progression towards further degree studies? How are SCHE institutions cooperating with industry and other social partners? What about student and teacher mobility and internationalisation in SCHE? What about QA in SCHE? What about employability, multilingualism, active citizenship and social commitment in SCHE? The authors have tried to address these key questions in the present study.

SCHE is gaining ground in Europe

SCHE - level 5 studies are definitely gaining ground compared to the situation in 2003. At the moment 19 of the European countries (or regions) studied do have SCHE – level 5. A few of those countries have just started up SCHE - level 5 studies and others intend to do so in the near future. **1,694,080 students at least** are studying in SCHE-programmes. **Especially non-traditional and mature students are increasingly participating in SCHE.**

However, **although in most countries studies at level 5 are also SCHE, this is not always the case.** Indeed in some countries there are level 5 studies or training of a professional nature which are not considered to be SCHE as they are not an intermediate level within the first level of higher education. In yet other countries two parallel systems exist with on the one hand SCHE – level 5 studies (within HE) and on the other level 5 professional higher education which is not considered to be part of higher education. All together qualifications at level 5 remain quite blurred in some countries. We are thus even going in some countries towards a **new binary system at level 5** with on the one hand SCHE and on the other qualifications at level 5 that are mainly focusing the labour market.

SCHE has found its rightful place in higher education

SCHE can be considered to be the missing link between secondary and higher education. The fact that the Bologna process has led to the introduction of the Qualifications Framework for the EHEA (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications) has definitely enhanced the status of SCHE. **SCHE enables students to climb the ladder of higher education step by step.**

In the majority of countries surveyed students can use most of the credits earned in SCHE to progress to degree courses. In some countries students can even use all the credits earned to progress to a bachelor's award. The minimum students can transfer is 30 ECTS. Sometimes the number of credits depends on the articulation between programmes.

In all countries providing SCHE there is specific legislation either as part of HE legislation in general or as a separate legislation for SCHE level 5 studies.

SCHE is provided in a wide variety of settings

In most cases SCHE level 5 is organised by the State and provided by various public education providers but in some cases it is organised by private providers. In both cases it may sometimes be organised in cooperation with sectoral or professional organisations, with chambers of commerce, with individual companies, with trade unions etc.

SCHE level 5 is provided by various public education providers such as universities, university colleges, universities of applied sciences, regional technical institutes, further education or adult education organisations or even upper secondary schools. In all countries surveyed SCHE is subsidised by the State or other authorities. In some cases there may be some (indirect) funding by companies.

The fact that SCHE is provided in such a wide variety of settings enhances the opportunities of non-traditional learners to participate in higher education. However, it is also to be noted that although SCHE is offered in a wide variety of settings, HEI are very often the awarding or responsible organisation or body.

SCHE meets the demands of the labour market

The main objective of level 5 SCHE studies is professional specialization focusing on employment. It must be stressed that SCHE level 5 studies always clearly lead to a vocational HE qualification; this means that every student who has obtained a SCHE level 5-certificate or diploma has a qualification that enables him or her to apply for a job at that level on the labour market.

Although the bulk of the study programmes offered in SCHE are in the area of business studies, administration, building, catering and hospitality, engineering and mechanics, it is interesting to point out that new programmes are being developed in areas such as logistics, ecology, forestry, security,

entrepreneurship, wine sales, aquaculture, driving instructor, aircraft mechanics etc. This indicates that SCHE is a thriving sector which quickly responds to the needs and demands of industry.

It is therefore not surprising that in most countries the employability rate of students is good and therefore SCHE could contribute to reducing youth unemployment.

SCHE develops strong partnerships between public authorities, higher education institutions, students, employers and employees, trade unions, chambers of commerce

In all countries SCHE level 5 HE has a very strong focus on cooperation with industry and other economic and social partners. In some cases cooperation with companies is compulsory. The key argument to do so is the need to have more highly educated and trained technicians that are required by industry and who respond to the explicit needs of industry.

As SCHE studies try to respond swiftly to demands of industry and as SCHE studies are employment-oriented it is obvious that collaboration with industry and business in designing the programmes and curricula and in defining the learning outcomes is very strongly targeted. This collaboration with industry takes different forms: representatives of industry sit on management boards of institutions or in regional programme committees, they are involved in external QA panels or they sit on examination boards for final exams and last but not least industry offers placements or internships.

Many lecturers in SCHE also have strong links with industry as the majority of institutions have representatives of industry teaching at their institution.

SCHE enhances employability and the employment rate of the students

There is a genuine need for students with a SCHE diploma or certificate and most of them find a job fairly easily within a reasonable period after their studies. This study also reveals that students are employed at their level as highly skilled technicians in various kinds of jobs. The fact that SCHE focuses on immediate and concrete employment results in industry being closely involved in outlining the contents of level 5 SCHE studies. It also results in the fact that SCHE-courses put considerable emphasis on employability in various ways.

Employability is focused upon especially by stressing vocational competences, by taking industry needs into account while setting up programmes and drafting curricula, by regularly adapting curricula to the needs of industry, by using a modular approach, by placements or internships and by using innovative pedagogical methods (such as projects in cooperation with industry) etc.

Employability is definitely also enhanced by the fact that in most countries SCHE institutions have a mixture of lecturers with an academic and a professional profile. In some countries legislation states that a certain percentage of lecturers have to have a professional profile appropriate to the professions for which training is provided. This also means that the teachers with a professional profile very often combine education with work in a company, which means they are very well aware of the latest developments in the profession concerned.

Although it is generally believed that multilingualism helps to enhance the employability of graduates the attention given to multilingualism in SCHE is minimal. Placements abroad and foreign guest lecturers are appreciated to promote multilingualism but a minority of SCHE institutions and ministries consider offering language courses to be useful. Multilingualism is definitely not an issue in English-speaking countries.

SCHE makes lifelong learning a reality

It should be stressed that the development and the implementation of SCHE contributed greatly to the implementation of this key objective. As has been demonstrated in the study, many of the students in SCHE are **non-traditional and mature students who return to education at a later stage in life**, thus enabling them to make lifelong learning a reality. An important number of these mature students combine work with education and training.

Although entry requirements in most countries are similar to those for other levels of higher education (a secondary school certificate) access requirements for SCHE programmes usually also provide more flexibility either through recognition of prior learning or through testing of adult or mature students.

Provision of SCHE is also quite flexible through part-time learning, dual learning and blended learning systems including ODL, time-tables meeting the needs of the learners etc. This proves that most countries see SCHE- level 5 in a lifelong learning perspective focusing on flexible access and flexible learning pathways. Notwithstanding the fact that many countries offer flexible learning pathways the majority of the students are still full-time students. However in a few countries the majority or a considerable percentage of students are part-time students. Those who study part-time are in most cases adult or mature students who may already be working. In those cases they combine work and learning.

SCHE is not only seen as an opportunity to widen access to higher education but also to stimulate their progress towards a bachelor's degree at a later stage. Legislative frameworks are provided in most countries to enable this. The credits students get recognized when pursuing their studies differ according to the country.

SCHE promotes equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

Europe needs more highly educated and trained people and SCHE can make a major contribution to this. It should be highlighted very strongly that SCHE is a unique opportunity to attract more students (and especially students of a socially disadvantaged background) and widen access to higher education. Although there are more women participating in SCHE, men seem to participate more in SCHE programmes than they do in other higher education programmes. Thus SCHE could contribute to **reducing growing gender inequity in higher education**.

SCHE is definitely contributing to **widening participation in higher education** and to enhancing social cohesion and equity as more disadvantaged students and more mature students are involved in

SCHE. Although hardly any data are available the majority of ministries and institutions think that compared to other levels of education there are **more disadvantaged students in SCHE**. The majority of respondent institutions providing SCHE even think that disadvantaged students are over-represented in SCHE. The lack of data as to underprivileged students shows that efforts still have to be made to improve and enhance data collection in certain areas. Finally the lack of information as to concrete diversity policies implemented within HEI in many countries also needs to be addressed.

Active citizenship and social commitment is promoted by several institutions in various ways: by engaging students in local social projects, by teaching corporate social responsibility, by implementing a sustainable development policy or by collaborating with NGOs. However, only a small number of institutions have a diversity charter promoting the involvement of disadvantaged students.

SCHE enhances creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship

SCHE-institutions are open to new technologies and innovation. As shown in the list of recently introduced programmes it is clear many programmes are state-of the art and responding to new trends (e.g. green jobs) and new technologies. Moreover several institutions provide programmes that enhance entrepreneurship and many of them teach entrepreneurship as a subject.

Without any doubt, the fact that many lecturers are entrepreneurs themselves and that creative pedagogical methods are used (e.g. projects in companies) enhances creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship among the students.

SCHE contributes to the implementation of the EQF and the NQFs

The introduction of the QF-EHEA and the EQF have led to countries restructuring their higher education structure and in some countries this has led to the introduction of SCHE and in others to upgrading vocational programmes in higher education to bachelor programmes.

Most, if not all, of the countries concerned, are reflecting on level 5 of the EQF while implementing their NQF. In some cases they are wondering how to fill in level 5 of the EQF in their NQF.

Virtually all countries have developed or are developing their NQF but the referencing in most cases has not yet been finalized. This results in some countries still not having decided where to position certain professional higher education / training courses. In some cases it is still undecided whether to put these studies at level 5 or level 6 of the EQF. In other cases it is not yet clear whether some post-secondary vocational programmes should be considered as level 4 or level 5 SCHE programmes.

SCHE makes mobility and internationalisation a limited reality

It is quite remarkable that the majority of the countries that have SCHE still express the workload in years. Typically the programmes cover two-year full-time study. Only a few countries

express the workload in ECTS credits ranging from 90 to 150 ECTS credits. Exceptions as to the length and the workload of programmes concern mainly nursing programmes.

In the majority of countries having SCHE the curriculum is a mixture of theory, practice (within the HEI) and a work placement.

The Diploma Supplement is only generally used in 13 of the 20 countries that have SCHE. This is the case because they are legally obliged to do so. In a few cases they are invited to use it. The majority believe that the Diploma Supplement facilitates transition to degree studies or access to the labour market or internationalisation.

The majority of SCHE institutions stress that SCHE lecturers participate in various mobility programmes such as Erasmus, Leonardo, Comenius, Grundtvig or regional programmes (e.g. Nordplus for Scandinavian countries). SCHE students participate mainly in the Erasmus and Leonardo mobility but have difficulties to do so, mainly as the SCHE studies are short which makes it difficult to integrate mobility periods into the programmes.

Mobility tools such as the learning agreement and the transcript of records under Erasmus and the training agreement under Leonardo are used by an important number of SCHE institutions but more information is still needed to have them more widely used. Europass mobility documents are only used by a small group as most SCHE lecturers and students are involved in Erasmus mobility.

SCHE institutions are mainly involved in Erasmus and Leonardo projects. Some are involved in Comenius and some adult education or further education institutions organising SCHE are involved in Grundtvig projects. An important group of SCHE institutions is still involved in no cooperation at all. This is very often due to the fact that they are small and have little time and HR to invest in internationalisation. The staff also lacks language skills and sometimes motivation to get involved. SCHE students from a disadvantaged background have no or little financial means to get involved. Working students can also not participate in long-term mobility.

SCHE contributes to improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

Half of the respondent SCHE institutions carry out internal quality assurance (self-) evaluations and mostly because they are obliged to do so. Furthermore in all countries (except one) there is always some kind of external quality assurance. However in several countries it is still the case that the external quality assurance agencies are yet to be the independent agencies as defined by ENQA.

Most of the countries have accreditation but in three of those the accreditation is ex ante which means the SCHE programmes have to be accredited before being introduced. Also here accreditation is not always carried out by independent agencies.

Although already a lot of efforts are being made this is an area where there is still room for improvement especially as far as internal quality assurance and independent bodies for external quality assurance and accreditation are concerned.

SCHE is contributing to **efficiency in higher education** as it may help **reduce drop-out rates** of students at other levels of higher education as in most countries there is articulation between secondary VET-courses and SCHE.

The awards granted still vary greatly across Europe

The titles, degrees, certificates or diplomas awarded are quite different in nature and in terminology. The great variety of terms used fails to enhance the transparency and readability or user friendliness of the awards granted.

SCHE contributes to reaching the objectives of the 2020 ET strategy and of the Leuven Communiqué

For all the reasons given above it can be stated that SCHE contributes to reaching most of the **objectives of the 2020 ET strategy and of the Leuven Communiqué ‘Learning for the future: higher education priorities for the decade to come’**.

The situation concerning SCHE is changing continuously

As a number of countries have not introduced their NQF some of them are still in doubt whether some of the post-secondary vocational courses and programmes organised in their country will be positioned at level 5 or at level 6 of the EQF. Others hesitate whether their level 5 training programmes will also be SCHE. Moreover, some countries that do not organise SCHE at the moment might do so in the near future. This means that the present report can only be seen as a state of affairs at the end of 2010 and that the situation might change considerably in the near future.

1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives of the study

The present EURASHE study, commissioned by the DGEAC¹ of the European Commission sets out to assess the impact on short cycle higher education of its inclusion on a voluntary basis into the EHEA-QF and also the impact on SCHE of the developments concerning the EQF for LLL and the NQF.

Contrary to the previous study the present comparative study concentrates on short cycle higher education at level 5 of the EQF for LLL and does not include developments at post-secondary level that are not considered to be higher education. The study also focuses on the link between the implementation of an NQF and the occurrence of SCHE. Moreover it also attaches more **importance to lifelong learning, the needs of the labour market, the collaboration of employers with institutions providing SCHE and to the employability** of the students. The study is also somewhat more limited than in 2003 when all the (then) Bologna signatory countries were involved. This time only the 27 member-states of the EU, the EFTA² members (Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein) and Turkey were surveyed. The decision to limit the study to those countries was a proposal of the Commission. In total 35 countries or regions were surveyed as Belgium has three different Communities that are responsible for education and as also for the UK England, Wales and Northern Ireland and on the other Scotland.

The study tries to find out what the main developments concerning short cycle education at level 5 were in Europe. Which countries that did not provide SCHE in the past have adapted their legislation, have developed SCHE and consider SCHE as a part of their higher education system now? Which countries are planning to implement SCHE in the future and what other developments are taking place concerning short cycle higher education in Europe?

The study also sets out to assess whether and how SCHE can contribute in general to achieving the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020').

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship,

and the objectives of the Leuven Communiqué 'Learning for the future: higher education priorities for the decade to come' in particular viz:

- Striving for excellence in all aspects of higher education,
- Social dimension: equitable access and completion,
- Lifelong learning and in view of lifelong learning developing strong partnerships between public authorities, higher education institutions, students, employers and employees

¹ Directorate General Education and Culture

² European Free Trade Association

- The development of national qualifications frameworks
- Employability of students
- Mobility of students, early stage researchers and staff with an improved participation rate from diverse student groups.
- Attractive working conditions to attract highly qualified teachers to higher education institutions,
- Improved and enhanced data collection
- Multi-dimensional transparency tools
- New and diversified funding sources and methods

1.2. Structure of the report

Two versions of the report are available: one summative and one full report with country chapters. The latter consists of two parts. The first part is a comparative study and the second part provides detailed country chapters. The former is limited to the comparative part of the report. In this version of the report only the comparative study can be found.

In the first chapter of the study the objectives and the scope of the study are set out. The second chapter drafts the context of the study with the background, the socio-economic context and the place of SCHE in different meta-frameworks. In chapter three the methodology used to collect the data is described as well as the problems met by the researchers.

The cornerstone of the study is the fourth chapter where the cross-country results are given, starting with an overview of the presence or the introduction of SCHE in the countries surveyed, the presence of an NQF and the link between them. Some attention is also given to the occurrence of level 5 in countries without SCHE. This chapter of the study then dwells on the organisation of SCHE with legislation, the main objectives of SCHE, the collaboration with employers when designing curricula and defining learning outcomes. Furthermore an analysis is made of where SCHE is provided and how it is funded, the entry requirements and the qualifications received, the duration of SCHE or the ECTS earned, the curriculum and the fields of study or programmes offered in SCHE and the flexibility of the provision. The study continues by looking at the two progression routes for SCHE-graduates. On the one hand it assesses the employability of SCHE graduates and how this is enhanced and, on the other, at the possibilities to transfer to bachelor degree studies. Attention is also given to the profile of students and lecturers with a special focus on the social dimension of SCHE. The next part dwells on aspects of transparency that contribute to the mobility of SCHE- students and graduates. Quality assurance and accreditation as well as the use of ECTS and diploma supplement are focused upon. This part ends with the international collaboration of institutions providing SCHE and mobility of students and teachers in SCHE. Lastly attention is given to collaboration with industry as well as its involvement in the local community.

In chapter five some examples of good practice are given to illustrate how SCHE can contribute to widening participation in higher education and to enhancing lifelong learning. An example of good practice is also given on how institutions providing SCHE can be supported to enhance quality assurance as well as the quality of SCHE-courses.

In chapter six the conclusions are drawn and recommendations made to the EU-Commission, the member states and the SCHE providers on how to enhance SCHE.

In the second part of the study that is available in the long version of the report, a description is given of the higher education structure in the countries surveyed. A focus is also put on the situation concerning the introduction of an NQF. For countries offering SCHE the organisation of SCHE is also described, as well as access to SCHE and progression to degree courses or the labour market. The profile of students and teachers, quality assurance and accreditation, internationalisation, employability and multilingualism of graduates and collaboration with industry and the local community are also briefly described. In the country chapters some attention is also given to post-secondary education when there is no SCHE but a thriving post-secondary vocational or professional sector and especially when countries have expressed their intention to introduce SCHE in the future. The full study (including the country chapters) can be downloaded from the EURASHE website.

2. Context of the present study

2.1. Background of the report

In 2003 the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), representing professional higher education in Europe carried out a Europe-wide survey of existing tertiary short-cycle (TSC) education in Europe (Kirsch, Beernaert, & Nørgaard, 2003),³ commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture in preparation for the 2003 Berlin Bologna Conference. Prior to the 2003 Berlin Conference of the European Ministers responsible for Higher Education, short-cycle programmes and qualifications were not considered to be within the framework of the Bologna Process. According to the study, TSC education in the European Union member states, the countries of the European Economic Area, Croatia and Turkey represented, together with postsecondary education (i.e., ISCED level 4 programmes standing between upper-secondary and tertiary programmes), more than 2.5 million students.

The study demonstrated that tertiary short-cycle programmes and qualifications were an integral part of the European higher education landscape involving a considerable portion of students. As such, tertiary short-cycle or sub-degree education in Europe could no longer be excluded from the Bologna Process. It contributed to the European Area of Lifelong Learning by expanding the range of higher education courses from which students could choose, and it enhanced lifelong learning through flexible learning.

Following the Berlin Bologna Conference and as a result of the study on TSC, Ministers invited the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) 'to explore whether and how shorter higher education may be linked to the first cycle of a qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area' (Bologna Process: Berlin, 2003). The Ministers also asked the BFUG to elaborate an overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area that would encompass the wide range of flexible learning paths, opportunities and techniques, and would make appropriate use of the ECTS credits. At the same time they encouraged Member States to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, describing qualifications in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile and they stressed the important contribution of higher education (HE) in making lifelong learning (LLL) a reality. In January 2005 EURASHE organised a seminar in Amsterdam on the topic of SCHE which resulted in a memo introduced with the BFUG.

The Qualifications Framework for the EHEA was adopted by the higher education ministers at the 2005 Bergen Conference (Bologna Process: Bergen, 2005). The framework comprises three cycles **(including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications)**, generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles. The short cycle within the first cycle refers to qualifications typically including or represented by approximately 120 ECTS credits – within national contexts. (Bologna Process: Bergen, 2005). With this communiqué, short-cycle higher education seems to have found its rightful place within the EHEA. Nevertheless, the organisation and recognition of the short-cycle qualifications within

the first higher education cycle remains voluntary. The adoption of these intermediate qualifications is still just “a possibility” “within national contexts”⁶ (Bologna Process: Bergen, 2005, p. 2).

A second framework, the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF for LLL) was adopted by the European Parliament and Council in April, 2008. Contrary to the QF-EHEA, the EQF for LLL is an overarching lifelong learning framework, incorporating all educational levels and qualifications. All countries are encouraged to relate their national qualifications systems or frameworks to the EQF for LLL by 2010 (on a voluntary basis) and to ensure that all new qualifications issued from 2012 onwards carry a reference to the appropriate level of the framework. Thus the EQF for LLL should be seen as a translation device between the national qualifications frameworks. It also shifts the focus away from the traditional approach, which emphasized learning inputs, such as the length of a learning experience or the type of institution, to the learning outcomes. It also encourages lifelong learning by promoting the validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning (European Commission, 2010).

Thus, qualifications frameworks that relate to higher education in Europe are found at two levels: one developed within the Bologna process and adopted for the EHEA in 2005, and one at the national level, expressed in national qualifications frameworks that are compatible both with this overarching QF-EHEA and with the EQF for LLL. Short-cycle higher education programmes are placed at level five of the EQF for LLL and as an intermediate level of the first cycle of the framework for the EHEA. Although the descriptor in the QF-EHEA for short-cycle higher education (within or linked to the first higher education cycle) is not identical to the descriptor for level 5 of the EQF for LLL, they correspond and are compatible with each other (Bologna Process: London, 2007).

Lastly, the Leuven Communiqué, “The European Higher Education Area in the new decade”, (Bologna Process: Leuven, 2009) stressed amongst other things that ‘access into higher education should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies.’ It also stressed the importance of lifelong learning and the employability of graduates.

2.2. Socio-economic context

In its Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘ET 2020’) the Council of the European Union emphasizes that ‘Education and training have a crucial role to play in meeting the many socio-economic, demographic, environmental and technological challenges facing Europe and its citizens today and in the years ahead.’ (2009/C 119/02).

According to the unemployment statistics of Eurostat, the youth unemployment rate (those aged under 25) was 19.8 % in the euro area and 20.2 % in the EU-27 in August 2010³. Although this rate fell in both the euro area and the EU-27 for the second consecutive month (Eurostat), this still presents an enormous challenge for the EU-27. Another group that is strongly affected by unemployment is the group of low-skilled workers where the employment rate stands at 50% compared to 85% for those with high skill levels and 75%, for medium skill levels according to the

³ http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics

report on 'New Skills for New Jobs: Action Now', a report by the Expert Group on New Skills for New Jobs prepared for the European Commission (European Commission, 2010).

The same report (European Commission, 2010) indicates that several countries are still faced with shortages and skill gaps in the labour market. It also points out that nearly one third of Europe's population aged 25-64 (around 77 million people) have no, or low, formal qualifications. According to the Cedefop forecasts (Cedefop, 2010) the labour force with low-level qualifications is projected to fall by around 15 million. On the other hand the share (%) of technicians and associate professionals in the labour market will continue to rise to nearly 20% by 2020 according to Cedefop and the need for service workers and shop and market sales workers to 15%.

In view of high youth unemployment and huge levels of unemployment of low-skilled or unskilled workers on the one hand and the labour market need for highly skilled professionals (inter alia technicians and higher technicians) on the other hand, short cycle higher education might play a crucial role in matching the needs of the labour market with an adequate supply of young well-trained professionals.

Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, stressed in one of her interventions that: 'Vocational training has a strategic role to play in helping our economies get out of the crisis and in putting us back onto a sustainable growth path' SCHE which often covers higher vocational or higher professional education definitely contributes to this⁴.

2.3. Many NQF's still under construction

The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning recommended to Member States that they should use the European Qualifications Framework as a reference tool to compare the qualification levels of the different qualifications systems. It also recommended that they should relate their national qualifications systems to the European Qualifications Framework by 2010, in particular by referencing, in a transparent manner, their qualification levels to the levels of the EQF set out in Annex II of the Recommendation, and, where appropriate, by developing national qualifications frameworks in accordance with national legislation and practice⁵. Many countries are at present working on the referencing of their NQF. Thus, the Netherlands invited an international committee led by Brian Maguire (as expert from HETAC) to look into the compatibility in 2008 – 2009. This committee concluded that the compatibility does indeed exist. However, only sixteen out of the 35 countries or regions surveyed had introduced their NQF at the end of 2010. Moreover, only three reports referencing national qualifications frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework were published on the website of the European Commission (Ireland, Malta, and the frameworks for the United Kingdom).

⁴ Education Policy Conference "Linked Learning: can options in Postsecondary VET make a difference?" Torino (Italy), Sala Europa 25 & 26-10-2010, ETF; see also:

http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/EmbedEvent_EN?OpenDocument&emb=/eventsmgmt.nsf/%28WebEventsR%29/43902EE8C9258EDCC12576F5004A19BF?OpenDocument&LAN=EN

⁵ Official Journal of the European Union, 6.5.2008, C 111/3

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF>

As a result some countries could not yet position their post-secondary professional education on the EQF for LLL. Some could not decide whether it would become a professional bachelor at level 6 or whether it would be positioned (as SCHE) at level 5. Others hesitated between level 5 and level 4. This means that in the near future several changes are still bound to take place as countries rethink their educational systems while working on their NQF.

2.4. Several meta-frameworks in use

Another problem the researchers encountered was **the confusion between ISCED, the EQF for LLL and the QF for EHEA**. It should, however be pointed out that the three meta-frameworks serve different purposes. Thus, ISCED⁶ is primarily an instrument suitable for assembling, compiling and presenting statistics of education with a distinction between levels and fields.

EQF	QF EHEA		ISCED	
8	Third cycle	Ph.D.	6	
7	Second cycle	Master		
6	First cycle	Bachelor	5A	
5 Higher education & vocational / professional qualifications	Short Cycle within the 1 st cycle	professional bachelor	5B	Most blurred zone of qualifications
		Various titles, degrees		
4	Some Higher Vocational qualifications organised by HEI		4 Post-secondary non-tertiary	
3			3	
2			2	
1			1	

Figure 1: Comparison between EQF– QF-EHEA- ISCED

As mentioned above, the main purpose of the QF-EHEA is to harmonise higher education systems in Europe by introducing common degree structures with an approximate number of ECTS credits to be earned , thus enhancing transparency, recognition and mobility. Lastly, the EQF is a reference tool to compare the qualification levels of the different qualifications systems and to promote both lifelong learning and equal opportunities in the knowledge-based society, as well as the further integration of the European labour market.

⁶ International Standard Classification for Education
http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/pdf/isced/ISCED_A.pdf

It was obvious that for a number of respondents this distinction was not clear (notwithstanding the clarifications given in the questionnaires). Thus, especially (but not exclusively) institutional respondents confused the ISCED 5B with level 5 of the EQF for LLL.

To add to the confusion, some vocational or professional bachelor programmes or bachelor programmes with a vocational /professional orientation are positioned at level 6 of the EQF for LLL and at ISCED 5B while the same ISCED level is also used for tertiary education at level 5 (or even 4) of the EQF.

Indeed, it is difficult to distinguish in ISCED between SCHE programmes at level 5 and vocational bachelor programmes at level 6. As far as educational levels are concerned ISCED 1997 defines level 5 as the “first stage of tertiary education (not leading directly to an advanced research qualification)”⁷ and when differentiating between ISCED Level 5 A and ISCED 5B the text continues “Qualifications in category 5B are typically shorter than those in 5A and focus on occupationally specific skills geared for entry into the labour market, although some theoretical foundations may be covered in the respective programme....it has a minimum of two years’ full-time equivalent duration but generally is of two or three years”⁸

As a number of countries cannot position their higher education programmes on the EQF and as they have not developed an NQF yet they will often turn to ISCED 97 to indicate the educational level of programmes. Because as well the EQF as the QF-EHEA provide more levels than ISCED it is obvious that this creates confusion. Moreover the distinction has to be made between on the one hand ISCED and QF EHEA and on the other EQF. The former are referring to educational levels whereas the latter refers to qualification levels that can be used in as well an educational as a labour market context. Lastly, it is also clear that many institutions offering SCHE are not familiar with the Dublin descriptors for the QF-EHEA and the descriptors for EQF.

2.5. Level 5 is not always SCHE

Although the descriptors for level 5 and the descriptor for the higher education short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle), developed by the Joint Quality Initiative as part of the Bologna Process, are not identical, they are regarded as being compatible with each other⁹. As the 2007 London Communiqué ‘Towards the European Higher Education Area: responding to challenges in a globalised world’ states: ‘We [the Ministers] are satisfied that national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA will also be compatible with the proposal from the European Commission on a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.’¹⁰

The EQF document thus asserts compatibility for the higher levels of the EQF with the QF-EHEA but although the learning outcomes of certain EQF levels correspond to the cycle descriptors of the QF-EHEA and clear cross-referencing was carried out at levels 5 to 8¹¹, not all countries that have

⁷ UNESCO (2006 –re-edition) ISCED 1997- International Standard Classification of Education, p. 19
http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/pdf/isced/ISCED_A.pdf

⁸ UNESCO (2006 –re-edition) ISCED 1997- International Standard Classification of Education, p. 35-36
http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/pdf/isced/ISCED_A.pdf

⁹ See annex 2 of the European Recommendation on the EQF : http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/rec08_en.pdf

¹⁰ http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/Bologna/documents/MDC/London_Communique18May2007.pdf

¹¹ European Commission (2008). *Explaining the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning*
http://62.77.61.20/asp/RAP/RAP_SendAllegato.asp?Id=18

developed higher vocational programmes at level 5 of the EQF consider these to be equivalent to SCHE.

