

# **Higher Education in Portugal:**

## **Recent Evolution, Equity, Trends and Perspectives of Future**

Gil Cabrito Belmiro

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## **Recent Evolution, Equity, Trends and Perspectives of Future**

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### **Introduction**

To understand the actual Portuguese situation of Higher Education (HE), it is necessary to address some facts of Portuguese recent past. In fact, the way that each country presents itself in a given moment is a consequence of the whole events that had influenced its evolution, in every social domain: educational, economical, political, and cultural (Fuller, B & Robinson, R., 1992). In consequence, only the knowledge of the factors that had written Portuguese recent history allows other people to understand situations, to appreciate problems and doubts, to comment performances or to perspective its future.

As a consequence, this article is divided into four parts. In Part I, the author enumerates some of the stressing events that explain the recent evolution of Portuguese society, namely in political, economical, educational and social terms. In Part II, the author presents HE System nowadays, its evolution in numbers and in nature. In Part III, the author presents the more important traces which characterize the actual HE System. In Part , the author presents the future trends of Portuguese HE, especially those which concern the Process of Bologna. The author will conclude the article with some final remarks and the references used.

### **I General characteristics of Portugal, before the Revolution on the 25 April 1974**

#### **1. The panorama before 1950ies**

Until 30 years ago, Portugal has been a country isolated of (and from) the democratic international community, being ruled by a Dictator (named António de Oliveira Salazar) supported by the Army and the higher classes, namely entrepreneurs and land-lords.

Between 1928 and 1974, the most primary citizen rights (like the rights to health, to education, to lodgement, to social security, to work, etc.) and freedoms (like freedoms of association, of contestation, of speech, of strike, etc.) were not secured. Portugal leaved in a climate of fear and

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terror, dominated by an intelligence policy which might, at any moment, to arrest anybody without any fault specified. Hundreds of these arrested individuals had never appeared.

In economic terms Portugal, until World War II, was a country whose economy was supported by an old and traditional agriculture sector and by the basic raw-materials coming from the African colonies. According to this, the ruling class was related to land and export activities, being the industrial activity almost inexistent. In fact, when the Dictator, in 1928, had took the power, one of the political measures he made was to close a lot of factories and conditioned the opening of others, to minimize competition in benefice of the great capitalists and to minimize the problems that could come once he and his supporters associated the workforce to protest movements, strikes and socialist ideals (Cabrito, Ferrão & Marques, 1978).

By that time, until the 1950ies the academic performance of Portuguese people was very low. Illiteracy rate reached almost 90% of the population (INE), and education did not be part of the strategic aims of the ruling class. In fact, more education is synonymous of more knowing and information and, as a consequence, a danger to the stability of the regime that only could remain thanks to the ignorance of ordinary people.

Basic scholarship, close to 1974, was a 4 years cycle, being very low the percentage of children that continued evolved on further studies. However the regime guaranteed its reproduction sending to the lyceum and to the university a minimum number of young people needed to replace the elites. Obviously, those youngsters, especially boys, belong themselves to the ruling class, that is, to the elites they must reproduce (Nunes, 1973).

Thus, until 1974 Portuguese society was characterised by being strongly discriminator (Mónica, 1978), where the enrolment on the lyceum and on the university was a privilege of a very small part of the Portuguese population (Vieira, 1995).

This discrimination was also witnessed by the fact that enrolment on university, contrarily to what it happened in the majority of European countries, was not free of charge. Otherwise, young people must pay a fee to be in the university which valued, before the Revolution of 25 April 1974, 1,300 escudos a year, that is about 6.5 €yearly (about 867 yens *per* year).

If this amount seems today insignificant it really represented a considerable weight in most family budgets in 1974, once the salary of the majority of Portuguese workers was less then 800 escudos a month (about 533 yens *per* month). This means that, the fee was around 9% of the family budget if both husband and wife are workers. Obviously, the situation got worse paying attention that there are other expenses associated to the university enrolment (books; didactics material; lodgement in case of displacement of family s home; transportation; etc.). In fact, to have a son in the university was very hard and almost impossible, for the working class or for the small farmers or for the owners of small firms.

## 2. The 1950ies: a decade of change

The 1950ies were marked by the change, on the economical, educational and even political domains, which has been externally imposed.

First of all, Portugal did not have an active part on World War II. During the war time, in spite of its neutral position, Portugal had performed an important role in the European context. In fact, Portugal supplies belligerent countries with canned food, clothes, boots, shoes and other leather accessories, minerals, metal goods, transports and guns and other military material. This circumstance means that during the war a small group of industries had been developed, some individuals had become rich men who desire to invest the new industrial and commercial capital in profitable activities.

So, as a consequence of this capital accumulating process, the 1950ies has been crossed by a strong development will (Dias, 1945). However, when the war is over and European countries begin to rebuild their economies, they give up of Portuguese goods, putting in danger the incipient Portuguese industry.

