

# Important changes achieved, but... Is Bologna still responding to global changes and emerging student profiles?

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- Portuguese reformes
- Context – different ways of reformes
- Questions specially relevants for academic staff
- Social inclusion
- Special profiles of students

## Our experience in Portugal:

- ❑ 2006-2012: Formal changes/Institutional and cultural changes
  - ❑ 2006-2007:
    - ❑ implementation of new legal regime of degrees and diploma (three study cycles), ECTS and DS
    - ❑ 3 levels of qualification/ despite creation of Integrated Master Programs (5-6 year duration of a single study cycle).
    - ❑ According to the Lisbon Declaration, new, very advanced legislation for simplified recognition of foreign degrees (especially European) – but not for recognition of mobility periods
  - ❑ 2007: Introduction of legislation for QA:
    - ❑ Evaluation of HEI through new legislation - 2007
    - ❑ Creation of the National Agency for Accreditation and Evaluation (A3ES) – 2007
  - ❑ 2007: New legal regime of the HEI (RJIES)
- ❑ 2011-2014 – Accreditation and evaluation of all study cycles at all universities – greater awareness of both curricular content and their formal organization – but, more bureaucracy and formalities

- 2009-2014: period of considerable changes (not only in the European HEI):
  - Economic and financial crisis – significant effects in Portugal
  - Rise of unemployment rate (including graduates/postgraduates) – a dramatic situation in Portugal (unemployment data are biased by young emigration)

But also:

- Increasing recognition of the importance of new skills for new professions
- Multidisciplinarity and new forms of knowledge – “clashing” with strong disciplinary conceptions
- Need for updating/continuous adaptation of training and knowledge
- Increasing of mobility (students and graduates)

- ❑ Changes in HEI (related also with global changes): awareness among the academic community?

Concept of “Student centred learning”, understanding of ECTS and meaning of Learning Outcomes – different perceptions of the concepts

- Changes in the role of the teacher
- Guarantee of quality of education and training – according to international standards
- Evaluation (still great centrality of exams – but higher grades do not necessarily express capacity for better performance)

But

- Greater interrelation of research and teaching/learning
- Greater flexibility of curricula (and of student pathways) – deep but flexible knowledge

- At the same time: Changes in student profiles and consequent challenges:
  - Increased massification of the first cycle and greater socio-cultural diversity > new challenges to the teaching-learning process
  - Difficulty in ensuring commitment and engagement of many students in learning process
  - Difficulties in achieving greater autonomy, critical thinking and curiosity of students (importance of changes also in secondary education) > Limited preparedness, at lower levels of qualification, for initiative, responsibility and capacity for problem-solving
  - Speed of technological change and need for continuous updating of knowledge in all areas
  - Capacity for adapting to new realities and acceptance of new learning challenges

□ Consequently:

- Despite increase in mobility, economic-financial difficulties make it difficult for many students to benefit from it > reinforce internationalisation at home
- In some areas, possibilities of inter-cycle mobility are still limited > necessary to evaluate both experiences
- Difficulty in including in curricula, specially in first cycle, the development of transferable skills (teamwork, critical thinking, communication, cooperation, respect for others...) > work with academic staff
- The awareness of a greater commitment to society is still shallow: awareness of the student's role in building the future
- Difficulties in creating conditions and facilities for lifelong learning

- The problem of employability – the concept and the “usefulness/uselessness” of forms of knowledge :
  - Limited understanding of labour markets about interdisciplinary degrees (horizontal and vertical) > HEI need to work better with employers
  - HEI must highlight the importance of curiosity, of initiative and creativity of graduates > through different pathways and collaboration with labour market
  - But “competitive” education does not favour the habit of teamwork , individualism does not encourage maturity and collective responsibility > these are relevant questions for HEI



□ New student profiles:

- Individualism, competition without collaboration, spreading of interests, difficulty in concentrating associated with the need for continuous novelty > HEI must work better this issues
- Greater and easier access to the information available on the Internet, but difficulty in converting it into knowledge requiring greater concentration, reflexivity or experimental/observational capacities – How to deal with reality?
- Worker-students – economic difficulties and/or need for updating – are HEI and academics really prepared for these realities?
- Entrepreneurial spirit – a “requirement” for all?

Thank you!

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