It should not be forgotten that on the one hand the two frameworks have similarities: they are both meta-frameworks covering a wide scope of learning and trying to enhance transparency and they both focus on quality assurance and support lifelong learning and labour mobility.

On the other hand they also serve different purposes. The main objective of the QF-EHEA is to harmonise higher education systems in Europe by introducing common degree structures with an approximate number of ECTS credits to be earned, thus enhancing transparency, recognition and mobility whereas the EQF is an overarching framework that relates systems to each other and is mainly a translation device¹².

The descriptor for level five of the EQF is not identical to the descriptor for short cycle qualifications within the first cycle. Indeed the purpose of the EQF is different from that of the framework of the European Higher Education Area. According to the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning¹³ the EQF should be used “as a reference tool to compare the qualification levels of the **different qualifications systems** and to promote both lifelong learning and equal opportunities in the knowledge-based society, as well as the further integration of the European labour market, while respecting the rich diversity of national education systems¹⁴”. In annex 1 of the text the term ‘qualification’ is defined as ‘a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.’ This means that the qualification can be given by others than educational providers (e.g. sector bodies). The EQF is therefore **much more market-oriented** than the European Higher Education Area Framework.

The two qualifications frameworks (EQF and QF-EHEA) are also not explicitly linked as students or workers who progress from level 6 to level 7 do not automatically progress from Bachelor’s to Master’s degree. This does not entail any consequences for students in SCHE but it might entail consequences for workers who have been qualified at level 6 of the EQF by their sector body but do not have the formal qualification of a Bachelor. It is therefore worthwhile comparing the two descriptors.

In the comparative table below, the descriptor for the EQF level 5 is compared to the Dublin descriptor for the higher education short cycle (within the first cycle) of the qualifications framework for the European higher education area. As can be seen the former is more generic and broader as the EQF encompasses all forms of learning: not only learning in higher education institutions but also more vocational qualifications acquired through formal, informal and non-formal learning. There is therefore no reference to the number of ECTS credits to be earned. The Dublin descriptors put more focus on the learning and on the progression towards the next stage of learning.

¹² European Commission (2008). *Explaining the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning*
http://62.77.61.20/asp/RAP/RAP_SendAllegato.asp?Id=18

¹³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF>

¹⁴ Id.²

As mentioned in the report of the Irish Bologna Expert Conference on “National Qualifications Frameworks and the European Overarching Frameworks: Supporting Lifelong Learning in European Education and Training”, many stakeholders are confused about the (co-)existence of two meta-frameworks. The two meta-frameworks are in fact a reflection of the traditional divide between higher education and vocational/ professional education¹⁵.

Short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle) Qualification		Level 5 of the EQF
Learning outcomes	ECTS credits	Learning outcomes
Qualifications that signify completion of the higher education short cycle (within the first cycle) are awarded to students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon general secondary education and is typically at a level supported by advanced textbooks; such knowledge provides an underpinning for a field of work or vocation, personal development, and further studies to complete the first cycle; – can apply their knowledge and understanding in occupational contexts; – have the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems; – can communicate about their understanding, skills and activities, with peers, supervisors and clients; – have the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy. 	Approx. 120 ECTS credits	LO relevant to Level 5 within EQF include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge; - a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems; - exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; - review and develop performance of self and others¹⁶”

When presenting the EQF in 2007, Michel Feutrie, the then president of EUCEN¹⁷ mentioned that the first five levels of the EQF follow a vocational logic whereas levels 6, 7 and 8 are drafted according to the Bologna (higher education!) logic¹⁸. Also in the Dublin descriptor for short cycle higher education the logic of higher education was not followed, according to some countries because there is too much of a focus on employability. This is why amongst others Germany refused to adopt the short cycle within the first cycle because according to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder of the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK):

¹⁵ <http://www.nqai.ie/documents/QualificationsFrameworksConferenceFinalReport130910.pdf>

¹⁶ <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/BPStocktaking9May2005.pdf>,

¹⁷ EUCEN: the European Association for University Lifelong Learning

¹⁸ www.ef.uni-lj.si/projekti/eucen/gradivo/Presentation_Michel_Feutrie.ppt

“The essential difference between DDs¹⁹ and QR DH²⁰ lies in the level of the short cycle. A corresponding logic cannot presently be found in the German higher education system. Although there are - e.g. in the training of educators - approaches towards assigning technical college training to the short-cycle system. However, these training programmes only actually manage to clearly meet the objective of employability. A direct continuation of the studies for a Bachelor's degree – with full credit – is not foreseen, neither in systematic nor institutional terms²¹.”

As a result a number of countries such as Finland do not have short cycle higher education but the national committee which has prepared the proposal for the Finnish National Qualifications Framework has proposed to place some VET qualifications at NQF/EQF level 5 (see chapter for Finland). This means that the distinction has to be made between countries having SCHE at level 5 of the EQF and a number of countries where SCHE is not part of the higher education structure as understood in the QF-EHEA but where level 5 (EQF) vocational education is offered.

¹⁹ Dublin descriptors

²⁰ Qualifications Framework for German Higher Education

²¹ BMBF (2008). *Report on the compatibility of the "Qualifications Framework for German Higher Education Qualifications" with the "Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area"*(2008). p. 25

http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/documents/NQF_Germany_self-certification_English.pdf

3. Methodology

3.1. Questionnaires sent out by regional coordinators

The methodology used has been the one announced in the grant application. The corner stone of the comparative study were the online-questionnaires: one very short one (questionnaire A) was intended for all countries covered by the study and its main aim was to find out which countries are offering SCHE or intend to introduce it in the future.

Online questionnaire A	Filled out by all countries – ministries – associations-institutions
Online questionnaire B	Filled out by ministries – associations and institutions in countries providing SCHE
Online questionnaire C Institutional questionnaire Similar to but shorter than questionnaire B	Filled out by institutions providing SCHE

The second one (questionnaire B) was to be filled out only by countries having SCHE. The questionnaires were drafted by the researchers together with the steering committee of EURASHE consisting of the four regional coordinators, members of the Executive Board of EURASHE, the project manager of EURASHE and the external evaluator.

The questionnaires were sent out by four regional coordinators to the ministries of education. The questionnaires were also forwarded to the members of the Board of EURASHE and to a number of institutions or organisations such as ADIUT (Association des Directeurs des IUT in France), IOTI (Institutes of Technology Ireland), the Association of Slovene higher vocational colleges etc.

To facilitate the task of the respondents the English questionnaires were translated into French, thus giving the opportunity to a maximum number of people to read and fill in the questionnaires in their own language or a foreign language they know. Later, a shorter institutional version of the English questionnaire (questionnaire C), mainly intended for institutions was also posted on the EURASHE website. The English versions of the questionnaires have been added as an annex to the study.

As mentioned above the questionnaires were sent, on the one hand to national contact points (virtually always ministries) and, on the other to institutions or associations. Originally it was the aim of the researchers to receive information through the questionnaires from all the ministries concerned. In fact twenty-eight national contact points filled out the first questionnaire intended for all countries surveyed. Some other ministries reacted by mail. There was a particular problem in Southern Europe where because of miscommunication only a few ministries filled out the questionnaire. However, the researchers managed to contact all ministries concerned and collect the information either through mails, telephone interviews or face-to face interviews. In fact, information was received from all ministries of the countries surveyed.

The second questionnaire was filled out by twenty ministries. Three countries filled out this questionnaire although the situation concerning SCHE is unclear (LI, BG, CZ) and three ministries from countries where SCHE is provided did not fill out the questionnaire for administrative reasons (BEFR, LU, PT). In fact 17 ministries out of twenty from countries providing SCHE filled out the questionnaire and three others responded through interviews and mails. One country posed a particular problem (Sweden) because although they originally stated having SCHE, and filled out the questionnaire accordingly they revoked this at the very last moment and stated that they have two-year higher education programmes leading to a university diploma but considered as level 6 (EQF). They also mentioned that they do not make any distinction within the first cycle between university diploma, bachelor and professional degrees. This means that eventually only 19 countries stated that they have SCHE.

The researchers would have liked to have received five institutional responses from each of the countries concerned, with the exception of those countries that had only recently introduced SCHE (BEFR, BENL) and those that were too small to have a wide range of institutions (CY, IS, LU, MT). For Central and Eastern Europe and France this objective was reached. It could also be considered that responses from Latvia and Norway were sufficient. However, there was a problem in reaching institutions in the UK and in Southern Europe (ES, PT). The latter did fill out the questionnaire for administrative reasons and the former were rather reluctant to fill out the questionnaire. This means that central and eastern European countries are over-represented in the institutional sample whereas especially southern Europe and the UK are under-represented. However as well in the UK as in Portugal the questionnaire was filled out by organisations representing the institutions or information was received through them (Universities UK, Foundation Degree Forward, Guild UK, Portuguese Coordinating Council of Polytechnics). Thus, the view of the institutions was taken into account as well in the country chapters as in the comparative part of the study.

Ninety respondents filled out the first questionnaire (A), twenty-nine of them were representatives from ministries of education (two different ministries filled it out for Slovenia). After data cleansing eighty-three usable questionnaires remained of which fifty-four were from associations or institutions. The second questionnaire (B) intended for countries having SCHE was filled out by seventy-four respondents (including the institutional questionnaire), twenty of them representatives from ministries. These included a number of countries where the situation was unclear (BG, CZ, LI). The decision was taken to exclude the responses from Bulgaria and Liechtenstein from the data set used to draft the comparative chapters on SCHE in Europe as it became clear following a number of contacts by e-mail and telephone calls that Liechtenstein does not have SCHE but only further education programmes that have not been included in the qualifications framework for higher education. As far as Bulgaria is concerned the former SCHE-programmes now include 180 ECTS and are called professional bachelor programmes. At the very last moment the data from the Swedish ministry were also excluded from the data set used to draft the comparative chapter on the countries having SCHE.

Because several Czech institutions still consider that they provide SCHE and because also the ministry filled out the whole questionnaire all the Czech questionnaires were taken into account. After data cleansing forty-nine questionnaires from institutions remained.

The responses from ministries were used to define the presence of SCHE, all aspects of the legislation (including, where relevant cooperation with industry), the link to EQF and QF-EHEA, QA and accreditation, use of ECTS etc. The responses from associations and institutions were mainly used to define the profile of students and staff, to see in how far SCHE-providers and their students participate in mobility and other international programmes, what the employment rate is of graduates, how institutions collaborate with industry, what their social commitment is etc. The list of responses received per country can be found as an annex to the report.

3.2. Interviews

The researchers carried out a number of interviews, either with representatives from ministries, or with Bologna experts and SCHE-providers. This was necessary as the ministries from some countries failed to fill out the questionnaires or only reacted very late. These interviews helped us to understand the local situation in some of the countries surveyed, especially when questionnaires had not been filled out or when the situation was unclear. The results of these interviews were used to complete the data for the comparative chapters. The list of people interviewed can be found in an annex.

3.3. Desk top research

In order not to make the questionnaires unnecessarily long, desktop research was carried out to describe the higher education systems of the countries concerned as well as progress on the NQF. For the former, Eurybase²² was used and for the latter the 2010 CEDEFOP report on national qualification frameworks in Europe²³ and the report of the Irish Conference on Qualifications frameworks²⁴. Furthermore, based on information made available by ministries, legislation concerning SCHE was consulted. The list of reports and legislation used can be found in the bibliography.

3.4. Drafting of the country chapters

The country chapters were based on desk-top research (*inter alia* Eurybase, CEDEFOP reports, legislation of countries concerned) and on the results of the questionnaires. These were submitted for approval to the respective ministries or education departments. For the countries that did not fill out the questionnaire a report was drafted based on desktop research, legislation of the countries concerned and, where possible, interviews. The texts were then submitted for approval to the ministry representatives of the respective countries. When approved the texts were finalised. So far, thirty-three country-representatives reacted to the texts. Thirty-one countries have approved the draft texts, sometimes after some amendments. One country (Sweden) has rewritten the report because they considered the information they gave in the questionnaire to be erroneous. A few countries were also asked to draft an example of good practice. Three countries reacted positively (BE, IE and TR). The country chapters can all be found in the second part of the study.

²² http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php

²³ CEDEFOP (2010). *The development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe*

²⁴ HEA (2010). *National Qualifications Frameworks and the European Overarching Frameworks: Supporting Lifelong Learning in European Education and Training*

3.5. Drafting of the comparative chapter

The comparative chapter was drafted, based on desk-top research, the questionnaires, the interviews and the country chapters. The draft text was submitted for comments to a number of experts on SCHE amongst others the external evaluator, the regional coordinators, representatives from ETF and some ministry representatives.

3.6. Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the comparative chapter, conclusions are drawn on the present situation of SCHE in Europe and on how SCHE contributes to reaching the strategic objectives of the strategic framework of cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and to working on the action lines of the Bologna process in general and the objectives of the Leuven Communiqué ‘Learning for the future: higher education priorities for the decade to come’ in particular. Special attention is given to quality assurance in SCHE, widening access to higher education and the social dimension of SCHE, mobility of SCHE and last but not least to the employability of SCHE graduates and how collaboration with employers can contribute to this.

Finally a number of recommendations on how to enhance short cycle higher education and increase its transparency and impact are given to the EU Commission, to the member states to the higher education providers and to EURASHE.

3.7. Problems encountered

3.7.1. Confusion between ISCED, QF-EHEA and EQF

As already mentioned before, the fact that many countries have not introduced their NQF and the confusion between the different meta-frameworks caused a lot of problems for the researchers. Certain countries could not or did not want to position some programmes yet.

3.7.2. Terminological difficulties

The researchers also encountered terminological difficulties. Although a definition was given in the questionnaire the term **short cycle** higher education is still not always recognised as referring to the intermediate cycle within the first cycle of the QF-EHEA. In a very small number of countries the term still refers to the bachelor’s cycle as opposed to the (unified) master cycle. Other respondents, especially providers, use the term short cycle when a course has a short duration irrespective of the fact that its learning outcomes correspond to the Dublin descriptor for the short cycle within the first cycle of the QF-EHEA.

Furthermore, a number of countries make the distinction between vocational and professional education. Thus, e.g. in Switzerland but also in Lithuania the term vocational is used for secondary education whereas the term professional is used for post-secondary or higher education.

Moreover quite a number of countries still make the distinction between higher and tertiary education. The OECD, in a recent report,²⁵ refers to the distinction as being more or less obsolete.

“Over 40 years ago tertiary education, which was more commonly referred to as higher education, was what happened in universities. This largely covered teaching and learning requiring high level conceptual and intellectual skills in the humanities, sciences and social sciences, the preparation of students for entry to a limited number of professions such as medicine, engineering and law, and disinterested advanced research and scholarship. These days, tertiary education is much more diversified and encompasses new types of tertiary education institutions (TEIs) such as polytechnics, university colleges, or technological institutes²⁶.”

However, although the structural borderlines between “higher” and other “tertiary” education get blurred, the delineation between a cognitive more rigorous “higher education” and anything beyond secondary education did not cease to exist²⁷. According to Teichler (2004) the borderlines of a higher education system are blurred by two additional factors. On the one hand the fact that although higher education institutions specialized on teaching and possibly research are still the main providers of higher education, other institutions such as service companies and chambers of commerce, might also offer higher education programmes and on the other hand the fact that research is also undertaken outside higher education institutions. The latter factor is not relevant for this study.

Also the terms used to indicate SCHE vary across the countries surveyed from Foundation degree to Associate degree, Higher (National) Diploma, University Diploma etc. Therefore the term SCHE will be used throughout the study. Thus the term “SCHE” will indicate programmes which are situated by the ministries of Education or Higher education at Level 5 of the EQF and are also seen as an intermediate level within or linked to the first cycle of the QF-EHEA and which are organised by universities, colleges of higher education, so-called polytechnics, further education colleges or adult education colleges or even upper secondary schools.

3.7.3. Difficulties in collecting information

The system of regional coordinators turned out not to be as efficient as hoped for. Moreover, many ministries were slow to react. This was possibly due to the fact that it was sometimes difficult to identify the person who was in charge of SCHE. . Sometimes the country-representatives contradicted each other, disagreed about certain issues or even revoked what their colleagues had stated.

In certain countries or regions particular logistical difficulties were encountered resulting in failure to complete the questionnaire. These reasons included, but were not restricted to, institutional ambivalence to questionnaires, work pressures and problems with the online questionnaire. These problems were partially overcome by the reissuing of the questionnaire and extensive follow up contacts. However, any follow up surveys in the future must consider the efficacy of overreliance on questionnaires as this form of data collection appears to be increasingly receiving negative reactions.

²⁵ OECD (2008). *Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society. OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education: Synthesis Report.*

²⁶ Id.

²⁷ Teichler, U. (2004). *Changing Structures of the Higher Education Systems: The Increasing Complexity of Underlying Forces.* Kassel: Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work

3.7.4. Lack of consistent data

There is still an important lack of consistent data concerning the participation and graduation rates in higher education. Some countries like Belgium Flanders calculate the participation rate in higher education at the level of all 18-year olds, others at the level of 18-21 or 18-25 year-olds. The same problem was encountered when reference is made to mature students. Several countries define mature or adult students in a different way. It is also difficult to collect data on SCHE-students through OECD reports. Most OECD publications only take into account ISCED 5A and 6 students when referring to participation rates in higher education. Also in the figures of Eurostudent only 5A students are taken into account. To add to the confusion the same studies, e.g. professional bachelor studies are sometimes recorded as ISCED 5A and in other cases as ISCED 5B. Moreover SCHE studies are also usually referred to as ISCED 5B.

3.8. Considerations for further studies

There are many aspects of the study that are worthwhile further expanding upon but that did not fit within the scope of the present study. If given this opportunity the researchers would definitely collect the information themselves and not rely on others. They would also make the questionnaires for the institutions much shorter, just focusing on institutional aspects. The researchers would also consider using more face-to-face or telephone interviews to gather information with less reliance on online surveying, as noted above.

Moreover, they think that EURASCHE should create a database with contacts at ministries but also contacts in institutions that are willing to fill out questionnaires or willing to give information through interviews or focus group discussions.

4. Cross-country results

4.1. Presence of SCHE/ level 5 in the countries surveyed

As was already mentioned above, not all countries consider short cycle higher education to be similar to level 5. Moreover more than half of the countries surveyed have not introduced their NQF yet and are still wondering at what level to position certain studies. An attempt was therefore made to list for all the countries surveyed whether the NQF had been introduced and how many levels were implemented and whether an NQF was under construction and how many levels were foreseen. The most important question was to know **whether a short cycle was provided within the higher education structure of the country or whether the country intended to introduce SCHE.**

Country	NQF	Introduce	under devel	SHE at level	EHEA/SCHE	when	PS links	PS no links	Intention
AT				8	no SCHE			(5?)	no
BEDE				8 (5?)	no SCHE yet		(5)		yes
BEFR				8 (5)	SCHE	2009			yes
BENL	8	2009			5 SCHE	2009			yes
BG				8 (5?)	no SCHE?	1999			unclear
CH					no SCHE		(5?)		unclear
CY				8 (5)	SCHE	1970's			yes
CZ				8 (5,6?)	no SCHE	1995			unclear
DE				8	no SCHE			(5?)	no
DK	8	2003			5 SCHE	1997			yes
EE	8	2008			no SCHE yet			(5?)	yes
ES				8 (5)	SCHE				yes
FI					no SCHE			(5)	no
FR	5 ?				3 SCHE	1966			yes
GR				8	no SCHE			?	no
HU				8 (5)	SCHE	1998			yes
IE	10	2003			6 SCHE	1970's			yes
IS			(7)	(4)	SCHE	1990			yes
IT			?		no SCHE yet		(4 / 5 ? EQF)		probably
LI			?		no SCHE		(5)		unclear
LT				8	no SCHE				5 no
LV				8 (5)	SCHE	2001			yes
LU				8 (5)	SCHE	?			yes
MT	8	2007			5 SCHE	2005/2006			yes
NL	8	2010			5 SCHE	2006			yes
NO			?	?	SCHE	1970's			yes
PL			?		no SCHE			?	no
PT	8	2010			5 SCHE	?			yes
RO				8	no SCHE			(5)	no
SE			?	?	no SCHE		(5)		no
SI				8 (6.1)	SCHE	1996			yes
SK				8	no SCHE			?	no
TR				8 (5)	SCHE	?			yes
UKEW	8	2001		HND + FD L5	SCHE	70's FD 2002			yes
UKSC	12	2001			8 SCHE	70's			yes

Figure 2: Presence of NQF, SCHE, level 5 EQF: ()= planned, ? = unclear

Where SCHE is provided and integrated in higher education respondents were asked at what level of the NQF/EQF it is positioned or foreseen and whether the descriptor for this cycle is based on the

Dublin descriptor for SCHE, on the descriptor for level 5 of the EQF or on both these descriptors. All countries were also asked whether they have post-secondary vocational education at level 4 (or higher) of the EQF having links or no links with higher education. For the countries not having SCHE they are also indicated.

4.1.1. Countries with short cycle higher education

The countries taken into account for the comparative part of the study are only countries where short cycle higher education is clearly perceived as higher education and where it has been integrated or is being integrated into the higher education framework of the country concerned. As the situation is constantly changing in several countries surveyed this means that this table is only a snapshot of the present situation.

All together 19 countries or regions (the different Communities of Belgium, the different member countries of the UK and the different regions of Spain having their own ministry of education) indicated that they have SCHE according to the Dublin descriptor for the intermediate cycle within the first cycle of the QF-EHEA. Moreover the Czech Republic stated on the one hand that they do not yet have SCHE but on the other as well the ministry as the tertiary vocational education institutions filled out the questionnaire as it is not certain yet whether they will become SCHE at level 5 or professional bachelors at level 6. In this way the Czech Republic was also taken into account. Only these 20 countries or regions (BE_{nI}, BE_{fr}, CY, CZ, DK, ES, FR, HU, IE, IS, LV, LU, MT, NL, NO, PT, SI, TR, UK EWNI, UKSC) will be taken into consideration for the rest of the study.

Three countries have indicated that they intend to or might introduce SCHE in the future (BE_{de}, EE, IT). This means that the majority of countries surveyed now have SCHE or are intending to introduce it.

In most countries SCHE is organised nationally. However, in Belgium, Spain and the UK education is either organised by the communities (Belgium), the regions (Spain) or the different countries within the United Kingdom. In Spain legislation is the same for the whole country but provision might differ according to the region. In order to enhance the readability of the report the term countries will be used even when referring to different entities (communities or regions) within the above mentioned countries.

It is clear from the table above that several countries do not see SCHE as an element of lifelong learning and do not associate lifelong learning with higher education as they indicate that they have post-secondary having no formal links with higher education (AT, DE, EE, FI, GR, RO).

This is confirmed by the EUA²⁸ Trends 2010 report where in the executive summary the section on responding to the challenges of lifelong learning, widening participation and access starts by stating that *“by the majority of European countries, lifelong learning is considered as a set of activities provided outside mainstream education...”*²⁹

Although, as far as the countries surveyed this is not the majority it is clear that as the report states national authorities together with HEIs should *“connect policies in order to create accessible,*

²⁸ European University Association

²⁹ Surssock, A., Smidt, H. et alia (2010). *Trends 2010: A decade of change in European Higher Education*. Brussels: EUA p. 8

*flexible and transparent student-centred learning and to monitor and evaluate implementation continuously. This is necessary in order to ensure that all education provision is seen within a lifelong perspective and in specific national, regional, local and institutional contexts.*³⁰

However, in spite of its plea for lifelong learning the report does not mention SCHE once. This is clearly an indication that SCHE is not a priority for most traditional universities represented by the EUA.

4.1.2. Introduction of SCHE

When looking at the dates when SCHE was introduced we can distinguish three groups. On the one hand France, the English speaking countries (IE, the UK), Norway and Cyprus that introduced SCHE in the sixties or seventies. A second group, mainly Central or Eastern European countries (BG, CZ, HU, SI) but also Iceland (1990) and Latvia (2001) introduced SCHE as post-secondary higher education in the nineties or the beginning of the second millennium. Lastly, there are the countries that introduced SCHE after the implementation of the QF EHEA and sometimes the introduction/construction of their NQF (BEnl, BEfr, DK, MT, NL). As well in Belgium as in the Netherlands the introduction of SCHE was more a transformation process of existing higher vocational education than the introduction of something entirely new.

4.1.3. Countries where there is no SCHE sometimes have level 5

As far as the countries not offering SCHE are concerned several countries indicate that they have higher vocational programmes that are labour market oriented and that are or might be at level 5 of the EQF. Nevertheless they are not considered to be SCHE because they do not, as explained before, follow the logic of higher education. We find this kind of higher vocational or professional education in mainly German speaking countries (AT, CH, DE, LI) but also in Finland, Sweden and Romania.

In Ireland there is a quite unique situation with on the one hand SCHE within the higher education institutions and on the other the Advanced Certificate (IE). The latter is a further education and training award at level 6 of the Irish NFQ (level 5 EQF) that is not aligned with the Bologna Framework (QF-EHEA).

4.1.4. Developments concerning SCHE

Compared to the situation in 2003 we see that some changes have taken place: on the one hand a number of countries have introduced SCHE such as BEnl, BEfr, NL and on the other hand SCHE has been upgraded to professional bachelor programmes (BG, LT) whereas the Czech Republic has not decided yet whether they will position their post-secondary higher education at level 5 or 6 of the EQF. A number of countries are also considering the introduction of SCHE (IT, EE). Sweden, which used to have SCHE, made a conscious decision in 2006/2007 that the University Diploma should be placed at level 6, even though it is only two years of study. That is why they do not categorize it as SCHE.

³⁰ Surssock, A., Smidt, H. et alia (2010). *Trends 2010: A decade of change in European Higher Education*. Brussels: EUA

The question was also asked whether there was a strategy in place concerning SCHE. In Cyprus the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education and Culture are discussing the new strategy for SCHE, for the vocational programmes of studies but the final decisions have not yet been taken.

Also in the Czech Republic, discussions are taking place and an analytical study has been prepared for the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in August 2009.³¹ In Denmark the current strategy is the consolidation of the existing SCHE-programmes. In Hungary a new national qualification register was introduced in 2006. The basis of this new strategy is to improve the economic and wider social needs. Through the modular system different programmes have to be linked and credit points have to be accepted. All programmes are practice-oriented, based on the outcome requirements which are in different ministerial acts.

In Ireland SCHE is an integral part of educational provision and, as a consequence, every provider considers its provision in any strategic planning context. In particular, Institutes of Technology in Ireland have used SCHE as a means of reaching adults who wish to engage in lifelong learning. In Latvia there is no overall national strategy but there is a project for a new Law of HE.

Norway is an exception and the tendency is that SCHE programmes are becoming less popular and several institutions are phasing them out. In Turkey the intention is to run six semesters to provide theory, practice and workplace training more efficiently. In Slovenia Tertiary education can be divided into SCHE and HE (first and second Bologna cycle = undergraduate professionally and academically oriented programmes). Slovenia will continue developing SCHE as an autonomous part of tertiary education³².

4.2. Main objectives of SCHE- studies

Six countries state that the main objective of SCHE-studies is further professional specialisation focusing on employment, whereas nine countries state that the main objective of SCHE is short professional education not linked to previous studies (e.g. nursing). In only two countries the main objective is preparation for degree studies (CY, MT) and three countries indicate that SCHE studies are focusing on employment but are also preparation for (bachelor) degree studies (HU, NL, UKSC). These results indicate that in most countries SCHE is short professional education (not) linked to previous studies and leading to a professional qualification that might also prepare for progression to further studies. The fact that in most countries the focus is on employment results in industry and the world of work being closely involved in the outlining of SCHE-programmes and in defining learning outcomes.

³¹ Ing. Michal Karpisek, MSc. et al: Analysis of current situation and possible development of the Tertiary Professional Schools Sector (available in Czech, www.msmt.cz)

³² Further information available on the web side of the Ministry of education and sport: http://www.mss.gov.si/en/areas_of_work/tertiary_education_in_slovenia/

4.3. Presence of NQF

As can be seen on the table above only 10 of the 35 countries or regions surveyed had already introduced an NQF by the end of 2010. Most of these countries (BFL, DK, EE, MT, NL, PT, UK EWN) have a national qualifications framework with 8 levels. In all these countries SCHE is organised at level 5 and as far as the UK QF for England and Northern Ireland is concerned at level 4 but with a different qualification (see under 2.6.6. qualifications awarded). One country (FR) has a national qualifications framework with 5 levels but is considering changing it into 8 levels. At the moment SCHE is positioned at level 3 of the French qualifications framework. The Irish qualifications framework has 10 levels with SCHE being organised at level 6. Lastly the qualifications framework for Scotland has 12 levels and SCHE is organised at level 8. Only three countries have already formally referenced their NQF to the EQF (MT, IE and the QF's for the UK).

It is noticeable that all the countries that have already introduced their NQF also have short cycle higher education. One of the reasons might be that when drafting their NQF they noticed that the descriptors for level 5 of the EQF corresponded to what was until then regarded as post-secondary vocational education. Decision-makers at national level might also have noticed a gap in their NQF between the qualifications acquired in secondary education and those acquired in higher education. Very often this gap or **this missing link could be found at level 5 of the EQF**.

