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Study by the European University Association shows how Europe has adopted European higher education reforms

A study published today by the European University Association (EUA) gives a fascinating insight into how Europe has adopted the higher education reforms outlined in the Bologna process. EUA's "Trends V" study of more than 900 European institutions indicates that globally dramatic progress has been made in implementing structural reforms highlighted in the Bologna higher education reform process. EUA will present the report to the 46 Education Ministers attending the Bologna Ministerial Conference taking place in London on May 17/18.

Trends V shows that 82% of 900 institutions responding to the survey have now introduced the three cycles of degrees outlined (the equivalents of a bachelor, master, doctorate). Aimed at promoting mobility within Europe and with the rest of the world, the Bologna process (signed by 46 countries) will create by 2010 a massive higher education area (EHEA) where common principles apply. The ambitious reforms are also designed to answer some of Europe's social and economic challenges by enhancing the quality of education, research and graduate employability. While Trends V shows that there now seems little doubt that the reforms in degree structure will be in place by 2010, it highlights that there is still much work to be done to achieve the underlying social and economic aims of Bologna.

Major progress still needed

While 74% of institutions stated that it was crucial to make rapid progress to the EHEA, the report shows that that most countries still need to make major progress in a number of areas such as:

- Working more closely with employers to ensure that the reforms are understood, and that new qualifications are relevant for

the labour market

- Improving quality assurance systems in Europe by strengthening institutional quality culture, involving students and moving to "light touch" external audits of institutions
- Strengthening trust between institutions and countries to improve mobility both for staff and students

Trends V highlights that universities must commit more resources to developing lifelong learning, a key goal for Europe. Only 17% of the sample felt this was currently a major priority for their institution. Finally, the study shows that the social objectives of Bologna are still somewhat from being achieved. Governments and institutions need to develop their strategies and take concrete action if they are to ensure that all who have the potential to benefit from higher education have equal opportunities in the European Higher Education Area.

A full PDF version of Trends V can be downloaded here:

www.eua.be

The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe. EUA's mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research.

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