Most of the countries that have a (draft) NQF also made a clear distinction in their (draft) NQF between levels 4 and 5 of the EQF. In Ireland and Malta intermediate awards are granted between levels 4 and 5. In Hungary an accumulation of credits can lead to an award at level 5 and in most countries (except CY, ES, SI) an accumulation of modules can lead to an award at level 5.

Two countries are not certain at what level their former specialists or higher vocational technicians will be positioned (BG, CZ). In the former case (BG) the students receive 180 ECTS when finishing their "professional bachelor" studies, so that it can be expected that they will be positioned at level 6. In the second case (CZ) the learning outcomes of tertiary professional education seem to be higher than those to be expected at level 5 but lower than at level 6. No decision has been taken yet as to where to position tertiary professional education. Slovakia, which does not have SCHE but has higher professional education, is considering transforming its higher professional education to the bachelor study programmes of professional higher education institutions.³³

However, most countries already have an NQF for higher education. Thus, for example as far as Iceland is concerned, only the levels of the Icelandic NQF for higher education have been defined. The Icelandic higher education framework has three cycles with two sub-levels, SCHE being the first level within the first cycle. An overarching qualifications framework with seven levels has been planned where levels 1 and 2 of the EQF correspond to level 1 of the Icelandic QF. Also Norway and Turkey have not introduced an NQF yet but have defined SCHE as the intermediate level within the first cycle.

When asked whether the descriptor for SCHE was linked to the Dublin descriptor for the short cycle within the first cycle, to the descriptor for level 5 of the EQF or to both descriptors, five countries

³³ Eurybase: *Organisation of the education system in Slovakia 2008/09*
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/eurybase/eurybase_full_reports/SK_EN.pdf

indicated that it was linked to the Dublin descriptor for the short cycle (CY, FR, NO, UK EWNI), four that it was linked to the descriptor for level 5 of the EQF (DK, IE, NL, TR) and five countries linked their descriptor to both descriptors (BEnI, IS, LV, MT, UKSC). One country (HU) indicated that there was no descriptor and for four countries this information was not made available (BEfr, LU, ES and PT).

4.4. Organisation of SCHE

4.4.1. Legislation

The respondents were asked whether there was legislation on SCHE and what aspects were covered by this legislation. Some countries (NO, IS) indicated that SCHE is included in higher education and is therefore regulated by acts on higher education such as the framework law for higher education in Iceland. Most legislation is quite recent, some as recent as 2009 (BEnI, BEfr) or 2010 (CY). Many countries changed their legislation in view of the Bologna process and the implementation of the BAMA structure (NL (2007), NO (2005), HU (2006), FR (2005), DK (2008), LV (2006). Sometimes this legislation simply concerned amendments to existing laws. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland new legislation was introduced on the Foundation degree in 2009.

Country	Organisati	Entry requ	Study field	QA	Accreditat	Transition	Institution	Min. stud	Tuition fee	Other item
BEfr	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	
BEfr	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	
CY	•	•		•	•				•	
CZ	•	•		•	•		•		•	
DK	•	•		•	•		•			
ES	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
FR	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•
HU	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
IE	•			•	•	•				
IS		•		•	•					
LV	•	•		•	•	•	•			
LU	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	
MT	•	•	•	•	•		•			
NL	•	•			•				•	•
NO	•	•		•	•	•			•	
PT	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
SI	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
TR	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	
UK EWNI					•				•	
UK SC				•	•				•	•

Figure 3: Legislation

The aspect that is covered in all legislation is accreditation, followed by entry requirements and the organisation of courses. Legislation in most countries also covers quality assurance, the institutions where SCHE can be organised and to transition to degree studies. In view of widening participation and access to higher education it is surprising that only eleven countries refer to (usually maximum) tuition fees. In only one country (SI) reference is made to minimum numbers of students per programme of institution. In the Czech Republic the minimum (and also maximum) number of students is defined only within the study group, not for the whole institution. In France the conditions

to acquire a (national) diploma are also laid down by law. There are particular regulations in Latvia regarding the Fire Safety and Civil Protection College, the State Police College, and the State Border Guard College. In Latvia there are also the standards of the profession approved by Cabinet of Ministers. The programmes for SCHE in Latvia have to be designed in accordance with certain standards of the profession. Sometimes (e.g. in Luxembourg) individual programmes have to be approved. In Norway, all accredited higher education institutions are free to establish study programmes up to and including SCHE and the bachelor's level.

According to ECTS principles HE organisations settle the conditions for the transition from SCHE to HE in Slovenia. In the UK EJNI transition from SCHE to degree studies is not governed by legislation but there is a formal requirement for foundation degrees to articulate with Bachelors. In Scotland there is no particular legislation but transfer to degree courses is common.

4.4.2. Provision of SCHE

SCHE is organised by the State or the public authorities in all countries surveyed. However, in all countries, except two, (DK, TR) SCHE is also organised by private education providers. In Turkey there are also the Foundation Universities under the Higher Education Law No.2544, which is applied for the State and Foundation Universities and in the Czech Republic there are also church schools. In France SCHE can be organised by private education providers but the exams are always State organised. Only in the UK (Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and Wales) can SCHE be organised by industry.

Country	Universiti	Uni Ap.	Sc Voc	HEC	FE C	Sec. Schoc	Adult Ed.
Befr							•
Benl		•				•	•
CY			•		•		
CZ			•			•	
DK			•		•		
ES			•			•	
FR	•					•	
HU	•	•				•	
IE	•	•			•		
IS	•						
LV	•	•	•				
LU	•					•	
MT	•		•				
NL		•					
NO	•	•					
PT	•	•			•	•	•
SI			•				
TR	•						
UK EJNI	•	•	•		•		
UK SC	•	•			•		

Figure 4: Institutional embedding of SCHE

In Cyprus, Ireland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland professional bodies can also organise SCHE and in Cyprus and Ireland this can be done in collaboration with the authorities. In Flanders collaboration with industry and professional bodies is also foreseen in the future. Foundation degrees are awarded by universities but can be taught /delivered by private providers, industry, professional bodies, public colleges or any other organisation. The awarding body (the university) is responsible for the quality assurance of the qualification.

One of the characteristics of SCHE is that it is provided in a wide variety of settings not only across Europe but also in each of the countries surveyed. There are only three countries where SCHE is only provided by one type of institution. In Iceland only universities can provide SCHE and they must be accredited by the government. In the Netherlands SCHE is provided in different settings but always by the universities of applied sciences. Also in Turkey SCHE is only provided by universities or foundation universities but it can be organised in foundation schools.

However, in most countries surveyed (BEnI, FR, HU, IE, IS, LV, LU, MT, NL, NO, PT, SI, TR, UK EWNI, UK SC) SCHE is delivered by HEI's such as universities, universities of applied sciences, regional technical institutes or university colleges. The French Community of Belgium also has the intention to organise SCHE in university colleges in the future. In Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain, Latvia, Malta, Slovenia, England, Wales and Northern Ireland SCHE is (also) provided by vocational or technical colleges and in Cyprus, Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom (all countries) by further education colleges³⁴. In Flanders, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Spain and Luxembourg, SCHE is (also) provided by upper secondary schools. In the case of Flanders this is only true for one programme (nursing) and in the Czech Republic these are usually separate institutions within a secondary school. In Portugal the technological specialisation courses are provided by higher education institutions, by the network of state, private and cooperative schools, professional schools and centres managed wholly or partially by IEFP (Institute of Employment and Vocational Training). In terms of internal political management most CET (SCHE-courses in Portugal) are provided by higher education institutions. Lastly, in Belgium (both Flemish and French Communities) SCHE is provided in the framework of adult education in the so-called centres for adult education. It should be noted that whereas Belgian HEI's in the past hardly focused on mature students there is nevertheless quite a flourishing tradition of (adult) education for social promotion. Although mature students are also catered for in other countries, courses for adult or mature learners take place in a number of settings such as further education colleges, vocational colleges but also universities and university colleges. In Portugal there are the centres for Employment and Vocational Training.

An Irish respondent points out that publicly funded areas such as Institutes of Technologies in Ireland have both a strategic and legal objective to provide short cycle higher education.

³⁴ HEFCE (2003) defines further education as follows: Further education is for people over compulsory school age (currently 16 in England), which does not take place in a secondary school. It may be in a sixth-form college, a further education college or a higher education institution. Further education courses are generally up to the standard of GCE A-level or NVQ Level 3. Further education colleges provide education for students over the age of 16.

4.4.3. Funding

In all the countries surveyed SCHE is subsidised by the State or the authorities. In six countries there is also funding by industry (FR, HU, IE, MT, NL, UKSC) and in three countries funding is provided by the authorities in collaboration with industry or professional organisations (IE, MT, UK EWNI). In the case of the Netherlands this funding is to some extent indirect funding by companies which pay for the tuition of their workers and employees in private HEIs. In fact the latter could be called privately-funded HEIs. Also in the UK EWNI we see a shift towards increasing private funding of SCHE.

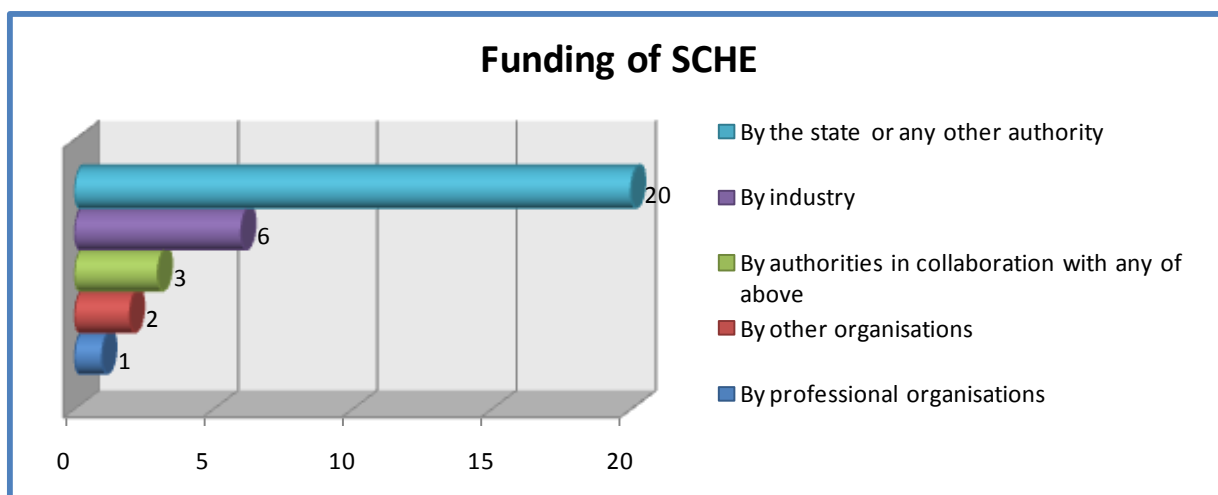


Figure 5: Funding of SCHE

In France, funding of SCHE is also provided by professional organisations. In Latvia and the Netherlands there are also other organisations that fund SCHE. In the Netherlands these could once again be the privately funded HEIs but also consultancies. No information is provided as to which organisations are concerned in Latvia.

In 2006, the Irish Government introduced a Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) through which € 510m is allocated for spending, between 2006 and 2013, in higher education institutions for projects to enhance collaboration in this sector; to improve teaching and learning; to support institutional reform; to promote access to lifelong learning; and to support the development of fourth-level education.

4.4.4. Entry requirements for SCHE

In all countries surveyed a certificate of general secondary education gives access to SCHE. In most countries concerned (BEfr, BEnl, CY, CZ, ES, FR, IE, LV, NL, PT, SI, TR, UK EWNI, UKSC) a certificate of technical or vocational education also provides access to SCHE. Half of the countries also grant access on the basis of recognition of prior learning (BEfr, BEnl, DK, FR, IS, MT, NL, UK EWNI, UKSC). In fact formal qualifications are not necessarily required for entry to Foundation Degree programmes. In the Netherlands and Portugal people who are over 21 (23 for PT) can be admitted based on an entry test covering some of the core subjects and in the French Community of Belgium there is an age requirement (on exit) as at the moment SCHE is only provided in adult education. In Malta vocational qualifications at MQF Level 4 also grant access to SCHE. In Slovenia a Master craftsman/Foreman/Shop

manager exam also grants access. In Latvia, there are additional entrance requirements in specialised military colleges.

One important area of current development in Ireland is the Recognition of prior learning. Recognition of Prior Learning is recognised as critical to the development of an open, accessible, inclusive, integrated and relevant education and training system, and is a key foundation for lifelong learning policies that encourage individuals to participate in learning pathways that include formal, non-formal, and informal learning.

4.4.5. Qualifications or awards received

As already mentioned in the introduction the qualifications or awards received still vary considerably across Europe. However certain trends can be seen, very often related to the language spoken or the educational system.

There are a number of countries that award an Associate degree (BENL, NL, TR), in fact following the term used by American Community Colleges. In Flanders the term *Graduaat* is used in Dutch but the English translation is added.

The French speaking countries use terminology that is identical or similar to that used in France (BFR, LU, FR). In France and Luxembourg the distinction is made between awards received in HEIs (*Diplôme* or diploma) and the awards in the higher education sections of secondary schools (*Brevet* or Certificate). With the exception of the French Community of Belgium all these qualifications refer to Technology or Technician. This is also the case for Denmark where the Academy Profession degree uses the term *teknolog* referring to the relevant field of study. Also in Spain (*Técnico superior*), Portugal (*Diploma de Especialização Tecnológica*) and Slovenia (*Engineer / inzenir(male) /inzenirka(female) or Technologist/tehnolog(male)/tehnologinja*) refer to this technological aspect of SCHE studies. In the Czech Republic they have Diploma Specialists.

The English speaking countries or those following the Anglo-Saxon educational tradition all award different kinds of qualifications, mostly linked to the duration of the studies. Usually the term certificate is used for shorter studies (one year) whereas diploma is used for two-year studies (on a full-time basis). However, it should be noted that the representative for the UK ENIW pointed out that the certificates, although being part of the higher education system are not positioned at level 5 but at level 4. This is probably also the case for Scotland (HNC and HECert), Malta and Cyprus. Malta and the UK EWNi also award a Foundation Degree (FD). The Foundation Degree courses are designed with a particular area of work in mind, with the help of employers from that sector, in general by Sector Skills Councils. The number of students involved in FD programmes now exceeds students on HNDs or HNCs.

On the other hand the distinction in Ireland is of a different nature. The Higher Certificate is normally awarded after completion of a programme of two years' duration (120 ECTS credits) in a recognised higher education institution. Entry is generally for school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. The major further education and training award at NFQ Level 6 is referred to as the Advanced Certificate. It is distinguishable from the Higher Certificate at the same level by its learning outcomes. It is important to note that a FETAC Advanced Certificate-Craft is awarded upon completion

of an apprenticeship. The Advanced Certificate is a further education and training award at NQF level 6 (EQF level 5) and is **not aligned with the Bologna Framework**.

Country	Award (s)/ Qualification(s) received
BEFR	Brevet de l'Enseignement Supérieur (BES) : Higher Education Certificate
BENL	Graduaat ; Associate Degree
	Certificate 1 year studies Diploma 2 year studies Higher Diploma 3-years studies
CY	Certificate of attendance for studies less than 1 academic year
CZ	diploma specialist" (DiS.)- the Czech equivalent is <i>diplomovaný specialista</i>
	Academy Profession Degree in + the relevant subject title In Danish the titles are unique for each degree but will generally involve the term "teknolog" combined with the relevant subject title.
DK	
ES	Tecnico superior : Higher Education Technician
	DUT : Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie : University Technology Diploma
FR	BTS : Brevet de Technicien Supérieur : Certificate of Higher Education Technician
HU	Certificate on higher level vocational qualification with state recognition
	Higher Certificate normally awarded after completion of a programme of two years duration (120 ECTS credits) = SCHE
IE	Advanced Certificate= not aligned with the Bologna Framework.
IS	Undergraduate Diploma.
	Diploma of the 1st level professional higher education and the 4th level of professional qualification in accordance with the concrete standard of the profession.
LV	
	DUT : Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie (integrated in the professional bachelor)
	BTS : Brevet de Technicien Supérieur
LU	BTS : Brevet de Technicien Supérieur Spécialisé (nursing)
	SCHE in Malta (at MQF Level5) leads to the following awards: Vet Higher Diploma Foundation Degree Undergraduate Diploma Undergraduate Certificate
MT	
NL	Associate degree (Ad)
	<i>Høgskolekandidat</i>) : Unofficial translation: "university college graduate" , courses lasting 2 years in HE institutions.
NO	
PT	Diploma de Especialização Tecnológica (DET), Diploma of Technical specialisation
	Engineer/inzenir(male)/inzenirka(female) or Technologist/tehnolog(male)/tehnologinja(female). (<i>economist, ..or more</i>)
SI	
TR	Associate Degree
	Foundation Degree (level 5) Higher National Diploma (level 5) Diploma of Higher Education (level 5)
UK	HNC: Higher National Certificate (level 4)
EWNI	Certificate of Higher Education (level 4)
	CertHE : Certificate of Higher Education (one year) DipHE : Diploma of Higher Education (two years)
	HNC: Higher National Certificate (one year)
UK SC	HND : Higher National Diploma (two years)

Figure 6: Qualifications/ Awards received

Sometimes the level of education is mentioned in the qualification. In Iceland, students receive an undergraduate Diploma, in Hungary a Certificate of higher level vocational qualification with state recognition and in Latvia the Diploma of the 1st level professional higher education.

Lastly, there are a number of countries where reference is made to institutions where the qualification is acquired: thus in Norway the students receive a University Diploma, in Denmark students receive an Academy Profession Degree and in Norway University college graduate.

4.4.6. Duration of studies – ECTS workload

All respondents were asked whether the workload for SCHE is expressed in years or ECTS and how many years (on a full-time basis) or ECTS the studies approximate.

As can be seen in the table below, the majority of countries still express the workload of SCHE in years. In eight countries (BEfr, ES, FR, HU, LU, NO, TR, UK EWNI) the studies (on a full-time basis) last two years. In two country (IS, PT) the studies last between one and two years. In Cyprus the duration of studies depends on the award students want to acquire. In the Czech Republic there are still three-year courses (even three and a half years for nursing) but these studies might become professional bachelor programmes in the future.

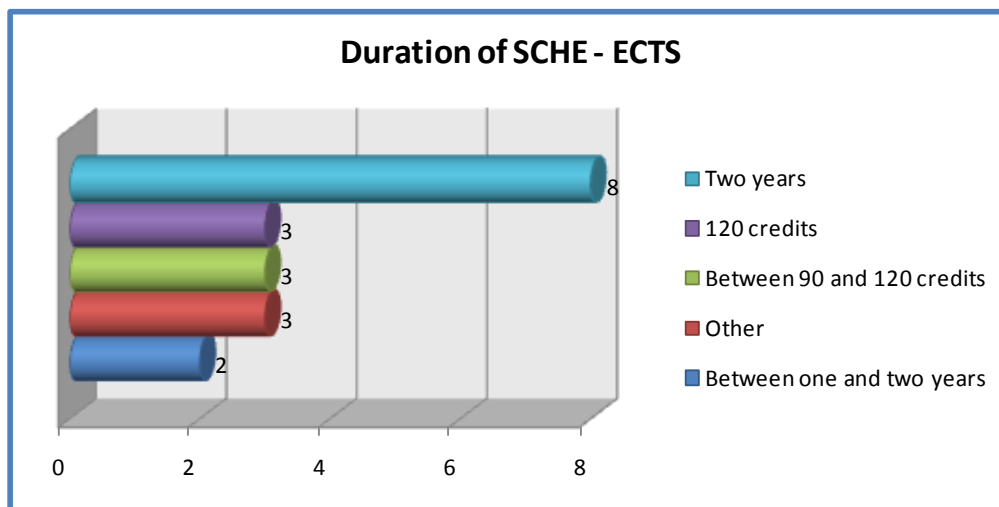


Figure 7: Duration of SCHE

The remaining countries express the workload in (ECTS) credits. In three countries (IE, NL, SI) students have to earn 120 ECTS credits. In the Netherlands these 120 ECTS are a minimum requirement but in practice all programmes have a workload of 120 ECTS. In three countries the workload is between 90 and 120 ECTS credits (BEnl, MT, UKSC). As far as the Flemish Community of Belgium is concerned it is either 90 or 120 ECTS. Portugal expresses the workload as well in ECTS (80) as years (three semesters) and hours (840-1200 hours excluding the training in a work-based context). Lastly, Latvia indicated that there is a workload of 80-120 Latvian credits (used to be 1.5 times bigger than an ECTS credit) and in Denmark the workload is between 90 and 150 ECTS.

It is clear that when exceptions are made as to the length and the work load of programmes, these concern mainly nursing programmes (e.g. Luxembourg Brevet de Technicien Supérieur Spécialisé) are concerned. This is probably to meet the requirements of the European Council Directive 77/452/EEC of 27 June 1977 concerning the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of the formal qualifications of nurses³⁵.

4.4.7. Curriculum

Only three institutional respondents mentioned that the curriculum is mainly practice-based (2 HU, 1LV). Two respondents stated that the curriculum is mainly theoretical (NO, one institution and one ministry). All other respondents stated that the curriculum consists either of a combination of practice and theory (14 respondents from CY, CZ, DK, IE, IS, MT, TR, UK) or a combination of practice, theory and work placements.

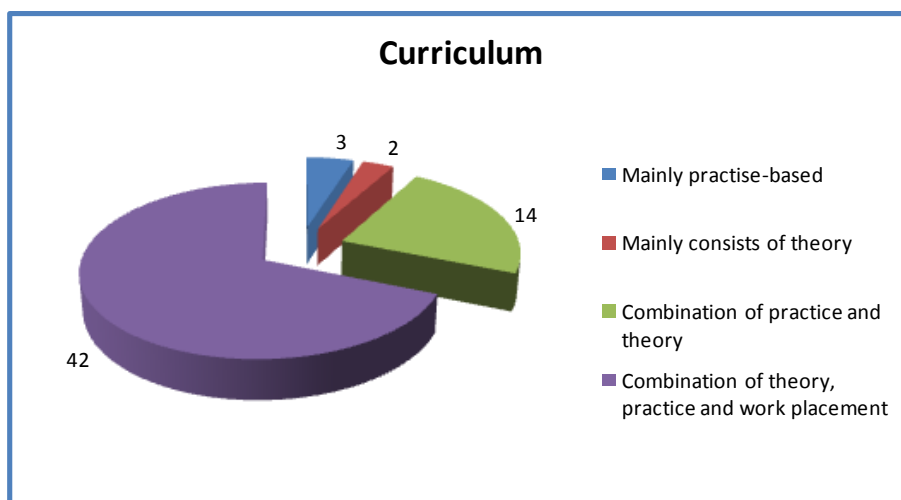


Figure 8: Curriculum

Within the same country different institutions often refer to different curricula. Thus, in the UK for example, work-based learning and placements are much more frequent in FDs than in HNDs. For certain programmes (e.g. nursing) placements are compulsory because of a European directive.

4.4.8. Flexibility

Legislation in most countries allows for flexible provision of courses in SCHE. In sixteen countries SCHE courses are taught both on a full and part-time basis. In Denmark, Iceland, Malta and Turkey the ministry only mentions full-time provision. When taking into consideration the way in which institutions providing SCHE are flexible to meet the needs of the learners it is obvious that the institutions show great flexibility.

Although only a limited number of institutions responded to the questionnaire the figures shown below give an indication as to the flexibility of institutions organising SCHE in order to meet the needs of their learners.

³⁵ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexapi!prod!CELEXnumdoc&numdoc=31977L0452&model=guichett&lg=en

In three quarters of the respondent institutions, courses are time-tabled to meet the needs of the learners. Seven out of ten institutions offer courses both on a full- and part-time basis. Courses are also offered through blended learning and through open and distance learning (around 40%). Only one quarter of institutions are not flexible in their mode of provision and only offer courses on a full-time basis and 5% only on a part-time basis. In one out of eight institutions courses are also offered off-campus at places of work, and in some institutions a combination of all of the above is offered. Some institutions also mention modular courses. In the Netherlands and the UK the possibility exists of dual education (mix of work and study, both relevant for the learning outcomes). In the UK this is referred to as work-based learning. In the Netherlands it is more comparable to Cooperative Education³⁶ (as known in the USA).

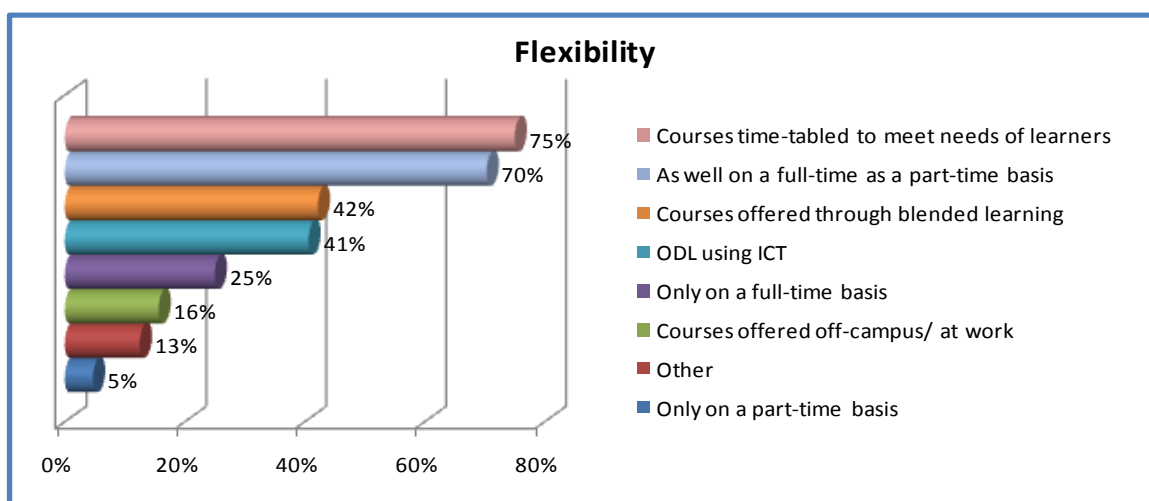


Figure 9: Flexibility

These figures are confirmed by responses from ministries where also 15 out of 20 state that the courses are time-tabled to meet the needs of the learners, and half say that courses are provided through open and distance learning and 8 through blended learning whereas four countries mentioned that courses are also offered at places of work (BENL, IE, UK EWNI, UKSC).

4.4.9. Study fields and programmes

Representatives from ministries were asked in which fields of study were programmes and courses offered at the level of SCHE. Originally it was planned to limit the list to the 15 fields of study used for the Erasmus programme but this list was considered to be too limited and not appropriate enough for SCHE. The list was therefore extended to 25 fields of study/ programmes where respondents could indicate which study fields were offered in their country or institution.

As can be seen SCHE programmes are organised in a wide variety of fields of study. However, the bulk of the programmes are in Business studies (all countries concerned), Administration (all

³⁶ Cooperative education is a structured educational strategy integrating classroom studies with learning through productive work experiences in a field related to a student's academic or career goals. It provides progressive experiences in integrating theory and practice. Co-op is a partnership among students, educational institutions and employers, with specified responsibilities for each party.

<http://www.co-op.edu/aboutcoop2.html>

countries except Iceland), ICT (all countries except Iceland and Norway), Building, Catering and Hospitality, Engineering and Mechanics (offered in 16 countries).

The fields of study that are least represented are Domestic sciences (only in Spain, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Turkey and the UK), Music and drama (Ireland, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Turkey and the UK) and Legal practice (BENL, FR, HU, IE, LV and the UK).

It is obvious that smaller countries such as Luxembourg and Iceland offer less programmes as only small numbers of students are concerned.

Country	Adm	Agri	Arts	Biot	Buil	Busi	Cate	Che	Craf	Cult	Dom	Educ	Engi	Envi	Heal	ICT	Lang	Leis	Mec	Mus	Proc	Rest	Soci	Legal
Befr	•				•	•										•		•					•	
Benl	•			•	•	•	•	•					•		•	•		•	•				•	•
CY	•		•		•	•	•					•	•		•	•		•	•				•	
CZ	•	•	•		•	•	•					•	•		•	•		•	•	•			•	•
DK	•	•		•	•	•	•	•						•		•			•		•			
ES	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	
FR	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		•			•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•
HU	•	•	•			•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•			•		•	•	•	•
IE	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
IS						•	•										•	•						
LV	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
LU	•		•		•	•							•		•	•								
MT	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	
NL	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
NO	•	•				•				•	•													
PT	•					•							•			•	•	•	•					
SI	•	•		•	•	•	•					•	•	•		•			•		•		•	
TR	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•				
UK EWNI	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
UK SC	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Figure 10: Fields of study per country

The respondent institutions were also asked which programmes they organise³⁷. Although these results are only indicative the same trends emerged even more clearly. Nine out of ten respondent institutions offer Business studies and Administration, and three quarters of the institutions offer ICT-studies. Nearly seven out of ten offer Mechanics and two thirds Engineering. Building programmes and programmes for Catering and hospitality can be followed at six out of ten respondent institutions. More than half of the institutions have Agriculture, Health care and Environmental studies programmed and just half offer programmes in Social work. At the other end of the scale less than two out of ten institutions offer Domestic sciences and less than one quarter Restoration, Crafts and Cultural heritage.

Moreover several respondents indicate that the list was far from complete. Thus, a few ministries indicate that in their country programmes in Social sciences, Media and Creative Industries (audio-visual) are offered at SCHE-level.

³⁷ For the French Community of Belgium, Luxembourg and Portugal the list may not be complete as the information was based on interviews and desk top research

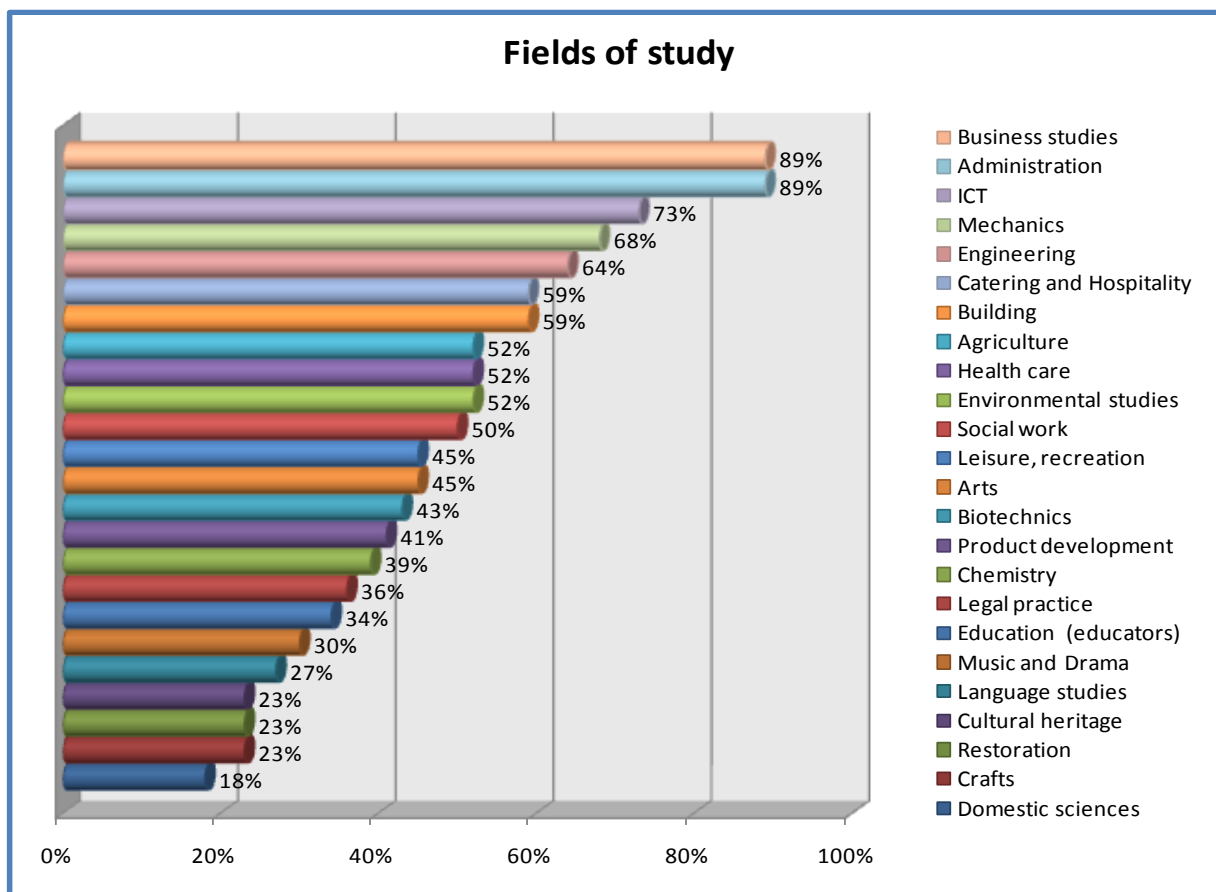


Figure 11: Fields of study (institutions)

When asked which programmes were introduced recently several respondents mentioned programmes in the food industry, ballet, police academy, ecology, forestry and hunting, urban planning and design, financial services, tourism, social pedagogies, transport, logistics, security, shipbuilding, retail wine business, aircraft mechanics and maintenance, entrepreneurship, aquaculture, driving instructor training (only NO) and retail management. The fact that so many new courses have been developed recently indicates that SCHE is a thriving sector that is clearly in line with the demands of industry.

4.4.10. Collaboration with employers to design curricula and define learning outcomes

As SCHE-studies are mainly employment-oriented it is quite obvious that collaboration with employers in designing the programmes and curricula and defining the learning outcomes is an absolute necessity. Therefore the respondents were asked in what way there was collaboration with employers when designing curricula. It is not surprising that in most countries professional organisations and/or employers are closely involved in the planning, designing and restructuring of curricula for SCHE. In six countries they are occasionally involved (DK, MT, NL, NO, TR, UKSC) and in only two countries are they rarely involved (CY, IS). In Cyprus this is only the case with public HEI s. As can be expected the employers who are involved in designing the curricula are specialists in the specific field (of study) offered by the respective school.

In more than half of the countries concerned (BEfr, BEnl, CZ, DK, FR, HU, IE, LV, MT, SI, TR, UK) chambers of commerce³⁸ are involved in designing or restructuring the curricula and in half of the countries the trade unions (BEfr, BEnl, DK, FR, IE, LV, SI, TR, UK). Lastly there are seven countries where institutions also work together with employment agencies (BEfr, BEnl, HU, LV, MT, PT, SI). In Ireland individual organisations work together with SCHE-providers when designing curricula and defining outcomes. In the Netherlands this happens together with employers and companies who sit on a 'regional labour market committee', in Malta with industry in general and in the UK with Sector Skills Councils, Sector Skills Bodies, employers and professional bodies related to the discipline in question.

4.5. Employability

4.5.1. Need for SCHE-graduates and employability rate

As the main objective of SCHE-studies in most countries surveyed is to offer (further) professional specialisation focusing on employment it is obvious that it is important to find out whether employability is taken into account in SCHE-studies. It was already demonstrated that most SCHE-courses are designed or restructured in collaboration with employers, employers' organisations, professional organisations, chambers of commerce and trade unions. However, it is also important to know whether this leads to genuine employment of SCHE-graduates.

Therefore, both the ministries and the institutions were asked whether there was a genuine need for short cycle higher education graduates, what the employment rate of graduates was and how institutions tried to enhance employment.

All institutional respondents except two responded that at present there is a genuine need for these graduates. One of those two respondents was from Hungary where there seems to be disagreement between colleagues. It should however be noted that Hungary will restructure its higher education system in 2011. On the other hand it is probably not a coincidence that one of the two institutional respondents who replied in the negative was from Norway as the Norwegian ministry of education responded that, with the exception of very specific professions such as driving instructor and animal care, demand was diminishing and that employers preferred students with a bachelor's degree. It should be noted, however, that along with SCHE there is a thriving post-secondary (non-higher education) vocational sector in Norway.

In several countries (e.g. the Netherlands, Portugal and Belgium) most students are already employed but they attend the courses to enhance their skills or to get promoted. Very often they do so at the request of their employers. In this case the qualifications attained in the course allow an internal progression in terms of functions, responsibility, autonomy and income.

The fact that in most countries the demand for SCHE-graduates is high is also supported by the Cedefop (2010) mid-term forecasts on skills supply and demand in Europe³⁹. As can be seen on the

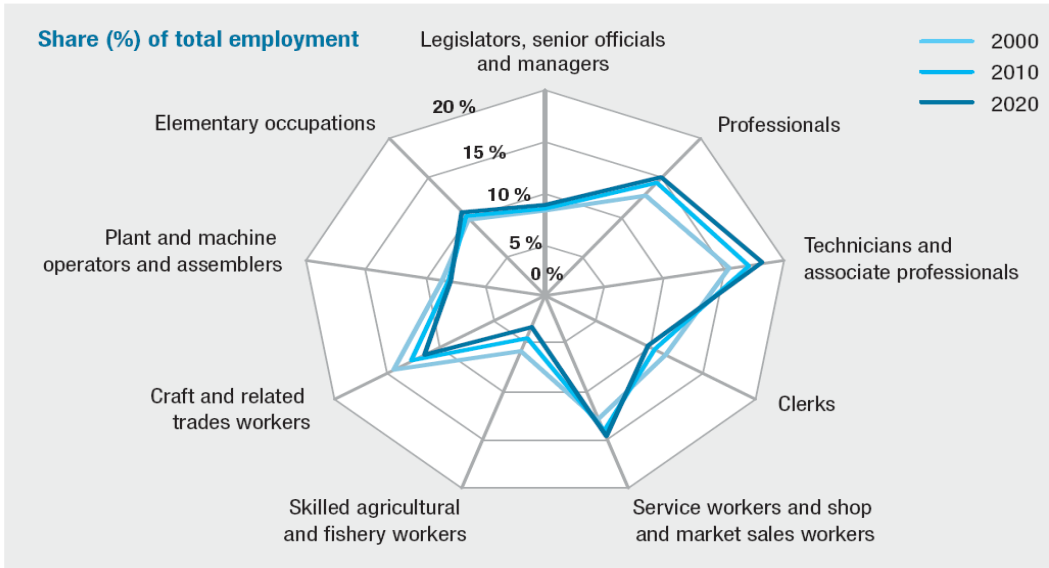
³⁸ An association of businesspeople to promote commercial and industrial interests in the community – definition Merriam Webster

³⁹ CEDEFOP (2010). *Skills Supply and Demand in Europe. Medium-term forecast up to 2020*. Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union

chart below, already 17% of the total employment share at the moment is for technicians and associate professionals and this share will rise again in the future.

In several countries, such as the Netherlands and the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium, employers (especially from SMEs in the Netherlands) urged the government to introduce this level of higher education. According to the respondents there are some fields with a higher demand and which enjoy more popularity such as institutional communications or media technology (e.g. Hungary). Some respondents stated that there was especially a demand for SCHE graduates with specific technical skills. Thus, the Cypriot economy needs graduates from SCHE in Engineering, Construction, Maintenance and Health Care. In Malta there is a growing demand for level 5 professionals particularly in industry and the services.

Figure 21. The changing occupational structure of employment, EU-27+



NB: Numbers in employment (NA-based estimates).
 Source: Cedefop (IER estimates based on E3ME and EDMOD).

Figure 12: Skills demand forecast - Source: Skills Supply and Demand in Europe (CEDEFOP 2010)

The respondents were also asked what the employability rate was of SCHE graduates. Some respondents did not answer this question as there were no data available. Moreover, as could be expected, these figures were not unanimous as the employability rate would, of course, differ according to the specific qualifications acquired and also the country concerned. One of the Slovenian institutional respondents mentioned that none of their college graduates is un-employed. They usually find employment even before graduating through their placement in companies. Many of them, right away or a few years later, decide to open their own businesses. In the UK EWNI only 7 % of full-time foundation degree qualifiers, and 4 % of part-time qualifiers, were neither studying nor in employment six months after graduation.

Although figures given below only give an indication and might differ according to the countries concerned and especially according to the specific qualifications of the graduates, they do give an indication of the employability of the graduates. For some countries there are no data available, (e.g. BEnl, BEfr) as the studies have only been introduced recently but it can be expected

that employability will be high as employers were urging for this level of studies to be introduced. Other respondents indicated that there were no data available yet or that there was insufficient time to track the data.

Only 8 institutional respondents indicate an employability rate of less than 80%. These are all respondents from Turkey, Hungary and Ireland. It could therefore be assumed that these employment rates have more to do with the economic situation in general in these countries than with the possible employability of SCHE-graduates as these countries were hard hit by the recent economic crisis.

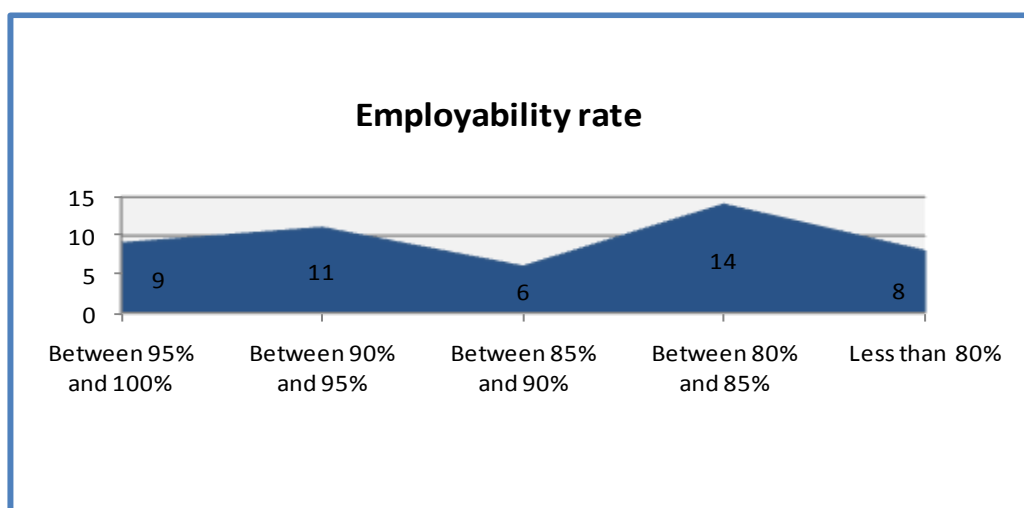


Figure 13: Employability

Respondents were also asked how long it took their graduates to find initial employment. Some institutions indicated that they did not have any data available. One institution indicated that as they only had mature students who were already employed this question was irrelevant for them. Nine institutions stated that it took the graduates less than two months to find initial employment, 11 that it took them between two and four months and 12 that they needed on average between four and six months to find employment. Only one institution responded that it took their graduates more than a year to find employment. Considering the responses in the previous section it is not surprising that it was a Turkish institution. Seven indicated that it took their graduates more than six months to find employment. Here there were one Turkish, two Hungarian but surprisingly also two French, one Slovenian and one Cypriot institution. Strangely enough the French institution indicated that although it took their graduates more than six months to find employment, between 90% and 95% of their graduates eventually found employment.

Lastly, respondents were asked what the main employment was of their graduates. Fourteen institutions responded that their graduates were employed as highly skilled technicians. Graduates from 22 institutions are mainly employed as white-collar workers in e.g. administration, sales or hospitality management. Moreover one institution indicates that their graduates work as middle-management operatives, another that they work as social workers for NGO's, one that they work in education. One institution states that although their graduates are mainly employed as highly skilled technicians they could also be employed in administration, sales and hospitals. One institution (HU) states that their graduates could be employed as highly skilled technicians, white-collar workers and manual workers. Only two respondents stated that their graduates are mainly employed as manual

workers (one from Turkey, one from Latvia). This is somewhat strange, especially for Turkey, as the SCHE-programmes are only provided by universities. However, the low employment rate might mean that graduates accept manual work because they do not find the kind of jobs they have been prepared for.

Although, once again, it must be stressed that these figures are only indicative and not representative it can also be stated that they are more or less in line with responses received from ministries where 8 ministries state that graduates are employed as white collar workers and 9 as highly skilled technicians. The Norwegian ministry indicates that it will depend on the specialisation. Lastly, no data were received for Iceland and for the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium. As the latter two have only been introduced recently there are no data available yet.

It should be pointed out that figures for highly-skilled technicians would probably have been even higher if responses had been received from Portuguese institutions as most institutions there focus on technology.

4.5.2. Enhancing the employability of SCHE-graduates

Respondents were also asked how the employability of the SCHE-graduates was taken into account. Because responses of ministries and institutions diverged more than for any other question, the responses of the ministries on the one hand and the institutions on the other are compared in the table below. As there were three times as many responses from institutions than from ministries, percentages are used to make the comparison possible. For a number of items the scores of the ministries are considerably higher but this might be due to the fact that ministries pointed out the ways in which institutions might take into account employability but that this is done by different institutions to different degrees.

Nearly nine out of ten ministries think that employability is taken into account by focusing on professional competences. Although this item also obtains the highest score from institutions, less than seven out of ten institutions state that they actually do so. More than eight out of ten ministries state that employability is taken into account when setting up new programmes but only 64% of the respondent institutions actually do so. However, it should be remarked that in a number of countries (e.g. BEnl, LU) new programmes have to stand the so-called macro-economic test where amongst others the demand for graduates from a specific programme has to be demonstrated.

Three quarters of the ministries also think that institutions regularly adapt their programmes to labour market needs but less than six out of ten institutions actually do so. In fact the much higher score from ministries might be due on the one hand to the fact that they indicate that this possibility exists but on the other hand that this results from wishful thinking. The fact that they just indicate a possibility that is definitely not implemented by all institutions is definitely true for the implementation of a modular approach. Three quarters of the ministries think that it is done whereas it is implemented by less than half of the institutions.

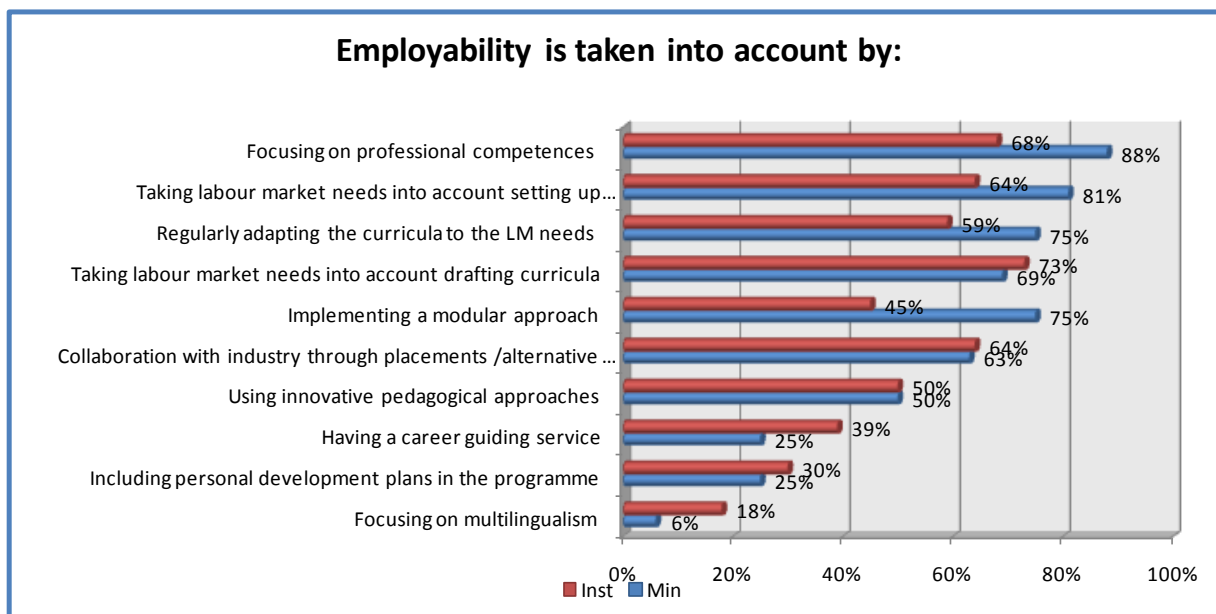


Figure 14: Enhancing employability⁴⁰

However, a number of items score higher with institutions than with ministries. Thus slightly more institutions take into account labour market needs when drafting curricula (73%) than indicated by ministries. Because of the small number of ministerial respondents we could state that the responses here are virtually identical. Also as far as collaboration with industry through placements and alternative learning paths and as far as the use of innovative pedagogical approaches is concerned the responses are virtually identical. As far as collaboration with industry is concerned, two thirds indicate that this takes place, whereas half the respondents state that they use innovative pedagogical approaches to enhance the employability of graduates.

Strangely enough only one quarter of the ministries thinks that the institutions have a career guidance service whereas four out of ten institutions state that they actually have one. The same phenomenon occurs regarding personal development plans. One out of three institutions states that they have personal development plans for their students whereas only one out of four ministries thinks that institutions have them. The strangest result was noticed as far as multilingualism is concerned. Although only one ministry (CZ) in the countries surveyed thought that multilingualism was used to enhance employability, two out of ten institutions mainly in Hungary and France stated that multilingualism enhanced the employment chances of graduates.

It is clear that employability is a major concern for all institutions providing SCHE. It would, however, be interesting to have detailed figures of all countries and all programmes as these could be used to adapt or restructure studies according to the needs of (local) industry. In this respect we refer to the example of Italy. Although SCHE has not been yet introduced in Italy (and thus data have not been taken into consideration for this part of the study) they might introduce it in the ITS⁴¹ as from 2011 onwards. These institutions are obliged by law to assess the provision of programmes every three years and if necessary adapt their programmes to the needs of the local industry.

⁴⁰ Data lacking for BEFR, LU, PT

⁴¹ Instituto Technico Superior

4.5.3. Support of employers

As collaboration with industry is considered to be very important by two thirds of ministries and institutions the respondents were also asked in what way employers supported SCHE studies and SCHE-providing institutions. Two ministries indicated that employers do not support SCHE (IS, NO). Also three institutions stated that the employers do not support SCHE institutions (IS, NO, HU). In the case of Norway and Iceland this is confirmed by the ministry but in the case of Hungary it might be one particular institution not receiving support from employers.

Three quarters of institutions and as many ministries state that employers support SCHE by offering placements for SCHE-students. It should however be noted that for some mature students there is no need for placements as they are already in employment and as there will be work-based learning or dual learning. This means that where offering practical experience to the learners is concerned, the support of employers is even higher. According to two thirds of the ministries and nearly six out of ten institutions employers support SCHE by helping to design curricula. Where reflecting on the content of programmes is concerned the opinions of ministries and institutions widely diverge: seven out of ten ministries state that the employers support SCHE by reflecting on the content of programmes whereas less than half of the institutions do so.

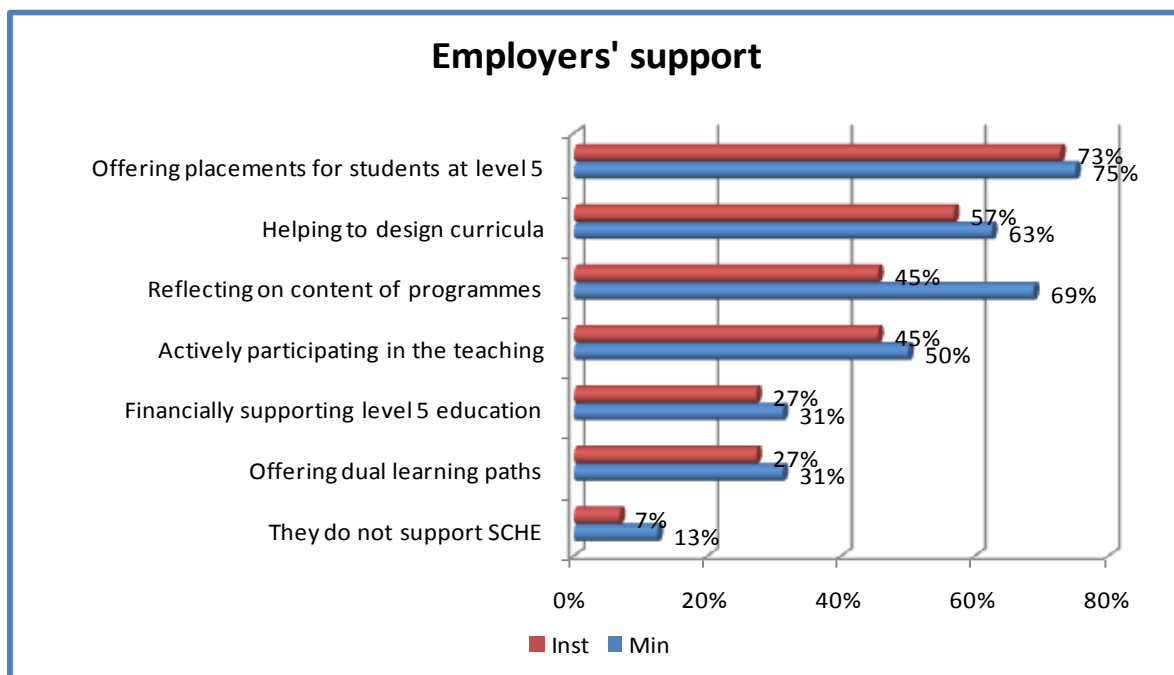


Figure 15: Employers' support

Where participation in teaching is concerned opinions of institutions and ministries are virtually unanimous as slightly less than half of the institutions and half the ministries state that employers actively participate in teaching in SCHE-programmes. Also as far as financial support and offering dual learning paths are concerned both groups seem to agree. Three out of ten state that employers support SCHE financially and that they offer dual learning paths. Lastly, 13% of the ministries but only 7% of the institutions state that industry does not support SCHE.

In Spain, employers sign specific economic agreements with institutions providing SCHE. In the open comments section several respondents state that the best way to support SCHE is by hiring SCHE graduates. Several respondents also point out that support may vary according to the area concerned. In some countries it is also up to the individual institution to decide on how far they cooperate with employers.

4.5.4. Collaboration with sector bodies and trade unions

Respondents were also asked about the nature of collaboration, if it existed, with sector bodies and trade unions and how this could enhance the employability of students.

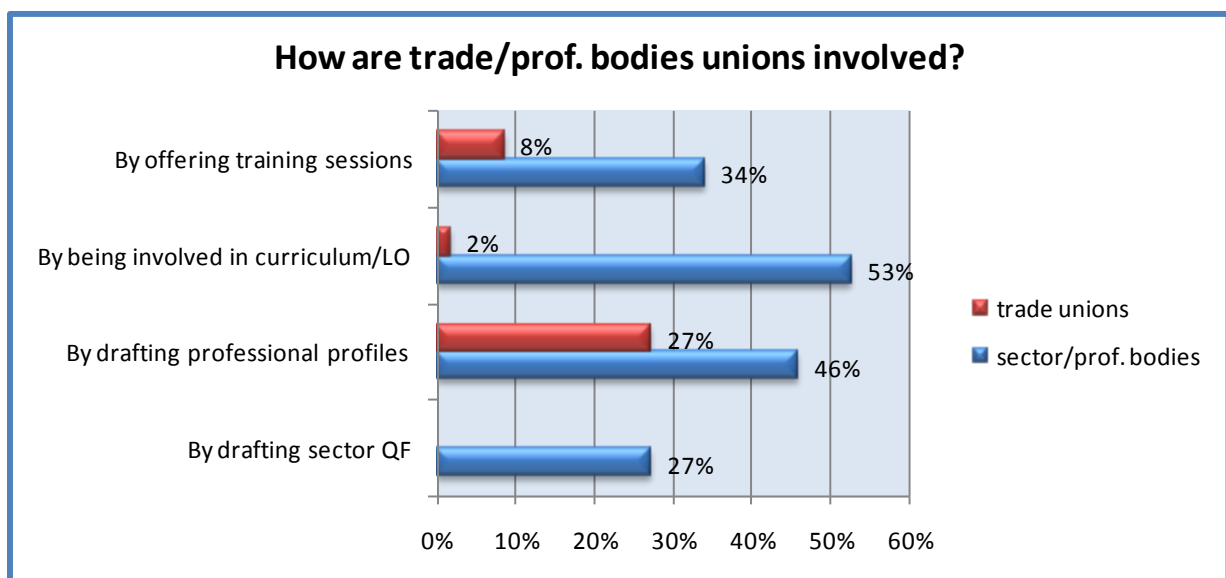


Figure 16: Involvement of sectors and TU

It is clear that collaboration with sectoral or professional bodies is more frequent than collaboration with trade unions. Indeed, one quarter of all respondents state that there is no collaboration whatsoever with trade unions. The only activity in which trade unions seem to be actively involved among the countries surveyed is the drafting of professional profiles where more than one quarter of respondents state that trade unions are actively involved. Nearly half of all respondents also state that sectoral bodies or professional organisations are actively involved in drafting professional profiles. More than half of all respondents state that sector organisations or professional bodies are actively involved in drafting curricula or programmes. Some respondents point out that nowadays the learning outcomes have become more important than curricula. One third of all respondents also refer to training courses organised by sectoral or professional bodies, whereas only 8% state that training courses are offered by trade unions. Lastly, a little more than one quarter of all respondents mention sectoral qualification frameworks.

Other forms of collaboration with sectoral or professional bodies that are mentioned refer to meetings and forums (NO) and participation in accreditation procedures. The UK EWN representative states that trade unions might collaborate with SCHE by raising awareness of opportunities within SCHE.

4.6. Progression to degree studies

4.6.1. Legislative framework

Respondents were asked whether there is any legislation in place to regulate transfer to (bachelor) degree studies. In most countries this is the case (except for DK, IS, UK). However, as far as the UK EWNI is concerned there is no real legislation, but articulation. Indeed, a requirement for Foundation Degrees is the possibility of progression to a bachelor's honours degree. Also in Scotland funding priorities exist for such articulation. In Denmark there are however specific bachelor programmes to top-up the SCHE programmes and in Iceland students can use part of the credits earned in SCHE to progress to bachelor's programmes. In Cyprus there is specific legislation for the private universities and in the Czech Republic the progression usually depends on the dean of the university. In Ireland the articulation is provided for under the Qualifications (Education and Training) 1999 Act and in Hungary under the Higher Education Act of 2005. In the Netherlands it has been laid down in the Higher Education and Research Act that Associate degree programmes are integrated in professionally orientated bachelor degree programmes and that Ad-degree holders are automatically entitled to complete their bachelor degree with the remaining 120 ECTS, directly or at a later moment. In Norway SCHE is considered a degree programme and the act on HE provides that graduates should be given full recognition when transferring to other programmes and institutions. The SCQF⁴² is a lifelong learning credit framework and all Scottish education exists within it. In Turkey SCHE graduates still have to pass a vertical pass exam to transfer to degree programmes.

Transfer to degree programmes is considered to be common in France, the Netherlands, Norway, and the UK. In these countries SCHE is seen as a fully integrated part of the first cycle. In other countries SCHE can be seen as rather linked to the first cycle as not all credits can be used for progression to a bachelor's degree. In eight countries students can use part of the credits earned at SCHE level to transfer to degree courses (CY, CZ, ES, HU, IS, LV, MT, SI). In four countries students can use part of their credits but have to attend a bridging programme in order to progress to bachelor studies (BEnI, DK, IE and TR).

In Flanders there are several possibilities: for some SCHE programmes a special short programme will lead to the bachelor diploma. For other programmes students can use the credits acquired to reduce the bachelor programme. In both options, a student can also ask for recognition of other prior learning, both formal and informal. In Cyprus, Ireland and the Netherlands students can transfer a maximum of 120 ECTS credits (where 240 ECTS are required for a bachelor degree). Also in France and Norway students can transfer 120 ECTS credits but they will only have to earn an extra 60 ECTS to be awarded a bachelor's degree. In Turkey students can transfer 120 ECTS but it is not clear how many more they will have to earn to be awarded a bachelor's degree. In the Czech Republic and Denmark it depends on the level 6 programme students want to attend and it is the decision of the receiving institution. Also in Iceland and Malta it differs from programme to programme. In Malta VET Higher Diploma or Foundation Degree students move into a first degree course in the second or third year. In Hungary students can transfer between 30 and 60 ECTS and in Slovenia as a rule 60 ECTS. In the UK some institutions assign ECTS credits to modules undertaken as part of a Foundation Degree. The award of 240 UK credits (120 ECTS credits) for a Foundation Degree would seem to be typical.

⁴² The Scottish Qualification Framework

4.6.2. Students progressing to bachelor degree studies

There are no data available for this section for the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium and for Portugal because the SCHE-programmes have only recently been introduced. There were also no data received for Luxembourg and Norway.

The majority of SCHE-students progress to degree courses in France, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands and the UK EWNI and UKSC. This is not surprising considering the fact that in France, Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK 120 ECTS- credits can be transferred. However, in the UK EWNI the number of credits transferred will depend on the progression route of the students. In Scotland HND students are taught alongside degree students.

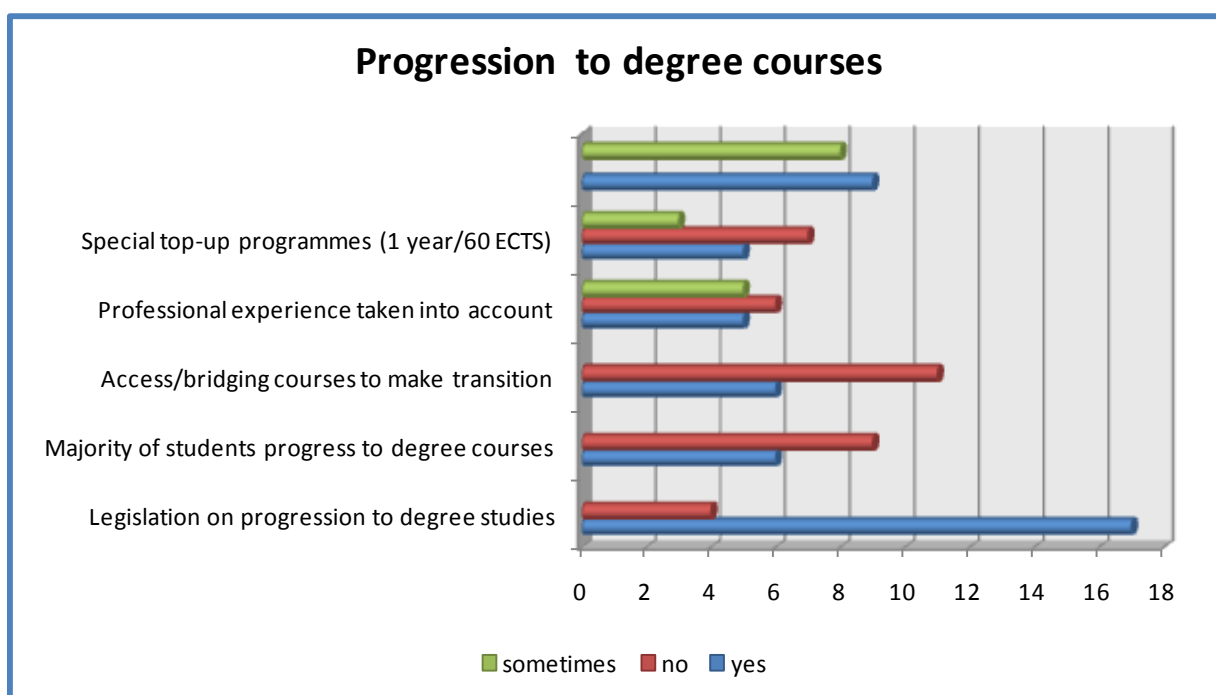


Figure 17: Progression to degree courses

In France the fact that transition is so easy is even seen as a problem because a number of students see SCHE-studies (both in the IUT⁴³ and in the STS⁴⁴) as an easy way to acquire a (professional) bachelor's degree. In fact guidance and counseling are considered to be better, especially in the STS than in the universities. On the other hand students have to be motivated to gain access to these institutions as they have to present a portfolio in order to be granted access to IUT and STS. It is therefore not surprising that most of the students who progress to professional bachelor studies are successful. Nevertheless the authorities think that not enough of these students who are well prepared for the labour market actually access it immediately.

Although there are no countries where students cannot transfer credits towards degree programmes a majority of students in the other countries (CY, CZ, DK, ES Cat, HU, IS, MT, SI, TR) will access the labour market.

⁴³ Institut Universitaire de Technologie

⁴⁴ Section de Technicien Supérieur

There are only six countries where there are “access” or “bridging” courses (BENI, IE, MT, LV, UK EWNI, UKSC). In two of them they are compulsory (BENI, IE). Professional experience is taken into account in five countries (DK, FR, IE, NL, UK EWNI) when students want to progress to degree studies and it usually facilitates the transition. In five other countries it is sometimes taken into account (CY, LV, MT, UKSC). The other countries for which these data were received do not take professional experience into account (CZ, ES CAT, HU, IS, SI, TR).

In five countries there are also special top-up programmes organised (CY, DK, HU, IE, UK EWNI) and in another five these courses are only organised for certain programmes (LV, MT, UKSC). In the other countries no top-up programmes are organised.

As far as foreign students are concerned students coming from other (European) countries with SCHE qualifications can earn a degree using the credits earned in their own country in nine countries (BENI, CZ, IE, IS, MT, NL, NO, UKSC) in eight other countries (CY, DK, ES Cat, FR, HU, LV, SI, UK EWNI) they can progress on the basis of RPL⁴⁵.

As a conclusion it could be stated that compared to the survey carried out in 2003 a lot has changed for the better. In all countries surveyed students can use most of the credits earned in SCHE to progress to degree studies. In Hungary only between 30 and 60 ECTS credits can be used to progress to degree studies. In all other countries the number of ECTS credits that can be transferred is higher on the condition that there is articulation between the courses in SCHE and those followed to acquire a bachelor’s degree. In some countries students can even use all the credits earned to progress to a bachelor’s award.

Usually SCHE-graduates who progress to degree studies do well and are successful in earning a bachelor’s degree. As an example we refer to the Foundation degrees in the UK where more than half the students who studied full-time for their foundation degree (59%) went on to study an honours (bachelor’s) degree in 2008-09. Among part-time qualifiers this proportion was 42 %. Most students who continued their studies did so at the same HEI at which they were registered for their foundation degree. Around 80% of foundation degree qualifiers were credited with the equivalent of full-time study for two years on an honours degree programme, regardless of whether or not they had changed institution for their honours degree study. Of those foundation degree qualifiers who went into the final year of an honours programme in 2008-09, 67 % were reported as graduating in that same year⁴⁶.

As well in France as in the UK many SCHE-graduates are quite successful when progressing to bachelor degree studies. We can therefore assume that SCHE might reduce drop-out rates in higher education, because SCHE students can progress step by step at their own rate.

Although it is not within the scope of this study it is also important to note that students can earn credits towards degree programmes even if they have attended training programmes that are not considered as SCHE such as some of the higher professional programmes in Switzerland. This indicates the growing importance of lifelong and life-wide learning not only within one educational system but also in other systems.

⁴⁵ Recognition of prior learning

⁴⁶ http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2010/10_12/#exec

4.7. Profile of students and teachers

4.7.1. Numbers of students in SCHE

According to the ministries concerned there are at the moment **1,694,080** students in short cycle higher education programmes in Europe (EUR 31) and Turkey. The figure is actually slightly higher as there were no data available for the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium where programmes have only recently been introduced. The figures for Spain are also incomplete as they only concern Catalonia.

Country	Male	Female	Total
BEFR	NDA	NDA	NDA
BENL	NDA	NDA	NDA
CY	3700	3300	7000
CZ	8047	20702	28749
DK	10500	8500	19000
ES Cat	22500	27500	50.000
FR	190000	162000	352000
HU	16100	21000	37100
IE	5175	3703	8878
IS	32	72	104
LV	5594	13053	18647
LU	66	165	231
MT	230	270	500
NL	1200	1800	3000
NO	485	450	935,5
PT			6 214
SI	8523	8356	16879
TR	485000	450500	935500
UKEWNI	74968	99377	174345
UKSC	15050	19950	35000
Total	847170	840698	1694080

Figure 18: Numbers of students in SCHE per country

It is quite surprising that there are slightly more male than female students in SCHE in the countries surveyed. Indeed, in the OECD “Higher Education to 2030⁴⁷” report, chapter on “The Reversal of Gender Inequalities in Higher Education: An on-going Trend” by Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin it is stated that: “of the 18 countries for which data were available in 1985 and 2005, women students were in the majority in 5 countries in 1985 compared with 16 in 2005.

⁴⁷ OECD (2008). *Higher Education to 2030. Volume 1: Demography. Chapter 10. The Reversal of Gender Inequalities in Higher Education: An on-going Trend.*
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/48/28/41939699.pdf>

In 2005, the average share of the student population accounted for by women amounted to 55% in the OECD area (1.2 women to every man)⁴⁸. Moreover, on average in OECD countries, significantly more women obtain university-level qualifications than men, 46% *versus* 30%⁴⁸.

Even if we do not take the figures for Turkey into account (where there is a majority of men participating in SCHE), men still account for more than 48% of the total student population participating in SCHE. **This might indicate that men seem to participate more in SCHE-programmes than they do in other higher education programmes.** SCHE might therefore be a way to reverse the trend of growing gender inequality in higher education especially as there are clear progression routes to bachelor programmes.

As could be expected we find the highest numbers of students in Turkey where there are over 935,500 students (FTE)⁴⁹ studying in SCHE-programmes and the smallest numbers for Malta and Iceland. The figure for Iceland only refers to the students at the University of Iceland. In France there are 188,000 students in Instituts Universitaires de Technologie and 234,000 in the Section de Technicien Supérieur. In England, Northern Ireland and Wales there are 99,760 students on Foundation Degree programmes, nearly 60,000 students on HND (Higher National Diploma) programmes and 15,000 students on Diploma of Higher Education programmes.

As already mentioned above, the only country where the numbers are actually decreasing is Norway where a number of SCHE-programmes are actually being phased out.

4.7.2. Profile of students

Although in virtually all countries the majority of students are studying full-time there are also a number of countries where the majority of students are studying part-time (SI 55%) or where there are considerable percentages of students studying part-time (LV 48%, NL 45%, UK EWNI 43% and IE 43%). It could also be expected that in both the Flemish and French Communities of Belgium there would be a majority of part-time students as at the moment SCHE is still mainly provided in centres for adult education. However, the data are not yet available and the situation might change in the future.

However in most countries the majority of SCHE-students are still studying full-time. According to data provided by Turkish institutions all the students in SCHE (100%) are studying full-time. There are also high percentages of full-time students in Denmark (90%), France (90%), Cyprus (80%), Malta (80%), Hungary (76%), The Czech Republic (72%) and Iceland (70%).

The institutions as well as the countries were asked the percentage of mature students in their country or in their institution. Although in the Netherlands, the UK EWNI and Denmark, the majority of students are studying full-time there is a majority of mature students. In the Netherlands 70% of SCHE-students are mature students and in the UK EWNI 65% of foundation degree students are aged over 21 on entry and in Denmark 60%. On the other hand it is not surprising that a majority of mature students were also recorded in Slovenia (55%). In fact these mature students are also those who are studying part-time. These percentages were confirmed by the institutional respondents. The

⁴⁸ http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/eag_highlights-2010-en/01/04/index.html;jsessionid=j86jtnmk8gd.delta?contentType=&itemId=/content/chapter/eag_highlights-2010-6-en&containerItemId=/content/serial/2076264x&accessItemIds=/content/book/eag_highlights-2010-en&mimeType=text/html

⁴⁹ Full-time equivalents

institutions were also asked the average age of students at their institution. Most of them indicate that they are between 21-25 and some state that they are over 25 or even 30. Considering the high percentages of mature and part-time students we might conclude that SCHE-students are often not the typical first entrants in higher education and therefore SCHE contributes to lifelong learning.

Lastly, the ministries and the institutions were asked whether underprivileged students were over-represented in SCHE or in their institutions. Although hardly any data seem to be available concerning this issue (only five ministries gave percentages) the majority of both the ministries and the institutions think that compared to other levels of education there are more disadvantaged students in SCHE. In France there are between 40% and 45% disadvantaged students in SCHE, in Ireland between 35% and 40% disadvantaged students and in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the Czech Republic and Hungary less than 30% (although over-represented). As far as Hungary and the Czech Republic are concerned the data of the Ministry are confirmed by the institutions and they confirm that disadvantaged students are not over-represented.

However, more institutions seem to think that disadvantaged students are over-represented. This might have to do with the fact that although there are no country-wide data available, institutions know the social status of their students better. Thus, although the Turkish Ministry does not provide statistics, most Turkish institutions seem to think that disadvantaged students are over-represented. The majority of institutions in most countries (except CZ, HU, NL, IS) state that disadvantaged students are over-represented in their institution. Even at the level of the institutions data are not always available or known (NO, UKSC).

Nevertheless it could be stated that SCHE is contributing to widening participation in higher education as there are apparently more mature and part-time students and most probably also more disadvantaged students than in other higher education programmes.

We can conclude that SCHE programmes and courses are provided for an increasingly diverse target audience. During interviews with amongst others representatives from Ireland and the Netherlands it became apparent that the cohort **of mature students in particular is growing in SCHE** as more workers feel the need to upgrade their skills, especially in view of the present economic situation. The fact that SCHE is not only provided at traditional HEI's but also in a number of other settings such as further education colleges, vocational colleges, adult education centres etc. definitely facilitates the accessibility of higher education and therefore contributes to widening participation and to the social dimension in higher education.

4.7.3. Profile of lecturers in SCHE

The respondents were also asked what qualification the majority of lecturers or lecturers in SCHE have at their institution or in their country. No data were received for this section from CY, LV and PT. There are four countries where the majority of staff has a bachelor's degree (IE, NL, UKSC, and UKEWNI). In Scotland there are also many higher degree educated staff. In the majority of countries for which data were received teachers have a master's degree (BEfr, BEnl, CZ, DK, ES CAT, HU, LU, MT, SI, TR). Also the Cypriot and Latvian institutions that did fill in this section of the questionnaire state that the majority of their lecturers in SCHE have a master's degree. In three countries the majority of lecturers have a Ph. D. (FR, IS, NO). It is not surprising that this is the case because both in Norway and

in Iceland SCHE programmes are only provided at university. In France we have to make a distinction between the IUT and the STS. In the former the majority of lecturers has a Ph.D. in the latter the majority has a master's degree although some lecturers also have a Ph.D. Most institutional respondents agree with the information given by their ministry. However, in the Netherlands the institutional respondents state that the majority of their lecturers have a master's degree. In Slovenia there is a mixed response with half the institutions stating that the lecturers have a master's degree and half the institutions stating that the majority of lecturers have a bachelor's degree. Several respondents mention that most of the lecturers also have a teaching qualification. Some also have trade-related qualifications. To be able to teach in tertiary education in the French Community of Belgium, lecturers have to be holders of a certificate valid for higher education (*certificat d'aptitude pédagogique approprié à l'enseignement supérieur*, CAPAES) which is quite unique. To be able to get this CAPAES the applicants have to hold an academic degree.

As far as the profile of lecturers is concerned there is a mixture of lecturers with an academic and a professional profile in thirteen of the countries surveyed (BEfr, CY, CZ, HU, IE, LU, LV, MT, NO, SI, UK ENIW, UKSC). In three countries (DK, NL, PT) the majority of lecturers have a professional profile (with experience in a professional context) and in four countries (ES CAT, FR, IS, TR) most lecturers have an academic profile according to the ministerial respondents.

As far as the institutions are concerned five institutions state that the majority of their lecturers have a professional profile (1 BENL, 4 SI) and fifteen institutions state that they have a majority of lecturers with an academic profile (1 CZ, 4 FR, 1 UK, 1 DK, 1 ES, 1 NO, 2 HU, 1 IE, 1 IS, 1 SI, 1 TR). Lastly nineteen institutions report that they have a combination of lecturers with an academic and a professional profile (1 BENL, 1 CY, 4 CZ, 1DK, 1FR, 2 HU, 1 LV, 1MT, 2 NL, 3 SI, 2 TR).

There are three countries where a certain percentage of lecturers in SCHE are obliged to have professional experience (FR, MT, SI). In all the other countries there is no legal requirement. As far as Malta and Slovenia are concerned the responses of the ministry and the institutions coincide. In Slovenia all the lecturers (100%) must have professional experience and in Malta 80%. In France two different responses were received: the national contact point indicates a minimum between 10% and 15% of lecturers needing professional experience whereas two institutional respondents indicate 33%. In Hungary there seems to be a misunderstanding. Although the ministry states that there is no legal obligation to have a minimum percentage of lecturers with professional experience, several institutions state a minimum of 60% and the Hungarian Association of institutions providing SCHE indicates that although there is no legal prescription it is expected that a certain percentage of the lecturers have professional experience.

We can conclude that although there is no legal obligation in most countries to have a certain percentage of lecturers with professional experience, most institutions have a mixture of lecturers or lecturers with an academic and a professional profile.

Most lecturers in SCHE work full-time according to the national respondents. This is also confirmed by the institutions. Twenty-two institutional respondents also state that the majority of lecturers work full-time. In Cyprus the ministry states that most lecturers in SCHE work part-time combined with work in industry but the only institutional respondent states that the majority of their lecturers work full-time. In Flanders one institutional respondent states that the majority of their

lecturers combine work in industry with teaching in SCHE, whereas another one states that the lecturers work full-time and the ministry does not yet have the data. In the Czech Republic the majority of lecturers work part-time in SCHE, combined with teaching at another level of education. This is confirmed by most institutions and can be explained by the fact that the tertiary professional colleges often share the premises with a secondary school. In France and Hungary we also find a number of institutional respondents that state that most lecturers at their institution work part-time combined with teaching at another institution or at another level. However, in Hungary the national respondent assumes that most lecturers work part-time combined with work in industry. In Ireland the institutional and national respondents agree that lecturers work part-time combined with teaching at another level or in another institution. In Slovenia there are as well lecturers working full-time as part-time combined with either work in industry, in another institution or at another level of education. In all other countries, both the national respondents and the institutional respondents state that the majority of lecturers work full time.

4.8. Quality Assurance and Accreditation

When looking at quality assurance and accreditation ministries were asked in how far all, most, some or none of the institutions applied internal quality assurance and whether it was compulsory or on a voluntary basis. Moreover they were asked whether there were external quality assurance mechanisms and what they were. Lastly, they were asked whether there was an accreditation mechanism and once again who granted the accreditation. The results were then linked to the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*⁵⁰ as defined by ENQA⁵¹.

Country	IQA all	IQA most	IQA some	EQA all	EQA new	no EQA (y/QAA)	Accredit A	Ex ante ac	No accr.ye AA	
Befr		•		•			ministry		•	ministry
Benl	•			•			nat.+exp	•		internatio
CY			•		•		nat.+exp	•		national
CZ	•			•			inspecto	•		ministry
DK		•		•			nat.	•		national
ES	•			•			prof.+ot	•		ministry
FR			•	•			ministry	•		ministry
HU	•			•			nat.	•		national
IE	•			•			nat.	•		national
IS	•			•			nat.+exp	•		ministry
LV	•			•			nat.	•		ministry
LU	•			•			nat.+experts		•	internatio
MT		•		•			other			•
NL	•			•			nat.+exp	•		internatio
NO	•			•			nat.	•		national
PT				•			nat.+experts		•	internatio
SI	•			•			nat.	•		ministry
TR			•			•				•
UK EWNI				•			nat.	•		prof./dep
UK SC	•			•			nat.	•		reg./prof.

Figure 19: QA and accreditation⁵²

⁵⁰ European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2009). *ENQA Report on Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Helsinki: ENQA
http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_3edition%20%282%29.pdf

⁵¹ European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

⁵² No detailed information was received from Portugal

4.8.1. Internal quality assurance

As can be seen in the table above, internal quality assurance is carried out by all institutions in about half of the countries surveyed, mostly because they are legally obliged to do so. In some countries such as Spain and Latvia all institutions do it on a voluntary basis. The situation in the French community of Belgium is rather unclear as they are developing tools for internal and external quality assurance. However, it is not clear whether most or some institutions apply internal quality assurance. In France, the ministry thinks that only some institutions use tools for internal quality assurance. However, some institutions (especially IUT) think that most or even all institutions apply internal quality assurance. In Turkey, the ministry assumed that institutions do not apply internal quality assurance. However, the institutions state that most or some of the institutions do apply internal quality assurance. For this section no information was received from Portugal and the UK EWNI. However it can be assumed that in Portugal institutions apply internal quality assurance as they state that they are working along the European Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance. It is clear that internal quality assurance is especially applied when there is a legal obligation to do so.

As internal quality assurance of HEIs is seen as the first step of quality assurance according to ENQA it would be preferable if a legal obligation were to be imposed on all institutions providing SCHE. Indeed “Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards... The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available.” (ENQA, 2009,p.7)⁵³.

4.8.2. External quality assurance

In all countries (except Turkey) there is already some form of external quality assurance. In Cyprus the external quality assurance is only applied where the accreditation of new programmes is concerned. However in several countries the external quality assurance agencies are very often not yet the independent agencies as defined by ENQA in the standards and guidelines for external quality assurance agencies. Indeed, according to the European standards for external quality assurance agencies by ENQA : “Agencies should be independent to the extent both that they have autonomous responsibility for their operations and that the conclusions and recommendations made in their reports cannot be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or other stakeholders⁵⁴.”

Some ministries explicitly pointed this out. Thus, in the French community of Belgium an independent quality assurance agency has been set up for higher education but it does not apply to SCHE yet and in France discussions are still ongoing as to how to set up an independent quality assurance agency. At the moment the ministry is still responsible for quality assurance. Also in the Czech Republic external quality assurance is applied by the ministry of education. In ten countries quality assurance is carried out by a national quality assurance agency (DK, HU, IE, LV, NL, NO, SI, UKENIW, UKSC). In four countries quality assurance is carried out by a national agency assisted by

⁵³ European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2009). *ENQA Report on Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Helsinki: ENQA, p. 9
http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_3edition%20%282%29.pdf

⁵⁴ European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2009). *ENQA Report on Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Helsinki: ENQA, p. 9
http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_3edition%20%282%29.pdf

international experts (BEnl, CY, IS, NL, LU, PT) and in one country (ES) by a professional body or another quality assurance agency. Also in Malta quality assurance is carried out by an independent body but it was not defined which one. In three countries quality assurance is still carried out by the ministry of education (BEfr, CZ, FR). In the case of the French Community of Belgium this is only a temporary situation.

4.8.3. Accreditation

Eighteen countries state that their SCHE programmes are accredited. Only Turkey and Malta do not have an accreditation procedure yet. However it must be pointed out that there are three countries where there is an accreditation “ex ante” (BEfr, LU, PT). In these countries programmes (only) have to be accredited before they can be introduced. Afterwards there is external quality assurance but no new accreditation procedure. In the Czech Republic and in Scotland there are several ways to be accredited.

However, in many countries the accreditation is not carried out by independent agencies as defined in the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.

Indeed, in six countries accreditation is still granted by the ministry of education (CZ, ES, FR, IS, LV, SI). In Spain accreditation can also be granted by a regional accreditation agency or a professional accreditation agency. In six other countries accreditation is granted by a national accreditation agency (CY, DK, HU, IE, NL, NO). In the Flemish Community of Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal accreditation is granted by an international accreditation agency.

4.9. Use of ECTS and Diploma supplement

4.9.1. Use of ECTS⁵⁵

All national contact points (usually ministries) were asked whether a national credit system is used or whether they use ECTS. The opportunity was also given to indicate that ECTS is used alongside a national credit system. It becomes clear from the table above that all the countries surveyed use a credit system. Nevertheless we have noticed that a credit system is not always used to express the workload of a programme but that in most countries it is still expressed in years.

In seven countries (ES, IE, LV, SE, TR, UKENIW and UKSC) a national credit system is used. In twelve countries ECTS is used (BEfr, BEnl, CY, CZ, DK, IS, LU, MT, NL, NO, PT, SI) and in two countries (FR, HU) a national credit system is used alongside ECTS. It should, however, be noted that several institutional respondents from Ireland, Turkey and the UKENI state that a national credit system is used alongside ECTS.

⁵⁵ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

Country	national CS	ECTS	ECTS/nat CS	by all instit.	by most inst	by some ins	legal obligat	easy transit	intern. coop
BEfr		•		•			•		
BEnl		•		•			•		
CY		•		•					•
CZ		•			•			•	
DK		•		•			•		
ES	•								
FR			•	•			•		
HU			•	•			•		
IE	•			•			•		
IS		•		•			•		
LV	•					•	•		
LU		•		•			•		
MT		•			•			•	
NL		•		•			•		
NO		•		•			•		
PT		•			•				•
SI		•		•			•		
TR	•			•					•
UK EWNI	•					•			
UK SC	•							•	

Figure 20: ECTS⁵⁶

This could explain why, although only twelve countries stated that they use ECTS, and two that they use it alongside their national credit system, fourteen countries (BEfr, BEnl, CY, DK, FR, HU, IE, IS, LU, NL, NO, SI, TR) say that it is used by all institutions and three say that it is used by most institutions (CZ, MT, PT). In two countries some institutions use ECTS (LV, UKENIW).

Most institutions use ECTS because they are legally obliged to do so (BEfr, BEnl, DK, FR, HU, IE, IS, LV, LU, NL, NO, SI). In the case of Ireland it is not clear whether the legal obligation concerns the national credit system or ECTS. In the case of Latvia we find the strange situation where institutions are legally obliged to use ECTS but where the ministry states that only some institutions use it.

In the Czech Republic, Malta and Scotland institutions use ECTS because it facilitates the transition to bachelor degree programmes. In the case of Scotland it is once again not clear whether the statement concerns the national credit system or ECTS. In Cyprus, Portugal and Turkey it is used to facilitate international cooperation. It is in fact surprising that not more countries see ECTS as a way to facilitate international cooperation.

It is to be regretted that not all institutions providing SCHE use ECTS. Even if a national credit system is comparable to ECTS there is the symbolic value of ECTS that is lacking. Moreover, although national credit systems might facilitate transfer and accumulation within national education systems they do not enhance transparency within the European Higher Education Area. ECTS can help recognition of a student's studies between different institutions but also between national education systems. It is clear that the best way to implement the general use of ECTS is by making it legally compulsory. With the exception of Latvia ECTS is used by all institutions in the countries where the use of ECTS is compulsory.

⁵⁶ For Portugal this table was filled out on the basis of desk-top research

4.9.2. The use of the diploma supplement (DS)

Ministries and institutions were asked whether the Diploma Supplement is used by all, by most or by some institutions and why.

In twelve countries (BEFR, BENL, DK, HU, IE, IS, LV, LU, NL, NO, SI, TR) the diploma supplement is used by all institutions⁵⁷. In all these countries, with the exception of Turkey, there is a legal obligation to do so. It is strange that, although there is a legal obligation in France not all, but most institutions use the diploma supplement. In the Czech Republic there is no legal obligation but institutions are encouraged to use the diploma supplement and most of them do so. Institutions are also convinced that it helps the transition to degree programmes but also access to the labour market. Also in Malta most institutions use the diploma supplement, mainly because it facilitates the transition to degree programmes. In Cyprus, Portugal and Scotland only a limited number of institutions use the diploma supplement. In Turkey institutions use the diploma supplement because it facilitates international cooperation. This is also the main purpose of the diploma supplement in Portugal where all students who are internationally mobile are issued a diploma supplement.

Country	all institut	most insti	some insti	not used	legal oblig	instit. enc	easy trans	int. coop.
BEFR	•				•			
BENL	•				•			
CY			•			•		
CZ		•					•	
DK	•				•			
ES				•				
FR		•			•			
HU	•				•			
IE	•				•			
IS	•				•			
LV	•				•			
LU	•				•			
MT		•					•	
NL	•				•			
NO	•				•			
PT			•					•
SI	•				•			
TR	•							•
UK EWN								
UK SC			•					

Figure 21: Diploma supplement

Four countries state that both the diploma supplement and the certificate supplement is used (DK, FR, HU, MT). However, most countries state that the certificate supplement is not used because the diploma supplement is used.

⁵⁷ No information received for UK EWN, information on Portugal received through desktop research

4.10. Internationalisation⁵⁸

4.10.1. Lecturer mobility

Because a number of national contact points signaled that it would be better to retrieve this information from the institutions, the information in this part is mainly based on the responses received from the institutions.

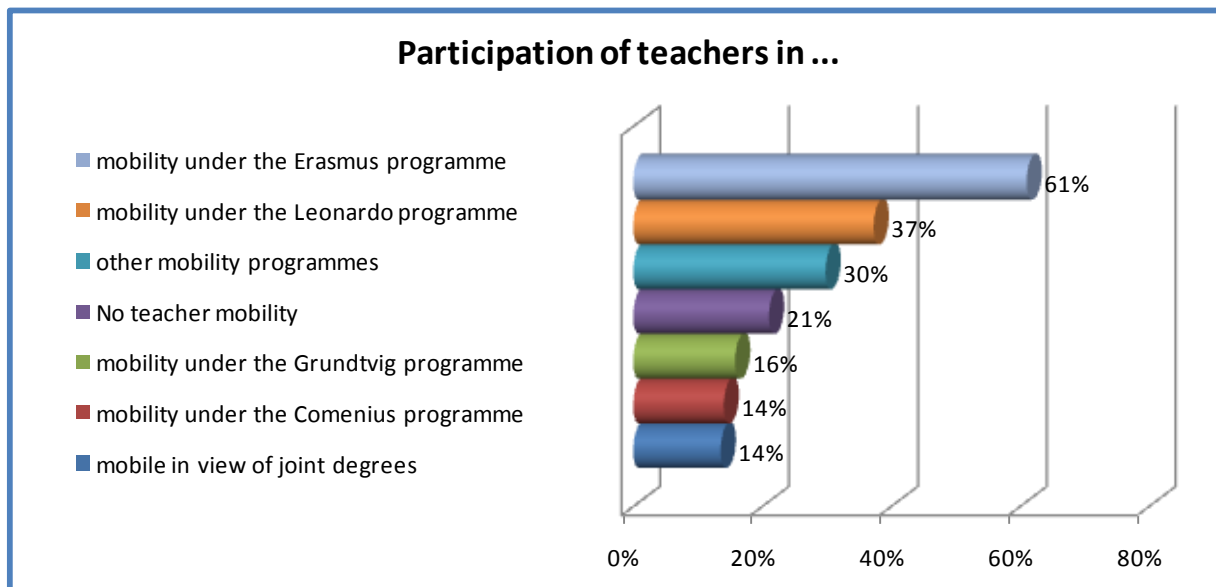


Figure 22: Teacher mobility

Sixty-one % of respondent institutions state that some of their lecturers are mobile under the Erasmus programme (CZ, DK, ES, FR, HU, IE, IS, MT, LV, NL, NO, SI, TR) and 37% participate in teacher mobility under the Leonardo programme (CZ, ES, FR, HU, IE, IS, MT, LV, SI, TR). Thirty % of the institutions participate in other mobility programmes (DK, FR, HU, IS, MT, LV, NO, SI). Examples that were given are mobility within Nordplus⁵⁹ but also cooperation Canada, Japan, Korea, India - scientific projects, organising international symposiums. Teacher mobility was also done in view of the preparation of an Intensive programme. One institution mentioned mobility in the framework of the IMO⁶⁰.

Twenty one % of the respondent institutions mention that they do not participate in teacher mobility. In 16% of the institutions lecturers participate in Grundtvig mobility (BEnl, DK, IS, MT, LV) and 14% in Comenius mobility (CZ, IS, MT, LV, SI). Exactly as many lecturers are mobile in view of setting up joint degrees (CZ, DK, FR, MT, NO, TR).

4.10.2. Student mobility

As far as student mobility is concerned the highest participation rate (61%) is also in mobility under the Erasmus programme (CY, CZ, ES, DK, FR, HU, IE, IS, MT, LV, NL, NO, SI, TR) and 32% in

⁵⁸ For this section no information was received from BEFR, LU, PT and UK and limited information from BENL

⁵⁹ The Nordplus Framework Programme offers financial support to a variety of educational cooperation between partners in the area of lifelong learning from the eight participating countries in the Baltic and Nordic regions.

⁶⁰ International Maritime organisation.

Leonardo mobility (CY, CZ, ES, FR, HU, LV, MT, SI, TR). Once again 30 % of respondents indicated that they participate in other mobility programmes (CZ, DK, ES, FR, LV, MT, NO, SI). The Nordplus programme was also mentioned for student mobility as well as student mobility for placements and observation in the framework of AEHT.⁶¹

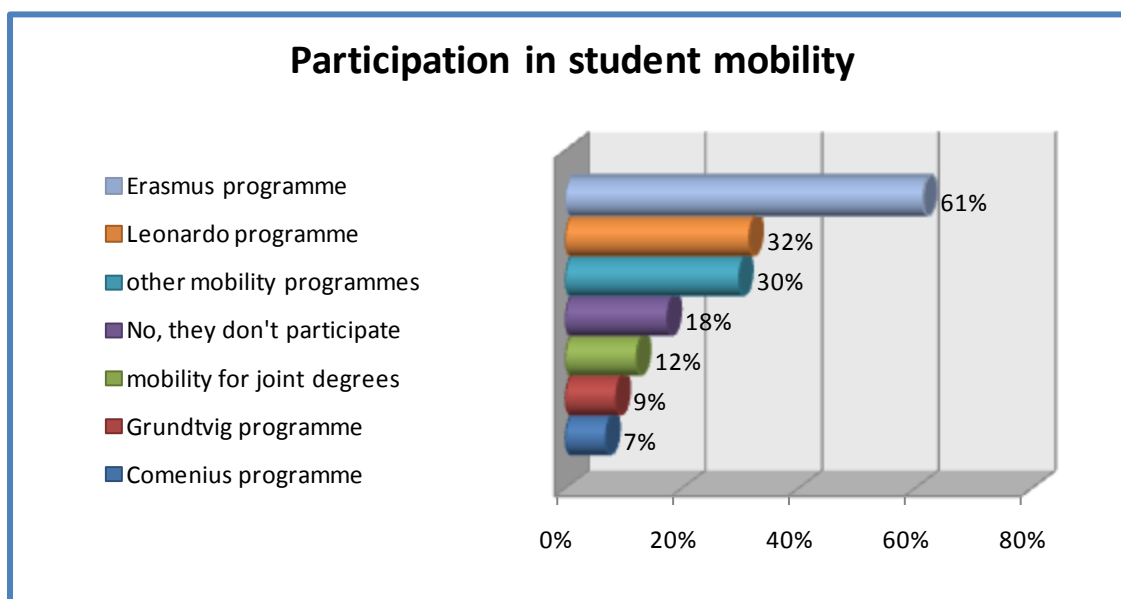


Figure 23: Student mobility

Eighteen % of respondents state that their students do not participate in mobility and 12% of students are mobile in the framework of joint degrees (DK, FR, IE, MT, NO, TR). Only 9% of the institutions state that their students participate in Grundtvig mobility (DK, MT, LV, SE) and even less that their students are mobile under the Comenius programme (CZ, HU, LV, MT, SE). The fact that there are more lecturers participating in Grundtvig and Comenius mobility can probably be explained by the fact that lecturers probably participate in Grundtvig and Comenius in-service training courses.

4.10.3. Tools used for student mobility

Respondents were asked which tools are used when students are mobile. It should be noted, however, that some of these tools are only used for the Erasmus sub-programme (Learning agreement (LA) and Transcript of records (ToR)) and more specifically for Erasmus mobility for studies. However, it would have made the questionnaire far too long if this distinction were made.

Learning agreement

A "Learning Agreement" sets out the programme of studies to be followed by Erasmus students, as approved by the student, the home and the host institution⁶². As can be seen, 42% of the institutions indicate that students leave with a learning agreement. In the previous section we found that 61% of the institutions indicate that their students are mobile under the Erasmus sub-programmes. Some of them could however be mobile for placements and not for studies. These students leave with a placement agreement (grant agreement) covering the mobility period and signed

⁶¹ European Association of Hotel and Tourism Schools - Association Européenne des Ecoles d'Hôtellerie et de Tourisme

⁶² http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc892_en.htm

between the student and his or her home higher education institution and a "Training Agreement" regarding his or her specific programme for the placement period; this agreement must be endorsed by the home higher education institution and the host organisation⁶³. Only 16 % of respondents state that their students do not leave with a learning agreement. These students might be mobile under other mobility programmes. We can therefore assume that probably all or most SCHE-students who take part in Erasmus mobility for studies leave with a learning agreement.

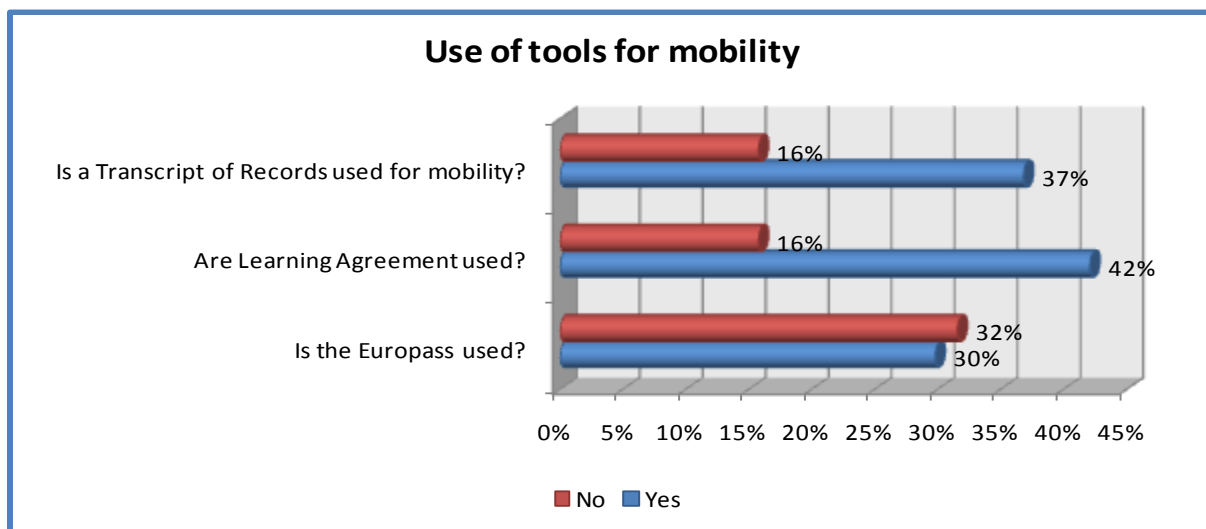


Figure 24: Tools for mobility

Transcript of records⁶⁴

The host institution must provide the ERASMUS student and his/her home institution with a transcript of records confirming that the agreed programme has been completed and confirming the results. The home institution must give full academic recognition for satisfactorily completed activities during the ERASMUS mobility period as agreed in the Learning Agreement.

Thirty-seven % of respondents state that students who are mobile receive a transcript of records. Once again 16% of respondents state that students do not receive a transcript of records. Once again this could concern students who are mobile under other programmes. However, as fewer respondents react positively we could assume that not all students who leave for ERASMUS mobility for studies receive a transcript of records.

Europass Mobility documents⁶⁵

The Europass Mobility is a record of any organised period of time that a person spends in another European country for the purpose of learning or training (called Europass Mobility experience). This includes for example: a work placement in a company; an academic term as part of an exchange programme or a voluntary placement in an NGO.

⁶³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc894_en.htm

⁶⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc892_en.htm

⁶⁵ <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernav/InformationOn/EuropassMobility.csp>

Thirty two % of respondents state that the Europass mobility documents are not used. This can easily be explained by the fact that students in SCHE are mainly mobile under the Erasmus programme. Only 30% state that the Europass mobility documents are used. These might be students who are mobile under the Erasmus mobility for placements but also students who are mobile under the Leonardo or Grundtvig programme.

4.10.4. Participation in other international programmes

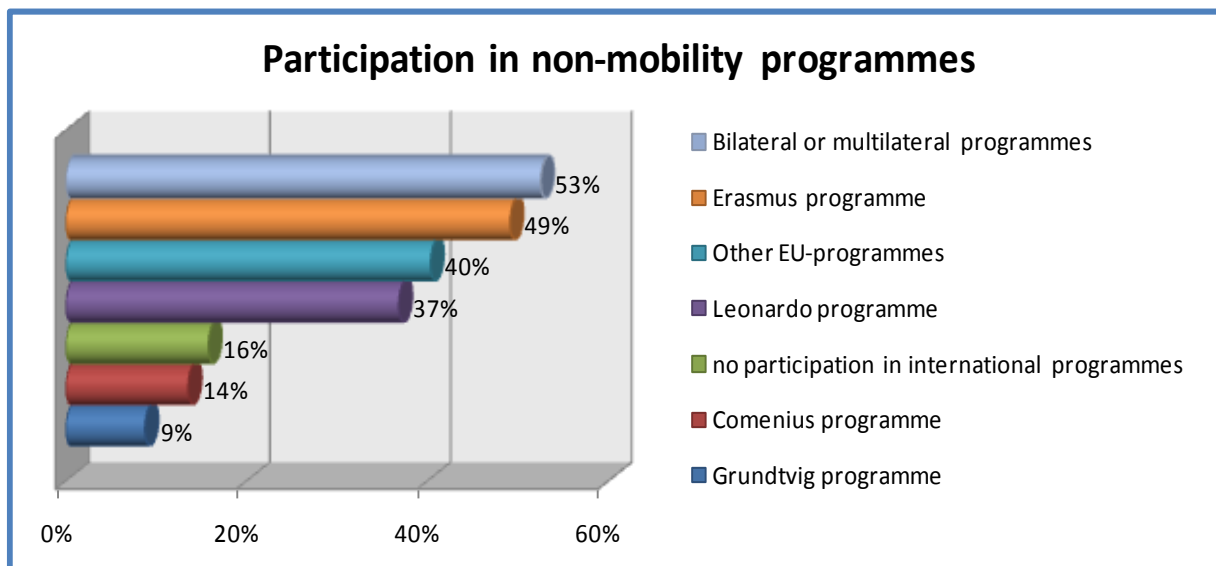


Figure 25: non-mobility programmes

More than half of the respondents state that institutions providing SCHE participate in bilateral or multilateral non-mobility programmes. Nearly half of the respondents state that institutions participate in non-mobility actions of the Erasmus programme and four out of ten states that they participate in EU-programmes that were not mentioned in the questionnaire. More than one third participates in Leonardo, 14% in Comenius and 9% in Grundtvig. Sixteen % of respondents state that their institution does not participate in international programmes.

4.10.5. Obstacles to mobility in SCHE⁶⁶

Although 17% of respondents explicitly state that they do not see any specific obstacles to mobility of SCHE-students and lecturers, many respondents mention specific problems mainly related to the profile of the students, financial problems, insufficient knowledge of foreign languages, the small size of the institutions, the lack of administrative support and lastly the short duration of SCHE – studies and a lack of interest from students and lecturers. Apparently there are also a number of institutions that are not yet Erasmus eligible.

One of the Slovene respondents summarizes a number of the problems that confront them: *“There is not as much of study mobility as we would wish. The reason is mostly a language obstacle and non-mobile students as the result of their **weaker social background**. The mobility of staff is quite good. Still the problem is also in the small colleges who are not well staffed for*

⁶⁶ For this section responses were received from UK ENIW and Scotland

international co-operation and organisation of mobility and projects, although they are all Erasmus eligible. In ASHVC we would like to organize an International Office to give these services for all HVC network. It might be helpful. “

One quarter of all respondents refer to the specific profile of SCHE students and usually their weaker financial status. Thus one of the respondents states: *“As most of our students are part-time students who are working full-time and studying in the evening, mobility is not an option for them that can be used during their studies.”* Also in the UK this seems to be an obstacle to mobility: *“Many UK students work part-time to finance their studies and many fear losing their job if they leave the country for a few months.”* The Scottish national contact points out that Commission rule changes have worked against students/institutions undertaking much SCHE mobility in Scotland.

Fifteen % of the respondents also think that a **lack of foreign language knowledge** is an obstacle for SCHE-mobility. However, this is not a specific problem for SCHE.

The small size of institutions, especially those that only provide SCHE, however, is a specific problem. **Eight %** of the respondents state that due to the small size of the institutions it is impossible to have an international office or an international coordinator. It was already mentioned by one of the Slovenian respondent but also another Slovenian respondent states that: *“Both teachers and students (especially in SCHE due to socially lower status) are very non-mobile. Also our college is very small and we cannot have a person employed only to work on international contacts and promote mobility. That makes it very difficult to prepare mobility, maintain it and motivate students and teachers.”* The fact that the administration for mobility is seen as very complicated seems to be a serious obstacle for small institutions.

Also the **short duration of SCHE-programmes** is seen as a specific problem for SCHE, especially for Erasmus mobility for studies as the students cannot be mobile during their first year. As one respondent states: *“The relatively short duration of the programmes can make it difficult to have time to study abroad. Students in SCHE are typically older than other types of students and will thus typically have obligations that hinder their international mobility.”* These obstacles are confirmed by a number of other respondents.

A few respondents also mention that SCHE-institutions are not always eligible for Erasmus mobility. Apparently this is especially a problem for the Czech Republic where Tertiary Professional colleges are not yet recognised as institutions providing SCHE.

The other obstacles that are mentioned are not specific to SCHE. Thus, several respondents mention problems concerning arrangements connected to students' course requirements and releasing lecturers at the moment when their absence would have least negative impact on students' learning." Also the incompatibility of the different educational systems as far as the possibilities for mobility are concerned is seen as an obstacle (e.g. exam periods, course periods or possibilities for placements at different moments of the year).

The last obstacle mentioned is a lack of interest and motivation. This might be due to the lack of motivated staff in small institutions but also to a lack of knowledge about the possibilities and the advantages of international mobility.

4.11. Cooperation with the local community

4.11.1. Involvement of local industry

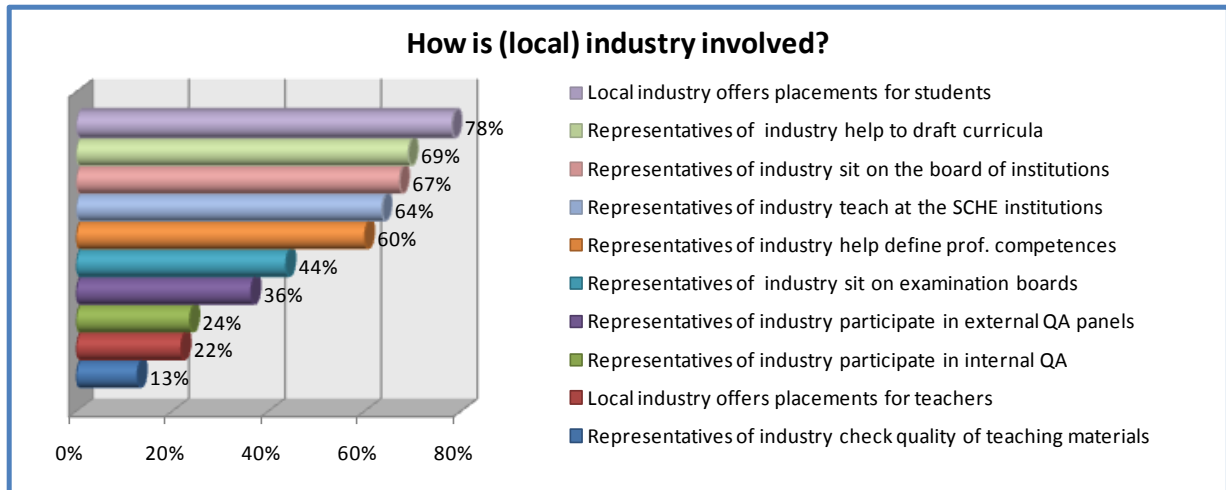


Figure 26: involvement of local industry

In the section on employment it was already pointed out that as SCHE-studies are usually labour-market oriented and that therefore the collaboration with industry in general and local industry in particular is essential for SCHE-providers. In certain countries this cooperation is even embedded in legislation (e.g. BEnI). Therefore respondents were asked how their institution or institutions in their country collaborated with representatives from (local) industry, with sectoral bodies and with trade unions. As there were only minor discrepancies between responses from ministries and institutional respondents all responses were taken together for this section.

It is not surprising to find out that the main collaboration with industry concerns placements for students. Seven out of ten respondents already considered this as the main support from industry to SCHE providers and even more (78%) mentioned that (local) industry offers placements for SCHE-students as a way of collaboration. In nearly seven out of ten respondent institutions representatives from (local) industry help to draft the curricula for SCHE – programmes or sit on the Board of the institution (67%).

In nearly two thirds of the institutions representatives from (local) industry are actively involved in the teaching and in six out of ten institutions they help to define the professional competences. Representatives from industry also sit on examination boards in more than four out of ten institutions and participate on external quality assurance panels in one third of the institutions. Involvement in internal quality assurance is less frequent with only one quarter of the institutions indicating that representatives from industry are involved. One out of five institutions also indicates that local industry offers placements for lecturers and only 13% of institutions state that representatives from industry are involved in checking the quality of teaching materials.

According to the responses received collaboration is least frequent in Latvia and Iceland. The Norwegian ministerial respondent also mentioned little collaboration except meetings and forums and points out that collaboration is mainly organised at the level of the faculty but according to the

institutional respondent there is collaboration concerning teaching, defining professional competences and internal and external quality assurance.

One Cypriot respondent states that although there is collaboration, it is mainly informal and one Czech respondent refers to project work that is being organised by SCHE providers in collaboration with industry. The Flemish ministry points out that representatives from (local) industry are also involved in the accreditation procedure. In Luxembourg representatives from local industry are involved in the selection committees if students have to be selected through an entrance exam or by presenting an application.

4.11.2. Reasons for collaboration

The institutions providing SCHE were asked why they wanted to collaborate with industry but also why industry wanted to collaborate with them. Because the responses from ministries and institutions diverged on certain items the percentages are once again given separately. These discrepancies could be caused by the fact that there were hardly any or no institutional responses from countries such as the French Community of Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, Scotland and England, Wales and Northern Ireland whereas responses were received from all ministries (for Luxembourg, Portugal and the French Community of Belgium through e-mail and interviews). On the other hand countries from Central and Eastern Europe are over-represented in the sample.

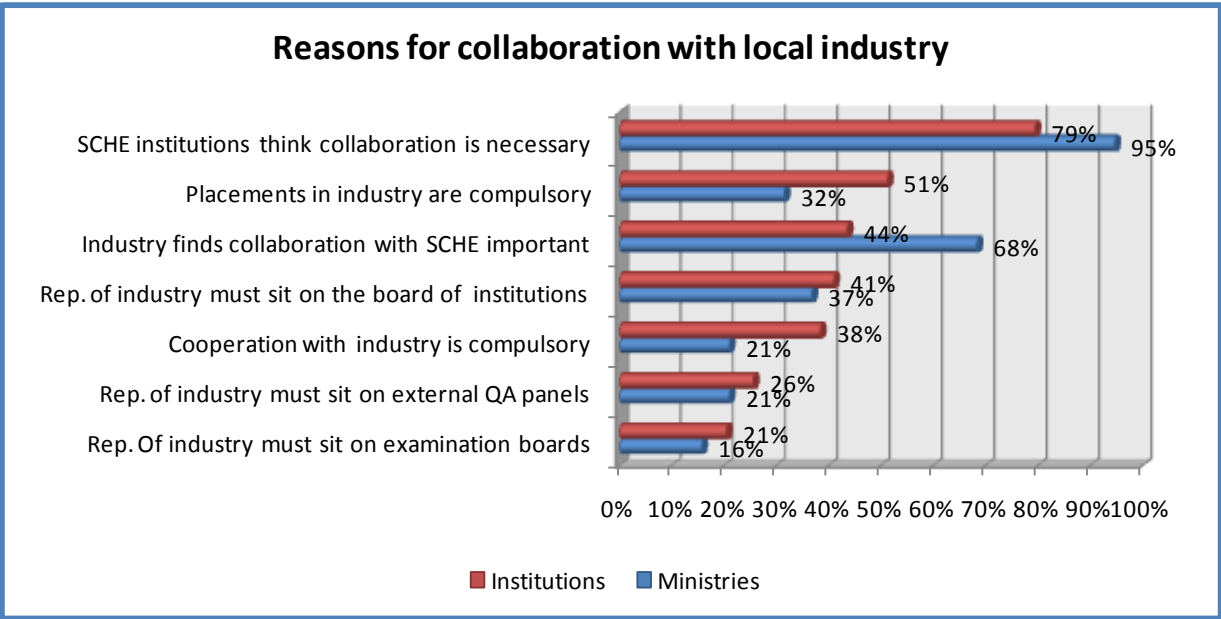


Figure 27: Reasons for collaboration

Both the institutions and the ministries think that the main reason for collaboration is the fact that institutions providing SCHE find this collaboration important. Virtually all ministries state that this collaboration is important and nearly eight out of ten institutions think this is the main reason for collaboration. Seven out of ten ministries think that (local) industry finds this collaboration important. However, less than half of the institutions are convinced that (local) industry finds this collaboration important. Especially in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta a number of institutions were not convinced that local industry attaches enough importance to collaboration with SCHE-institutions.

More than half the institutions state that placements in industry are compulsory whereas only one third of ministries state that they are compulsory (BEnl, BEfr, SE, SI, TR). The same discrepancy is found as far as cooperation with industry is concerned. Nearly four out of ten institutions state that cooperation with industry is compulsory whereas less than one quarter of the ministries (CZ, DK, ES, FR, MT, UKSC) states that this is the case. It might be that some institutions think that it is compulsory whereas they are only motivated to do so. As far as representation on the board of management, participation in external quality assurance and the presence of representatives from industry on examination boards are concerned there are only minor discrepancies that could be explained by the reasons given above.

4.11.3. Social commitment

As far as collaboration with the local community and social commitment are concerned ministries and institutions were asked what kind of social commitment institutions providing SCHE have. Because once again major discrepancies were found in certain items the responses of ministries and institutions were calculated separately. It should be noted that several ministries indicated that they are not aware of what is going on as there are mostly no legal requirements and that individual institutions may be involved in any of these.

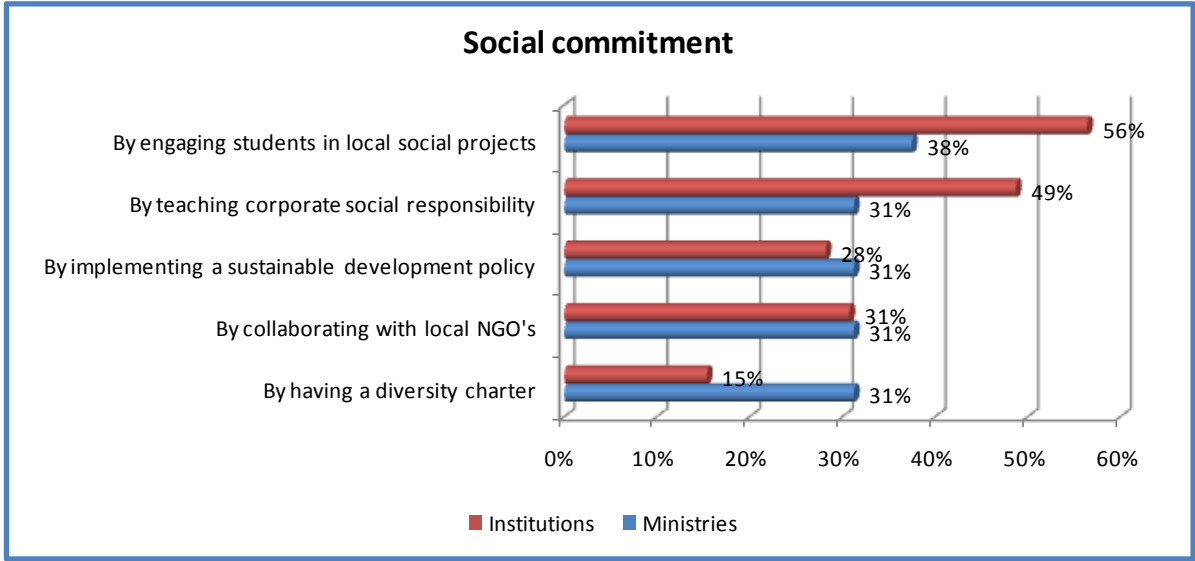


Figure 28: Social commitment

The institutional results show that the respondent institutions have a strong local commitment as more than half of the respondent institutions indicate that they engage their students in local social projects. Less than one out of four of the ministerial respondents were aware that there is involvement in local social projects (CZ, HU, IE, MT, SI, and UKSC). Nearly half of the institutions indicate that institutions teach corporate social responsibility, whereas less than one third of ministerial respondents think this is the case (HU, IE, MT, NL, and UKSC).

More than one quarter of institutions and ministerial respondents indicate that institutions implement a sustainable development policy (CY, CZ, FR, NL, and UKSC). The Scottish national contact point states that this is compulsory for all institutions. Nearly one third of institutions (31%) and exactly as many national contact points declare that institutions show their social commitment by

collaborating with local NGOs (HU, IE, NL, SI, UKSC). Lastly, nearly one third of ministries (IE, IS, NL, MT and UKSC) but only 15% of institutions state that institutions show their social commitment by having a diversity charter. Institutions can also show their social commitment by offering programmes for immigrant students (NO), etc.

The responses from Hungarian and Slovenian institutions confirm the very positive expectations of the ministry and the results from Turkish institutions exceed the expectations of the ministerial respondent.

It is obvious that the social commitment of institutions in local matters is quite considerable as more than half of the respondent institutions engage their students in local social projects and one third collaborate with local NGO's.

4.12. Multilingualism⁶⁷

Once again the results of the ministries and the institutions diverge on certain items and therefore the results are given separately. Several ministries indicate that they are not always aware of what is happening at institutional level.

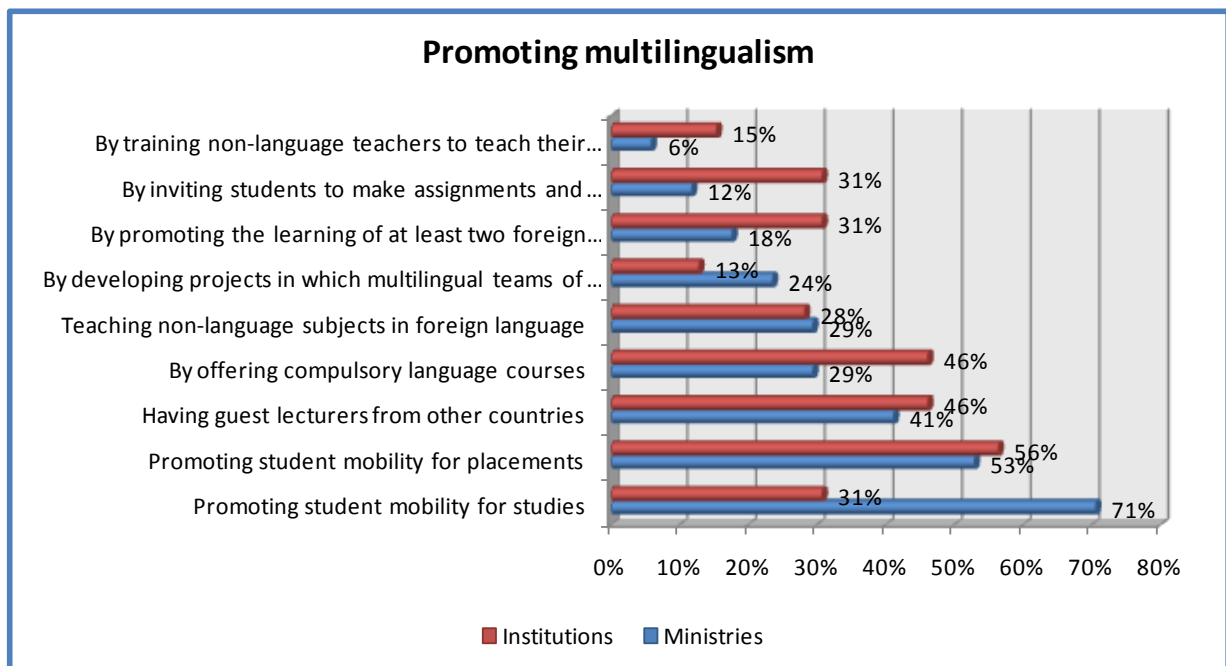


Figure 29: Multilingualism

Seven out of ten ministries (CZ, DK, FR, HU, IS, LV, MT, NL, NO, SI, TR) but only one out of three institutions states multilingualism is enhanced by promoting student mobility for studies. Ministries and institutions more or less agree as far as student mobility for placements to promote multilingualism is concerned. Half of the ministries (CZ, DK, ES, FR, HU, LV, MT, NL and SI) think that these placements are a way of promoting multilingualism and slightly more institutions (56%) think that they can promote multilingualism through these placements.

⁶⁷ In this section no responses were received from BEFR, LU, PT

Nearly half of the institutions and one out of four ministries (CZ, FR, LV, MT, NL, NO, SI) consider having guest lecturers as a way of promoting multilingualism and nearly half of the institutions but only slightly more than one quarter of the ministries (BENL, CZ, FR, LV, TR) think that offering compulsory language courses as a way of promoting multilingualism although both ministries and institutions point out that this is only the case for certain programmes. Twenty-nine % of ministries (FR, HU, IS, MT, NL) and nearly the same percentage of institutions state that institutions teach non language subjects in a foreign language. One quarter of the ministries (CY, LV, MT, SI) think that institutions promote multilingualism through the development of projects with multilingual teams but only 13% of institutions say that they actually do so. One out of three respondent institutions promotes the learning of at least two foreign languages but less than two out of ten ministries (CY, CZ, FR) think that institutions actually do so. Even less ministries (MT, NL) state that students are invited to do assignments in a foreign language whereas one out of three institutions invites their students to write assignments in a foreign language. Only the Hungarian ministry is convinced that institutions should train their lecturers to teach their non-language subject in a foreign language and 15% of respondent institutions actually do so.

Multilingualism does not seem to be an issue in most English speaking countries. Thus, one English institutional respondent states that multilingualism in the UK is actually very poor. This is confirmed by the comment of the representative for the UK EWNl who states that multilingualism does not usually feature within Foundation degree programmes. Also the Scottish national contact point knows that multilingualism is not a requirement in the vast majority of programmes but that foreign languages might be options. The Irish national contact point writes that multilingualism is not a strong feature of SCHE in Ireland.

On the other hand the Hungarian representative of the Association of Vocational Higher Education Institutions points out that each SCHE programme has a compulsory subject (module) of

Professional Foreign Language Terminology and one Maltese respondent refers to the fact that teaching and learning at this level in Malta is carried out in English and with English textbooks.

It can thus be concluded that although most countries consider multilingualism to be important it is especially important in countries with a minority language and virtually inexistent in English-speaking countries.

5. Examples of good practice

5.1. The Use of Embedded Awards in the Irish National Framework of Qualifications to Promote Lifelong Learning in Ireland

Mark Glynn and Richard Thorn, Institutes of Technology, Ireland

Institutes of Technology and Lifelong Learning in Ireland

The Institutes of Technology (IoTs) were established in the early 1970's with a specific mission to provide vocational, third level education whilst also meeting the developmental needs of the regions in which they were located. From a low of 10% of school leavers participating in full time higher education in the early 1970's, Ireland now has one of the highest participation rates in the world with almost 60% of the school leaving cohort progressing to higher education, (O'Connell, *et al*, 2006). At present about half of the undergraduate (Level 5 and 6 on the EFQ) students registered in higher education institutions in Ireland are registered in Institutes of Technology.

Notwithstanding the success of Irish higher education in respect of full time, school leavers, the IoTs are currently strategically focusing on the needs of adult and part time learners. This emphasis has arisen as a result of a reappraisal of mission and strategy in the light of Ireland's poor performance in part time education, compared to the benchmark Northern European countries (see EU, 2008) by attempting to increase the provision of flexible learning opportunities in line with the IoT's long standing mission to provide vocational, higher education. To help achieve this aspect of their mission the IoTs have established a major flexible learning initiative to help build capacity within the IoTs to deliver flexible learning and externally to jointly promote part time learning opportunities .

The project 'Supported Flexible Learning' is funded jointly under the Higher Education Authority's Strategic Innovation Fund and the Institutes themselves. It consists of two main components *viz* the building of capacity within the IoT's to deliver flexible learning and the development of collaborative approaches to promoting lifelong learning.

Measurement of 'Supported Flexible Learning' Project Success

A key component of the project has been the establishment of a performance measurement system to determine to what extent, if any, the project results in a system wide change in delivery from fixed delivery methods (teaching aimed primarily at direct entry school leavers) to flexible delivery methods (teaching that meets the needs of adult, part time and lifelong learners). The indicators chosen are

- The number of part time and occasional higher education students in the Institutes of Technology

- The number of Special Purpose and Minor Awards registered for the Institutes of Technology
- The number of educational offerings on www.BlueBrick.ie; a portal designed specifically for the needs of lifelong and part time learners

and

- The number of staff trained in flexible delivery methods.

The performance measurement aspects of the project are described fully in Glynn *et al* (2010). Of particular relevance here is the use of Special Purpose and Minor awards from the National Framework of Qualifications.

The Irish National Framework of Qualifications and Embedded Awards

The Irish National Framework of Qualifications was established by an Act of Government in 1999. The framework was brought into effect between 2000 and 2003 (NQAI, 2003). The Irish framework is a 10 level framework with levels 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 being levels associated with higher education. Specifically level 6 equates to EQF level 5 while levels 7 and 8 relate to EFQ level 6. Irish NFQ levels 9 and 10 equate to Levels 7 and 8 respectively of the EFQ. For the purpose of this case study we are concerned with Level 6 on the Irish NFQ which equates to Level 5 on the EFQ and thus is defined for the purposes of the L5 project as SCHE.

The Irish NFQ consists of Major, Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards that can be made at levels 6 through 9. At Level 6 the Major Award is ‘Higher Certificate’ and requires the completion of 120 ECTS credits worth of study. Minor, Special Purpose and Supplemental Awards will always attract fewer credits than a Major Award subject to there being a minimum of 10 ECTS credits available in the award.

- **Minor** awards provide recognition for learners who achieve a range of learning outcomes, but not the specific combination of learning outcomes required for a major award. This recognition will have relevance in its own right. A Minor award will have learning outcomes that form part of those of a major award.
- **Special Purpose** awards are made for specific, relatively narrow, purposes — for example, the Safe Pass certification of competence in health and safety in the construction industry. A Special Purpose award may form part of a major, minor or supplemental award.
- **Supplemental** awards are for learning which is additional to a previous award. They could, for example, relate to updating and refreshing knowledge or skills, or to continuing professional development.

There has been relatively little use made of supplemental awards but, as will be shown below, the use of minor and special purpose awards has been significant.

The significance of Minor and Special Purpose Awards is that they were designed specifically with the needs of learners, rather than providers, in mind. Their use, therefore, by providers represents market awareness and a focus on the needs of learners.

Use of Special Purpose and Minor Awards

Figures 1a and 1b show the number of Special Purpose and Minor Awards registered with HETAC (Higher Education Training and Awards Council). For purposes of completeness Minor and Special Purposes awards at Levels 6 through to 9 have been included. In relation to SCHE it is the use of those awards at Level 6 that is of interest in this paper. It should be noted that a large Institute of Technology (Dublin Institute of Technology) makes awards in its own right and does not return information to HETAC. Whilst the Irish framework of qualifications was launched in 2003 it was not until 2007 that policy and criteria for the development of Special Purpose and Minor Awards became available to the IoTs as a result of the approval processes delegated from HETAC. The data shown therefore show the growth of the use of these awards from the beginning of their availability.

In summary, it is clear that there is growth in the system in the use of these awards. This suggests strongly that there is greater awareness of the potential of these awards to meet the needs of learners as originally envisaged when these awards were embedded in the framework as described above.

Figure 1a

(Data provided by Higher Education and Training Awards Council)

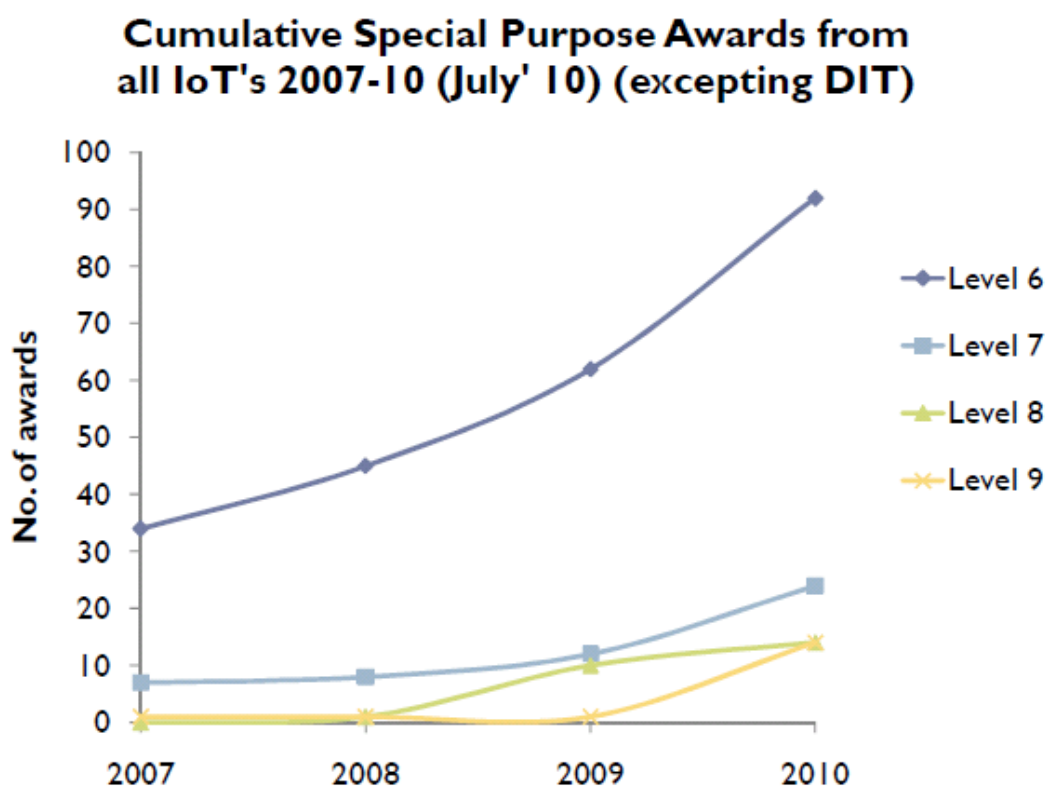
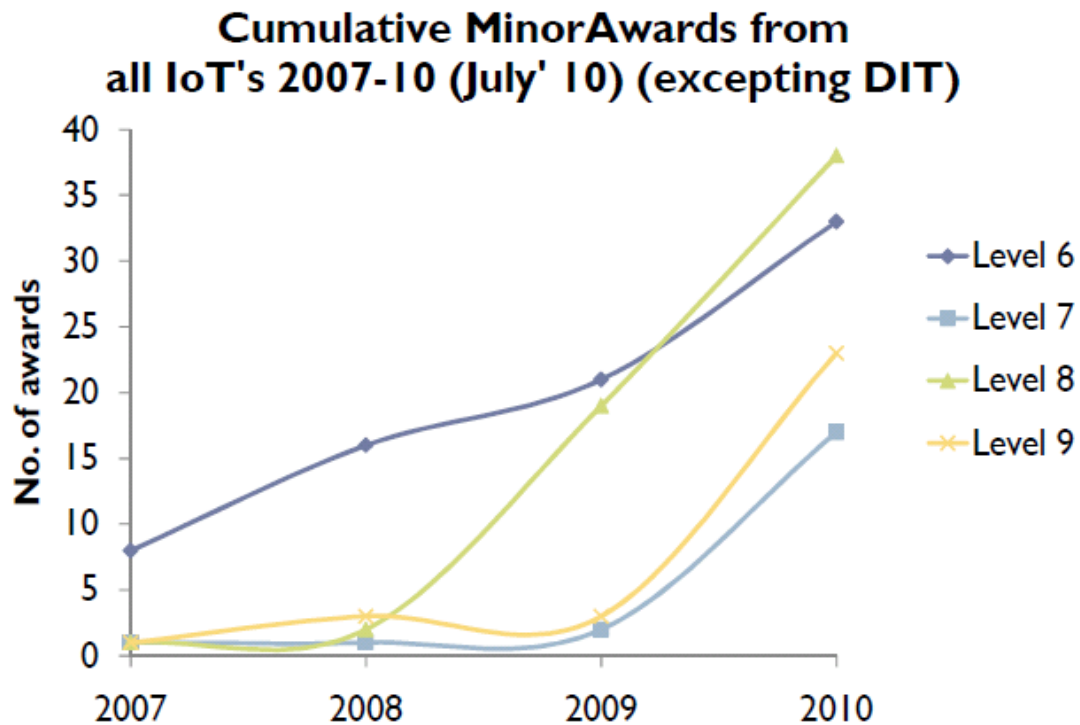


Figure 1b

(Data provided by Higher Education and Training Awards Council)



Conclusion

The question arises – does the increased use of embedded short course awards (in particular in SCHE) also coincide with an increase in the numbers of part time students and students studying by flexible learning methods? Yes is the answer. The Institutes of Technology have recorded a c. 5% increase in students registered as part time in the last year alone while numbers registered on distance and e-learning categories has increased by over 30% in the last year. The authors do not suggest that the use of embedded awards for short courses alone is responsible but the availability of these awards has undoubtedly increased the attractiveness of studying part time and pursuing lifelong learning. There are a great number of other factors relating to the economy, funding, student fees and organisational culture dictating uptake of lifelong learning opportunities (see Thorn *et al*, 2010) but it is clear that the framework of qualifications and the embedded awards has made it possible to conceive of a different approach to lifelong learning.

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5.2. The development and implementation of SCHE level 5 or HBO5 in the Flemish Community of Belgium with special attention to quality assurance

Yves Beernaert

Introduction

The present case describes the activities carried out in Flanders in the implementation and development of SCHE level 5 of the EQF. It describes the different steps taken by the Flemish Ministry of Education, the different networks of education (public, private, provincial etc.) and the NVAO (Nederlands – Vlaams AccreditatieOrgaan)⁶⁸ to start implementing the Flemish decree of 30 / . 04 / 2009 on SCHE level 5 or HBO 5.

Following the introduction of the three-cycle system within the framework of the Bologna process Flanders maintained its binary higher education system: on the one hand professional higher education and on the other academic higher education.

The Decree of the Flemish Parliament of 30 April 2009⁶⁹ concerning Secondary after Secondary and Higher Vocational Education was published in the Official Journal of Belgium on 20th July 2009. As a result of this decree and its publication, Flanders has now a short cycle within the first which is called “Hoger beroepsonderwijs” (HBO) or Higher Vocational Education. The abbreviation commonly used is HBO 5 as this short cycle higher education is situated at level 5 of the Flemish NQF⁷⁰ and at level 5 of the EQF.

HBO5 has its own specific final objective and is clearly positioned between secondary education and the bachelors as HBO 5 leads to an educational qualification at level 5 of the Flemish Qualification Framework (NQF). A student who successfully completes HBO5 is granted the officially recognized diploma of “gegradueerde” or Associate degree.

It has been decided that within HBO 5 new programmes can be created or that existing programmes can become HBO5 after having been transformed into level 5. HBO 5 programmes can be organised and provided on the one hand by CVO (Centra voor VolwassenenOnderwijs or Centres for Adult Education) and on the other hand by the “Hogescholen” or university colleges. They can also be set up jointly by CVO and university colleges.

⁶⁸ NVAO: (in Dutch: Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie) is the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders. The organisation was established by international treaty and it ensures the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders. NVAO independently ensures the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders by assessing and accrediting programmes and contributes to enhancing this quality. In addition, NVAO contributes to the increase of quality awareness within higher education and improving the position of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders in the national and international context. See also: <http://www.nvao.net/about-nvao>

⁶⁹ Decreet van 30 april 2009 betreffende het secundair na secundair onderwijs en het hoger beroepsonderwijs: <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/edulex/database/document/document.asp?docid=14112>

⁷⁰ Vlaamse Kwalificatiestructuur (Flemish NQF): <http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/wetwijs/thema.asp?id=216&fid=1>

Applications for transformation can be introduced for existing programmes provided by the CVO (Centres for adult education). This concerns programmes which in the past were set up and developed in the framework of the so-called Higher Education of Social Advancement. Applications for transformation can also be introduced for HBO 5 programmes in nursing. At the moment secondary schools organise a post-secondary degree of nursing and these programmes can be transformed into HBO 5.

A pilot project to transform existing adult education into HBO 5 monitored by NVAO

To test how these transformations could be completed the Ministry of education invited, the NVAO to monitor and support the introduction of the new HBO 5 by setting up a pilot project, in cooperation with the pedagogical support services of the education networks. Five institutions were invited to join the pilot project: 4 CVOs and one nursing school.

NVAO accepted this responsibility for various reasons. First of all it strongly believes in the major added value of HBO5 to society. Secondly, NVAO was happy to see that all services and organisations concerned with HBO 5 had decided to join and work together on the implementation of this pilot in a spirit of quality management. This is considered to be a key element in quality and quality assurance. A third reason was that the whole pilot was based on transparency and robustness as to the possible implementation of HBO 5 through this pilot project.

The whole process of implementing the pilot project was closely monitored and followed-up by NVAO through all the different phases of this pilot project. The implementation of the pilot was also very well documented which resulted in a comprehensive report published in December 2010. This report is called “Leereffectenrapport proefproject HBO5”⁷¹ or Report focusing on the lessons learnt through the pilot project HBO5. The present case study makes extensive use of this publication and of the contents of a workshop on the topic organised by the Ministry of Education and NVAO in Antwerp on 17 November 2010.

Key elements of the transformation

The report of the pilot points out that the transformation from an adult education programme to a higher education programme at SCHE level 5 is a major step and requires also major preparation. It is said to be a paradigm shift which is comparable to the implementation of the bachelor – master structure in the university colleges and the universities. Transforming and organising a new programme is not just a mere administrative matter or dealing with files, it also involves thorough changes to its contents.

The NVAO drew the attention of the 5 institutions involved in the pilot to some key elements. The key change to be made by the 5 institutions concerned was the vital and crucial switch in vision and organisation from an institution looking at the programme it intends to organise not from the ‘inside’ but from the ‘outside’. The start has to be the outside or surrounding world. NVAO insisted

⁷¹ Leereffectenrapport proefproject HBO5”: full text in Dutch to be downloaded on the following page:
<http://www.nvao.net/nieuws/2010/385>

that the real societal relevance of HBO5 is to be found in the professional field that has to be intensively involved in the drafting of the learning outcomes (via the evaluation of the degree to which the competences are acquired) and of the contents of the programme, in recruiting of personnel and in implementing quality assurance. The professional field, NVAO stressed, was also to be involved in developing the forms of assessment which have to be congruent with the learning outcomes. Only at this stage can the professional field develop the different pedagogical tools with specific attention to dual learning environments. Thus the programme, the personnel and the infrastructure have to facilitate the acquisition of high quality practice-oriented LO.

This means that institutions transforming adult education programmes into HBO5 have to comply with very strict requirements. First of all they have to develop a vision which takes into account the objectives, the place and the specificity of HBO5 in its societal context. Secondly the institution has to link this to a professional organisational development focusing on: middle management, HR management, QA, data collection, development of RPL procedures, individualized learning pathways and creative (digital) learning environments etc.

The objective of the monitoring and follow-up, set up by NVAO, was to support the five institutions to be able to comply with those strict requirements and to make the transformation from adult education programmes to SCHE level 5 programmes as smooth and efficient as possible.

The lessons learned from this project were listed earlier in the report. They will be useful to all adult education organisations (CVO) that will apply to transform some of their programmes into SCHE level 5 or HBO 5 programmes. The “Leereffectenrapport” is not meant to be a scenario to bring about a perfect transformation from an adult education programme to a HBO5 programme. The objective of the report is to make an inventory of the most important learning aspects and lessons that can be learned from the pilot and which may be useful to future applicants. It should be clear that a CVO does not have to transform all its programmes into HBO5. It will select those which are most relevant for the labour market in close cooperation with the professional field.

Phases of the pilot project

The pilot project consisted of three phases:

- The submission and selection of transformation application
- The process evaluation
- The product evaluation

a) Submission and selection of transformation applications

To have a concrete idea of the implementation of the pilot phase the different phases of the pilot project are listed in terms of the activities developed. This gives the interested reader an idea of the time and the efforts that have to be invested in such a pilot project. The process started with initial meeting (5/05/2010) in Brussels where NVAO and representatives of education networks met to agree on the implementation of the pilot. On 15/05/2010 the draft transformation applications were submitted by institutions to NVAO. On 1/07/2010 the start-up meeting of the committee dealing with

the applications and the first evaluation of the applications took place, monitored by NVAO. On 5/07/2010 the applications were sent to an evaluation committee. Members filled in an evaluation document prepared by NVAO. The committee members had to send their reports to NVAO and an overview was made by NVAO of all comments.

On 30/08/2010 the committee meeting took place to discuss the results of the evaluation and on 9/09/2010 clarifying meetings between committee and representatives of the 5 pilot institutions. Based on this a decision was taken. Moreover, a test visit by the committee to one of the pilot institutions was organised (17/09/2010). The final reports were discussed by the committee on 6/10/2010 and on 13/10/2010 the reports were sent to the pilot institutions. They could react if necessary. On 20/10/2010 the final evaluation meeting took place when the committee made an inventory of the findings subsequent to the evaluation of all the applications.

b) The process evaluation

The NVAO developed a number of activities to support the pilot institutions in their process of transforming adult education programmes into HBO5 programmes.

A training day (30/03/2010) was organised concerning the drafting of transformation applications. Participants were representatives of the education networks plus representatives of the 5 institutions. Key elements linked to the transformation from adult education to HBO5 were highlighted and discussed. Specificity of HBO5 was focused upon in all its aspects mentioned earlier under key aspects for the transformation. Participants were acquainted with the expectations of the Decree of 30/04/2009 on HBO5 and Se-n-Se⁷². They received practical tips on how to draft a transformation application etc.

During the initial meeting (27/04/2010) the objectives and functioning of the pilot project, time planning, deadlines etc. were explained as well as the organisation and communication of the monitoring. Information on the composition and functioning of the evaluation committee was given as well as on the support that could be provided to the pilot project. Clear agreements were made in order to enhance transparency and openness.

The five pilot institutions then had to draft the transformation application. They did it in different ways and found it very difficult.

An intermediate evaluation meeting was organised to discuss the experiences as to the drafting of the transformation applications. The NVAO had made a quick scan of the applications received and gave feedback. Another meeting was organised where the evaluation committee had a discussion of one hour with representatives of each of the 5 pilot institutions based on their application.

One of the pilot institutions was visited. A visit to the pilot institutions is typically only scheduled when the information in the application is insufficient.

⁷² Higher Vocational Education at level 5 and Secondary after Secondary education

Lastly, an evaluation report was sent to each of the 5 pilot institutions. They were used for internal discussions.

c) Product evaluation

The product evaluation focused on the different key elements that had to be described in the transformation application:

- The intended learning outcomes of the programme to be developed.
- The contents of the programme itself:
 - o The professional focus: e.g. contacts with the professional field etc.
 - o The relations between the intended learning outcomes and the programme: focus on competence learning, dual learning etc.
 - o Consistency of the programme: e.g. use of modular system, portfolio
 - o Access: e.g. flexibility in access, RPL, remedial support to certain students etc.
 - o Scope of the programme:
 - 120 ECTS credits for 4 CVO
 - For the nursing school it was expressed in contact hours: 4600 according to the EU directive for nursing
 - o Transition to other (degree) courses
- Personnel
 - o Quality of the personnel: e.g. in-service training policy, degrees of the lecturers, scientific expertise etc.
 - o Quantity of personnel: part-time (combined with other job), full-time etc.
- Infrastructure
 - o Equipment, auditoria, library, other facilities etc.
 - o Student counselling services, career advice services etc.
- Internal Quality Assurance
 - o Quality system used: PDCA circle etc.
 - o Involvement of staff, students, alumni and the professional field
- Assessment
 - o Policy to assess students: evaluation methods and forms used
 - o Final assessment (end of studies) assessing competences achieved

General conclusions of the pilot project to transform CVO into HBO5

- The pilot project demonstrated the great potential of adult education institutions (CVOs) to become HBO 5 (SCHE level 5) institutions. The network of CVO institutions also holds great potential.
- This method of transforming can be mainstreamed in the near future to all CVO programmes if the institutions are interested in getting involved in cooperation with the professional field concerned.

- It is important to the paradigm shift from the inside to the outside look highlighted earlier in this text.
- Institutions that decide to move to HBO5 must be very clear about the professional profile of their alumni.
- Close cooperation with the professional field or sectors is the key to a successful transformation.
- The method to transform adult education into HBO5 proves to be very efficient and rewarding for all those involved.
- A successful transformation into HBO5 enables the institutions to position this diploma of “gegradueerde” very clearly in the European higher education area.
- The process of transformation will give much more societal recognition to these transformed adult education programmes and will contribute to enhancing lifelong learning.

References

NVAO (2010). *Leereffectenrapport proefproject HBO5*. : full text in Dutch to be downloaded on the following page: <http://www.nvao.net/nieuws/2010/385>

Decreet van 30 April 2009 betreffende het secundair na secundair onderwijs en het hoger beroepsonderwijs:

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/edulex/database/document/document.asp?docid=14112>

Vlaamse Kwalificatiestructuur (Flemish NQF):

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/wetwijs/thema.asp?id=216&fid=1>

5.3. The importance of level 5/the Associate degree for widening access to higher education in Turkey

An Overview of Higher Education in Turkey

The higher education system in Turkey covers all the institutions implementing at least two-year programmes after secondary education. Higher education institutions can be public universities (devlet üniversiteleri), non-profit foundation universities (vakıf üniversiteleri) and foundation post-secondary vocational education and training (VET) schools (vakıf meslek yüksekokulları) that are not attached to any university. In addition, there are military and police academies which are called higher education institutions (diğer yükseköğretim kurumları).

In 1981, the higher education system in Turkey was centralised, with all higher education institutions becoming the responsibility of the Council of Higher Education (Yükseköğretim Kurulu). According to the Higher Education Law (No. 2547) all post-secondary education of at least four half years (semesters) or more are accepted as higher education. Higher education institutions consist of at least some of the following: faculties leading to a four-year bachelor's degree, graduate schools, post-secondary schools (vocationally oriented two-or four year schools), conservatories, departments and research centres.

Currently, there are 156 universities in Turkey. Among these 102 of them are public and 54 non-profit foundation universities. There are also 9 foundation post-secondary VET schools and 37 other higher education institutions.

In 2010, the total number of higher education students (including distance education) is almost three and a half million (3 529 334). 3 311 990 of them are in the public universities; 178 264 of them are in the non-profit foundation universities; 3565 in the foundation post-secondary VET schools and 35515 in the other higher education institutions. Public and non-profit foundation universities have 94% and 5% of higher education students, respectively. The number of distance education students is 1557 217. Therefore, about 44% of higher education students continue their studies via distance education and 56% of that number via face-to-face education. The number of foreign students in Turkish higher education system is only 21 948.

There are 105 427 university lecturers in Turkey. 91 524 of them are in the public universities; 10 981 in the non-profit foundation universities; 177 in the foundation post-secondary VET schools and 2745 in the other higher education institutions. Public and non-profit foundation universities have nearly 86% and 10% of higher education university lecturers, respectively.

Since 1982, the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University in Eskişehir has been offering both associate degree and bachelor's degree programmes via distance education. Today, in addition to the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University, many other higher education institutions offer distance education programmes, a majority of which are provided online.

Turkey's total higher education gross enrolment rate (GER)⁷³ is 53,4%. Distance education GER is 25% and face-to-face education GER is 28,4%. Moreover, GER for associate degrees and bachelor degrees are 16,7% and 36,7%, respectively if distance education is included. On the other hand, these rates are 9,9% and 18,5% when distance education is excluded.

An Overview of Post-Secondary VET Higher Education in Turkey

In Turkey, the two-year post-secondary schools are called post-secondary VET schools (meslek yüksekokulları) and these give completely vocationally oriented education lead to an associate degree. These schools are higher education institutions aimed at training manpower for specific occupations.

Currently, there are 660 post-secondary VET schools and 586 of them are public university post-secondary VET schools; 34 of them are non-profit foundation university post-secondary VET schools; 9 of them are foundation post-secondary VET schools and 31 of them are other post-secondary VET schools. Almost 88% of post-secondary VET schools are public university post-secondary VET schools.

The total number of post-secondary VET school students is 1 042 350. About 41% of them are distance education post-secondary VET school students and 59% of them are face-to-face education post-secondary VET school students.

The number of post-secondary VET students is 613 077 (including distance education) and 429 273 excluding distance education. The majority, 559,496 of them, are public university post-secondary VET school students; 30,894 are non-profit foundation university post-secondary VET school students, 3565 foundation post-secondary school students and 19,122 other post-secondary VET school students. Ninety one % of post-secondary VET school students study in public universities but 5% of that number is in non-profit foundation universities. Almost 30% of higher education students are post-secondary VET school students whether distance education students are included or not.

In total there are 12160 lecturers in post-secondary VET schools. Almost 12% of higher education lecturers work in post-secondary VET schools (MYO). 9209 of them are in public university post-secondary VET schools; 1235 of them are in non-profit foundation university post-secondary VET schools; 169 of them are in foundation post-secondary VET schools and 1547 of them are in other post-secondary VET schools. Therefore, 76% of post-secondary VET schools academic staff work in public universities but 10% of them work in non-profit foundation universities.

The total quota of post-secondary VET schools is 308 980 and the number of these placed in post-secondary VET schools is 232 939 for this year if distance education is excluded⁷⁴. Almost 56% of new students were placed in post-secondary VET schools without an examination and 60% of them graduated from vocational and technical high schools.

73 Higher education gross enrollment rate (GRE) is expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils (excluding graduate pupils) enrolled in higher education, regardless of age, to the population of the five-year age group (18-22) (Source: Turkish Statistical Institute and Council of Higher Education).

74 Student Selection and Placement Centre will announce the number of new students registered in post-secondary VET schools in the coming months.

There are 6014 programmes in postsecondary VET. There are 200 types of programmes. Associate degree programmes such as Accounting, Computer Programming, Business Management, Electric and Office Management, Marketing, Foreign Trade, Machine and Hospitality Services have the majority of post-secondary VET students.

In terms of The European Qualification Framework (EQF), higher education has been accepted at levels 5,6,7,8. Post-secondary VET schools education (associate degree) is defined as short cycle higher education (SCHE) in Turkey which corresponds to level 5 of the EQF.

General Conditions and Problems of Post-Secondary VET Education in Turkey

As stated above post-secondary VET education has formed a big part of higher education in Turkey since **nearly one-third of higher education students are post-secondary VET school students**. Currently, there are some criticisms concerning post-secondary VET schools but the basic one is that there is insufficient training manpower to meet the expectations of the business world. Unfortunately, post-secondary VET education has yet to fulfil the demands of the business world.

From the first half of the 1980s, some pilot projects tried to improve post-secondary VET schools. But those projects could not match with the increasing number of post-secondary VET schools. Also, a continuous and permanent system could not be set up in post-secondary VET schools where pilot projects were applied. Hence the tradition for vocational higher education could not be generated during those years.

In brief, the problems of post-secondary VET schools in Turkey are,

- Failure to provide practical training at the level of professional standards,
- Lack of motivation of students and academic staff,
- Lack of respect for the profession in society.

Post-secondary VET education is organised at national level by the Council of Higher Education, working for reorganisation of post-secondary VET education in Turkey since 2008. Some changes in legislation have been prepared but these proposals have yet to be enacted. Recent changes in legislation concern basically the following topics: new regulations for workplace training (during the workplace training, at least 1/3 of the minimum wage is given to students as a salary and these fees are paid by the organisation or institutions giving workplace training); students are insured against work accidents and occupational diseases and the cost of insurance is covered by the post-secondary VET school; a higher transition capacity of post-secondary VET school students to degree studies (increased about 10%). Although the duration of education will remain the same in post-secondary VET education (2+2 semesters = 4 semesters), Turkey will introduce the 6 semesters (3+3) structure in an attempt to integrate theory, practice and workplace training more efficiently and also in order to enhance skills and competences.

Currently, the link between post-secondary VET education and the business world is very weak and there are no links in some areas. This situation leads to a mismatch between labour force supply and demand, showing the challenge of finding qualified manpower for the business world in spite of high unemployment. The disconnection between the post-secondary VET education system and the

business world has prevented the training of the labour force in adequate quality, variety and number. A basic vulnerability observed in the post-secondary VET education system is that the labour force has not been able to find adequate skills. On the other hand, according to young people, inadequate and incompatible post-secondary VET education system, lack of jobs and lack of information about jobs are the main reasons for unemployment.

According to the EQF, qualification consists of three components called learning outcomes: knowledge, skill and competence. The main problem arises in gaining skills in Turkey since, in general, there is not enough workshop, laboratory and workplace training in post-secondary VET schools to gain skills for occupations. Generally, there is no inadequacy in terms of theoretical knowledge. However, when adequate skills are not acquired, weaknesses in competence emerge since competence is defined as a combined application of knowledge and skills to work.

Today, Turkey's young population and demographic characteristics offer an important potential advantage. Annually, the working age population will be expected to increase by more than 800 000 in the following ten years. The ratio of the working age population to the total population will increase to 69.3% in 2020 and then start to fall in Turkey according to UN projections and this situation is defined as a window of opportunity. In order to benefit from this opportunity, Turkey should reorganize its post-secondary VET education system to generate a sufficient number and quality of human capital. If the younger population is not able to find adequate training courses and jobs, the risk will be higher than today since employment in 2020 will be lower than today in EU countries and most new jobs will need high qualifications since jobs in Europe will become more knowledge and skills intensive⁷⁵. In order to compete with rivals in EU countries, the education system will have to make sure that the learning outcomes achieved in SCHE meet those of other European countries.

75 Source: CEDEFOP.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

The development of SCHE over the past seven years shows that SCHE, as an intermediate degree within the first degree of higher education, has integrated itself fully into all major developments in higher education in Europe. It is clearly the missing link between secondary and higher education and for many learners it is the missing link that enables them to access higher education, even without a secondary school degree. Thus the development of SCHE is a major element in the chain and continuum of lifelong learning. The development also shows that all the countries concerned are working at positioning SCHE at level 5 of the EQF and at the equivalent level of their national framework even if in several cases the referencing is still under way.

It is also important to point out that some countries which do not yet have SCHE, are considering developing SCHE at level 5 of the EQF in the near future. Interesting is the fact that some countries have not developed SCHE at level 5 but have developed vocational higher education & training at level 5, not leading to a degree or a higher education qualification. It is worth pointing out that some countries are developing two parallel level 5 systems: on the one hand SCHE as an intermediate degree within the first degree of higher education and on the other hand higher vocational education and training. In this way a new binary system is created and it will be interesting to follow developments in the near future. Finally, it is worth noticing that in some countries universities are organising higher vocational education and training at level 4 of the EQF with or without also organising level 5. One may thus wonder how those countries with only level 4 will develop level 5 if they do so. This is another element which will require further attention in the future.

The present study also clearly shows that SCHE is strongly complying with all major developments and demands of the Bologna reform. SCHE has been integrated into the Bologna architecture in many countries. SCHE is strongly embedded in higher education. It is part of the higher education legislation even if special decrees apply to SCHE. Legislation covers all aspects of SCHE, with particular attention applied to the progression of SCHE towards further degree courses. The demands as to the qualifications of the lecturers are quite diverse, ranging from lecturers holding a doctorate to lecturers holding a bachelor degree. Although QA is high on the agenda in most countries, a few countries still have to make progress to comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area of ENQA.

Cooperation with industry and other social partners is highly valued in SCHE across the whole of Europe. In some countries it is even compulsory. This is reflected in the involvement of industry in all aspects of SCHE. Thus lecturers with practical experience in industry are greatly valued in all countries providing SCHE. Similarly, internships for students and dual learning pathways are of great importance in SCHE. Employability is taken very seriously in SCHE and is enhanced in many ways through close cooperation with industry.

Most countries are using ECTS, sometimes alongside their own credit system, and the Diploma Supplement is widely used. Students and lecturers in SCHE are involved in international mobility and in European and international cooperation projects but in a limited way. Due to the shorter duration of

the studies and due to the specific profile of the students, mobility still needs to be stimulated and should be enhanced through greater flexibility in the sub-programmes of the LLL programme. One of the major obstacles is also the small size of institutions. It is also to be regretted that multilingualism receives little attention in SCHE in many countries.

Active citizenship and social commitment are high on the agenda in many institutions providing SCHE across Europe. However, although the majority of the countries having SCHE state that socially disadvantaged students are probably more present in SCHE, none of the countries have data to support the participation of those students in SCHE. Many countries and institutions also do not have exact data on the employability of their graduates. More attention should be given in the future, not only to the collection of data concerning disadvantaged students but also to the development and implementation of diversity policies in SCHE.

SCHE has strengthened its position over the past 7 years in higher education and is regarded as bringing a real added value to higher education in Europe. New developments are still taking place as to SCHE in Europe and it will be important to follow-up these developments in Europe in the years ahead, especially in those countries introducing SCHE at the moment.

6.2. Recommendations

6.2.1. Recommendations to the Commission

Concerning the development of Level 5 SCHE

- EURASHE recommends that the Commission organise a Cluster or Working Group focusing on the development and implementation of SCHE level 5 studies. It should be composed of high level civil servants in charge of SCHE in their respective countries. Observers should also be invited from EURASHE and EUA, ESU, Business Europe and other stakeholders involved in the Bologna process to attend the meetings.

This cluster or WG would involve countries that have had SCHE level 5 for many years, countries that have just introduced it and countries that intend to organise SCHE level 5. The Cluster or WG could focus on the problems met while developing and implementing SCHE. The cluster or WG should focus on examples of good practice in various areas of SCHE such as cooperation with industry, QA and accreditation, employability, multilingualism etc.

- EURASHE recommends that this Cluster on SCHE would look especially into the issue of the great variety and diversity of titles, diplomas and/ or certificates which are used in SCHE. This great variety is an obstacle to readability and user-friendliness. It is also a major obstacle to European and international (professional) mobility.

EURASHE reiterates its recommendation made in the 2003 report that the Commission should put on the agenda of the cluster of WG the use of one title in English – **e.g. Associate Degree** - for students graduating from SCHE provided they earn at least 120 ECTS credits. Using one title would enhance the readability not only in a European but also in an international context.

The cluster could also focus on how the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Europe, as proposed by ENQA could be better implemented in SCHE.

Concerning the EQF and the QF-EHEA

- EURASHE recommends defining the levels of higher education Europe-wide with specific attention to SCHE level 5 promoting the use of the European meta-frameworks viz. EQF and the QF-EHEA. ;
- EURASHE recommends developing a translation tool between the EQF and the new ISCED 2011 classification to create transparency on the levels of higher education not only in Europe but worldwide.

Concerning Internationalisation and mobility

- EURASHE recommends **more flexibility** to be used to define the different target audiences for the sub-programmes of the LLL-programme. Thus, some mature students are not old enough to participate in Grundtvig mobility but cannot meet the standards for Erasmus mobility as they cannot leave their job for a long time;
- EURASHE recommends introducing more possibilities for **short-time mobility** for SCHE students. Especially the Intensive Programmes under Erasmus should be promoted in SCHE institutions. This will no doubt enhance the social dimension of mobility in higher education. Therefore widespread information should be given on the existence of tools for mobility as well as the different possibilities for mobility.

6.2.2. Recommendations to the national authorities

Concerning lifelong learning

- EURASHE recommends that national authorities should promote SCHE as a way to enhance lifelong learning, to widen access to higher education, to enhance the social dimension in higher education and to reach the objectives of ET 2020. In this respect national authorities should see it as their responsibility to continue funding SCHE and even see this as a priority area;
- EURASHE recommends that in order to enhance progression from SCHE-studies to bachelor degree studies and to stress that SCHE-studies are the intermediate or the short cycle within or linked to the first cycle, articulation between SCHE-programmes and bachelor programmes should be made compulsory;
- EURASHE recommends that national authorities promote the recognition of prior learning, whether formal, informal or non-formal, by all institutions providing higher education. Special attention should be given to the recognition of skills acquired in non-tertiary or non-higher

post-secondary vocational or professional programmes. Therefore EURASHE recommends national authorities and HEIs and other institutions providing SCHE to work together to create accessible, flexible and transparent progression routes in a lifelong learning perspective;

- It would be useful to organise seminars and or in-service training for staff in SCHE to explain the use of these descriptors in order to define the relevant level of their courses;
- EURASHE recommends that national authorities take more explicit measures to promote multilingualism in SCHE institutions especially by giving language courses or by teaching certain subjects in foreign languages.

Concerning quality assurance and accreditation

- EURASHE recommends that internal and external quality assurance should be applied in all SCHE institutions across Europe.
- EURASHE recommends making internal quality assurance procedures compulsory taking into account the mission and capacities of the institutions;
- EURASHE recommends that accreditation be closely linked to QA and should be carried out by independent agencies.
- EURASHE therefore recommends establishing quality assurance and accreditation agencies or enhancing the existing ones along the lines of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Europe as proposed by ENQA;
- EURASHE recommends imposing the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Europe as proposed by ENQA on all institutions in higher education also on institutions providing SCHE.

Concerning social cohesion and equity

- EURASHE recommends that as SCHE attracts many disadvantaged and non-traditional students it is important that countries stimulate SCHE institution to improve the collection of data of student;
- EURASHE also recommends that ministries invite SCHE institutions to develop or strengthen diversity policies which give specific focus to the various types of students in SCHE.

Concerning internationalisation

- EURASHE strongly recommends that all countries should work with ECTS credits. This would no doubt facilitate mobility of the SCHE students and cooperation between the SCHE institutions or departments.

6.2.3. Recommendations to the institutions

Concerning internationalisation

- EURASHE recommends that SCHE institutions make more **efforts to develop internationalisation** strategies for their SCHE students taking into account the specificity of those students;

EURASHE recommends setting up more structural cooperation between institutions providing SCHE and especially between smaller institutions and HEI's that already have a lot of experience in organizing international mobility for students.

Concerning internal quality assurance

- **EURASHE recommends that all institutions providing SCHE should implement internal quality assurance along the lines of** the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Europe;
- EURASHE recommends the institutions to make more efforts concerning data collection and processing on the social status of their students but also on the progression of their students, the drop-out rates and on the employability.

Concerning social cohesion and equity

- EURASHE recommends the use of student-centred learning methods especially in short cycle higher education in accordance to the specific mission of institutions providing SCHE.

6.2.4. Recommendations from the researchers to EURASHE

- The experts recommend that EURASHE should keep track of the developments which are taking place in SCHE level 5 in the months and years ahead. EURASHE is also advised to keep track of the developments in SCHE in the other European countries (such as the members of the CIS) not covered by the present study. EURASHE is finally advised to keep track of developments in other continents in SCHE such as especially the USA, Canada and Australia. EURASHE should use to this effect the appropriate European funding made available for cooperation between Europe and the above mentioned countries;
- They recommend that EURASHE pays particular attention during their annual international conference to international cooperation between SCHE Institutions. EURASHE is advised to apply for Erasmus funding to organise a special training session for representative of SCHE to be trained to enhance internationalisation in their institution;
- They recommend EURASHE should update the present report in five years' time when most of the European countries will be working with their new NQF;

- They recommend EURASHE should create a database with contacts at ministries responsible for SCHE in the Bologna countries and also a list of institutions providing SCHE that are willing to contribute to further studies.

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List of acronyms

Ad : Associate degree (NL)

ADIUT : Association des Directeurs des IUT : Association of Heads of IUT (FR)

AEHT : European Association of Hotel and Tourism Schools - Association Européenne des Ecoles d'Hôtellerie et de Tourisme

BA : Bachelor

BES: Brevet d'Enseignement Supérieur: Certificate of Higher Education (BEfr)

BFUG : Bologna Follow-Up Group

BTS: Brevet de Technicien Supérieur:/ Certificate of Higher Technician (FR and Lux.)

CEDEFOP : Centre Euroéen pour le Développement de la formation Professionnelle : European centre for the Development of Vocational Training

CertHE : Certificate of Higher Education (UK ENIW + Scotland)

CQFW : Credits and Qualifications Framework for Wales

DD : Dublin descriptors

DET : Diploma de Especialização Tecnológica : Diploma of Technical specialisation (PT)

DG EAC : Directorate General for Education and Culture

DipHE: Diploma of Higher Education (UK ENIW + Scotland)

DS: Diploma Supplement

DUT: Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie : University Dipoloma of Technology (FR)

ECTS : European Credit transfer System

EFTA : European Free Trade Association

EHEA : European Higher Education Area

ENQA: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

EQF: European qualification framework

ESF : European Social Fund

ET 2020 : Education and Training Strategy for 2020

ETF: European Training Foundation

EU: European Union

EUCEN : European Association for University LifeLong Learning

FD: Foundation Degree((UK ENIW)

FETAC: Further Education and Training Awards Council (Ireland)

FTE: Full-Time Equivalent

HE : Higher Education

HEFCE: Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEI : Higher Education Institution

HETAC: the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (Ireland)

HBO 5: Hoger BeroepsOnderwijs level 5 : higher professional education (Bnl)

HNC : Higher National Certificate (UK ENIW + Scotland)

HND : Higher National Diploma (UK ENIW + Scotland)

ICT : Information and Communication Technology

ILA: Individual Learning accounts

IMO : International Maritime organisation.

IOTI (Institutes of Technology Ireland)

ISCED : International Standard Classification of Education

IFTS : Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore (IT)

IST: Istituto Technico Superior (IT)

IUT: Institut Universitaire de Technologie: University Institute of Technology (FR)

LA : Learning agreement (Erasmus mobility)

LLL : LifeLong Learning

LM: Labour Market

LLP: LifeLong Learning programme of the EU (DG EAC)

MA: Master

MECU: Spanish qualifications framework

NGO: Non Governmental organization

NOKUT: Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education

NQF: National Qualification Framework

NVAO: Nederlands – Vlaams AccreditatieOrgaan: Dutch – Flemish accreditation Agency

ODL: Open and Distance Learning

OJ: Official Journal of the European Union

PDP: Personal Development Portfolio

Ph.D.: Doctorate

QA: Quality assurance

QCF: Qualifications and Credit Framework (England & Northern-Ireland)

OECD : Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development :

QF: EHEA: Qualification Framework European, Higher Education Area

RPL: Recognition of prior learning

SCHE: Short Cycle Higher education

SCQF: Scottish Credits & Qualification Framework

SES: Socioeconomic Status

SQA: Scottish Qualification Authority

STS: Section de Technicien Supérieur: Section for Higher Technicians (FR)

TA : Training agreement (Leonardo da Vinci mobility)

TEI: Tertiary Education Institutions

TOR : Transcript of records (Erasmus mobility)

TSC: Tertiary short Cycle

VET: Vocational education and Training

VHE: Vocational Higher Education

List of abbreviations for countries

AT: Austria

BEde: Belgium: German-speaking community

BEfr: Belgium French-)speaking community

BEnl: Belgium Dutch-speaking community

BUL: Bulgaria

CH: Switzerland

CY: Cyprus

CZ: the Czech Republic

DE: Germany

DK: Denmark

EE: ESTONIA

ES: Spain

ESCat: Spain Catalonia

FI: Finland

FR: France

HU: Hungary

IE: Ireland

IS: Iceland

IT: Italy

GR: Greece

LI: Liechtenstein

LT: Lithuania

LV: Latvia

LU: Luxemburg

MT: Malta

NL: The Netherlands

NO : Norway

PL: Poland

PT : Portugal

RO : Roumania

SE : Sweden

SI : Slovenia

SL : Slovakia

TR : Turkey

UK EWNI: UK England, Wales and Northern-Ireland

UK SC: UK Scotland

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People interviewed

Bonichon, Sylvie, *French Bologna-expert for SCHE*, Tallinn, 16 October 2010

Bouillot, Gerard, *Secretary General of social promotion education, SEGEC*, Brussels, 26 November 2010

Cammarino, Raffaelina, *Italian Ministry of Education*, Turin, 26 October 2010

Coudyzer, André, *Secretary General of higher education, SEGEC*, Brussels, 26 November 2010

Daale, Hans, *Secretary General Dutch Association for Shorter Higher Education (DASHE)*, Amsterdam 18 June, 2010

Marek Frankowicz, *Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Polish Bologna expert*. Tallinn, 16 October 2010

Hens, Liesbeth, *Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap*, Antwerpen, 17 December 2010

Ivanov, Stefan, *International University College, Dobrich, Bulgaria*. Amsterdam 18 June, 2010

Karpisek, Michal: *Vicepresident of EURASHE, Executive Officer at SPTV/CASPHE, the Czech Republic*, Brussels, 24 September 2010

Lewis, John, *Scottish Qualification Agency, Budapest*, 21 January 2011.

Longhurst, Derek, Chief Executive, Foundation degree forward (fdf) Derek Amsterdam 18 June, 2010

Panazol, Jean-Marie, *Inspecteur général de l'éducation nationale, Doyen du groupe économie gestion*, Turin, 26 October 2010

Sundqvist, UllaKarin, *Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education*, Turin, 26 October 2010

Experts who contributed to the report

Country	Name	Organisation, association department, institution
Austria	Heinz Kasparovsky	Federal Ministry for Science and Research, Austria
Belgium German speaking Community	Jörg Vomberg	Ministerium der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft, Belgium
	Stephan Boehmer	Autonomen Hochschule in der DG
Belgium French Community	Kevin Guillaume	DG Non-Compulsory Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of the French Community of Belgium
	Bouillot, Gerard, Coudyzer, André	Secretary General of Social Promotion Education, SEGEC Secretary General of higher education, SEGEC
	Liesbeth Hens	Department Education and Training- Higher Education
Belgium Flemish Community		Ministry of the Flemish Community of Belgium
Bulgaria	Ivana Radonova	Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, Bulgaria
Cyprus	Andreas Papoulas	Ministry of Education and Culture Department of Higher and Tertiary Education
The Czech Republic	Martina Kanakova	National Institute of Technical and Vocational Education Department for International Cooperation
	Michal Karpisek	Czech Association of Schools of Professional Higher Education, Prague
		Danish Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education and International Cooperation
Denmark	Jakob Krohn-Rasmussen	
Estonia	Helen Pollo	Ministry of Education and Research, higher education department
Finland	Timo Luopajarvi	Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (ARENE)
France	Jean-Marie Panazol	Inspecteur général de l'éducation nationale
	Ronald Guillèn	Relations Internationales ADIUT (Association des Instituts Universitaires de Technologie)
Germany	Grit Matthiesen	DAAD - German Academic Exchange Service
Greece	Vasileios Papazoglou	Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs
Hungary	Pal Veres	Ministry of Culture and Education Department of Higher Education
	Istvan Bilik	Association for co-operation of Higher Education Institutions and Business (ACHB)
Iceland	Einar Hreinsson	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture
Ireland	Peter Cullen	Higher Education and Training Awards Council.
	Richard Thorn	Institutes of Technology of Ireland
Italy	Anna Laura Marini	Direzione Generale per l'Istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore e per i rapporti con i sistemi formativi delle Regioni
	Raffaelina Cammarino,	Italian Ministry of Education
Latvia	Marina Meksa	Ministry of Education and Science
Liechtenstein	Eva-Maria Schädler	Schulamts des Fürstentums Liechtenstein
Lithuania	Ana Aleknaviciene	Lithuanian Colleges' Directors Conference
Luxembourg	Germain Dondelinger	Premier Conseiller de Gouvernement
Malta	Joachim James Calleja	Malta Qualifications Council
	Paul A. Attard	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)
The Netherlands	Bert Broerse	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
	Hans Daale	DASHE, Dutch Association for Short Higher Education
Norway	Tove Lyngra	Ministry of Education and research
Poland	Maria Boltruszkó	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
	Anna Smoczyńska	Head of Polish EURYDICE Unit.
	Marek Frankowicz	Jagiellonian University in Krakow
Portugal	Morão Dias,	General Director of the Ministry
	Inês Vasques Branco	Service Director, Service Directorate of Support of the Network for Higher Education
	José Manuel Silva	Instituto Politécnico de Leiria
Romania	Gabriela Ciobanu	National Centre for TVET Development, Ministry of Education Research Youth and Sport - Romania
Slovenia	Eva Kaczová	Ministry of Education of the Slovak republic Department of the Higher education
	Alicia Leonor Sauli Miklavčič	Association of Slovene higher vocational colleges
Slovakia	Eva Kaczová	Ministry of Education of the Slovak republic Department of the Higher education
Spain		Education Department, Generalitat de Catalunya
Sweden	Sara Bringle	Ministry of Education and Research
	Carina Lindén	Ministry of Education and Research
	Sundqvist, Ulla Karin,	Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education
Switzerland	Sarah Daepf	Eidgenössisches Volkswirtschaftsdepartement EVD, Bundesamt für Berufsbildung und Technologie BBT
Turkey	Durmus Günay	The Council of Higher Education
United Kingdom: England, Northern Ireland and Wales	Paul Dowling	UK Higher Education International and Europe Unit
	Alexandra Jenkins	UK Higher Education International and Europe Unit
	Nick Johnstone	Guild HE
	Esther Lockley	foundation degree forward (fdf)
	Derek Longhurst	foundation degree forward (fdf)
United Kingdom: Scotland	John Lewis	Scottish Qualifications Authority
	Dugald Craig	West of Scotland College' Partnership (WoSCoP)

Figure 30: contributing experts

Responses to the questionnaire per country

Country	Min./department	Association	Institution
AT	1		1
BEDE			
BEFR			
BENL	1		2
BG	1		2
CY	1		2
CH			
CZ	1	1	5
DE	1		1
DK	1		2
EE	1		
ES	1		
FI	1		
FR	1	1	5
GR	1		
HU	1	1	5
IE	1	1	2
IS	1		1
IT			
LV	1		1
LI	1		
LT	1		
LU			
MT	1		1
NL	1	1	1
NO	1		1
PL			1
PT			
RO	1		
SE	1		2
SI	2	1	7
SK	1		
TR	1		3
UK EWNI	1	1	1
UK SC	1	1	
Total : 83	29	8	46

Figure 31: Total of respondents

Questionnaires

The questionnaires can be found and downloaded in the full version of the study (including country chapters) on the EURASHE – website

<http://www.eurashe.eu/RunScript.asp?p=ASP\Pg0.asp>