In fact, this new industry can not compete with European goods. So, in order to maintain and develop those industries, the Government has been forced to help the new industrial bourgeoisie. Thus, the Government had guaranteed to entrepreneurs: a) subsidies and protection from the foreigner competition thanks to a protectionist policy; b) the implementation of basic infra-structures; c) incentives to the appearance of economic groups and large corporations, which associated industry, bank and assurance activities, transportation and, colonial exploitation; d) reform of the educational system, in order to guarantee specialised workers needed to the industrial development.

However, and in spite of the protectionist policy, Portugal could not remain isolated from the rest of Europe countries. On one hand, the industrial development needed the importation of machinery and raw materials from outside; on the other hand, Europe leaved a very strong movement of internationalisation.

On the European scope, and as a consequence of the Plan Marshall established for the reconstruction of the European continent, it had appeared the first big international organisations with economic aims (OECE, CEE, EFTA); with regulation aims of specific productions (CECA, EURATOMO); and, with political and military aims (NATO).

Portugal could not be outside and he came to be a member of the OECE and later on, of the EFTA, by the influence of its oldest allied, the United Kingdom. In this organisation, in order to surpass its underdevelopment, Portugal had beneficiated of a special status (the G Annex) which protected its agriculture and its recent industry. Thanks to this *clausula*, and the funding support given by its EFTA partners, Portugal had initiated its first great industrial development project, having adopted the economic model of "industrialization by replacing the importations".

This project needed plenty of qualified workers. To produce those qualifications, in 1948 is

launched a great reform of the educational system (probably, the more important reform of all the Portuguese reforms on education), which had changed completely the educational picture of the country. On the scope of this Reform it has been created the technical and vocational schools, in the industrial and business branches. By the end of the 1950ies there were two secondary education subsystems: the lyceum and the technical schools.

Enrolled in these schools, the children from blue collar workers, from small farmers and from small firm owners had climbed up on the social hierarchy. The decade of 1950 corresponds to a period of "happy demand for education" (Grácio, 1986), once these young boys and their families had realized the benefits they could get with more education.

Once having finished their studies on these schools, the majority of youngsters searched for a job and, most cases, they found a compatible job with their academic diploma as the Human Capital Theory states on those days (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964).

If some of those young boys wanted to continue studies they could do it by entering in the Medium Post Secondary Studies, the Institutes of Engineering and the Institutes of Accountability. If they achieved those courses with a final mark of 14 values or plus (in a scale from 0 to 20), they could present themselves to do some others examinations in order to enter in the University. On the contrary, students from lyceum entered directly into it.

By the end of the 1950ies there were 4 universities on the country (the University of Oporto; the University of Coimbra; the University of Lisbon; The University Technical of Lisbon); and 6 Institutes, 3 of each speciality, and distributed by the cities of Oporto, Coimbra and Lisbon.

So, the decade of the 50ies turned to be characterised by a triple movement: industrialization; educational reform; internationalisation.

It is important to notice that this decade was also a time of a great emigration. In fact, considering the economic and political rigor of the country thousands of poor Portuguese individuals had emigrated to United States of America, South Africa and Brazil, and later on to France, Germany, United Kingdom and other European countries. In spite of this emigration be mostly illegal, Portuguese authorities "close their eyes" because the emigration was "good" for the country. On one hand, it contributed to minimize social tension; on the other, it contributed to increase the wealth of the country once those emigrants, always very tied to their "Patria"(the country) send back to their families the majority of the money they won outside.

### 3. The 1960ies and the colonial war

In early 1960ies it had been maintained the industrialization process, the opening to the international market, the emigration and the stressing of the education. However, just in the beginning of the decade the fight for freedom and independence in Portuguese colonies in African and Asian Continents had begun.

This colonial war had begun in 1961, after the Government of the Indian Union had annexed Portuguese Colonies of Goa, Damão, and Dio. Some time later, on mid 1961, the colonial war had begun in Angola, situated on the African Continent and reached East Timor, on Asia.

In spite of the efforts made with the war, Portuguese Government had been forced to continue the international policy of opening to outside market, in order to negotiate some political support coming from some countries, which gave to Portugal some guarantees of not being condemned on International Forums, such as the United Nations Organisation.

In order to get those supports, Portugal had allowed foreigner investment enter in metropolitan and colonial markets. And this is a very hard measure for the Government to take, once, and concerning the colonies, Portugal had always monopolised the whole colonial business. For some countries, which wanted to settle down their firms on Portuguese colonies since XIX century, the agreement has been very fruitful. And so, The Netherlands, Belgium, France, United Kingdom and United States of America reach to (neo) colonize Portugal and Portuguese colonies, exploring cheap and specialised workforce as well as diamonds, oil and raw-materials (minerals and from agriculture) (Cabrito, Ferrão & Marques, 1978).

Thus, with the agreement and the complicity of some strong countries of International Community, Portugal had conducted a very bloody war during 13 never ending years.

During those years, Portuguese people leaved on a war economy. The activities privileged were military industries (transportation and guns), textile and leather industries, agro-food industries and pharmaceutical industry. At the same time, it has tried an attempt to develop glass and optical industries as well as radio components industries, in order that foreigner investment can profit of workers very competent, very careful, very cheap and very peaceful, especially women.

As a consequence, public services were neglected such as consumer activities, health services and educational system. In the end of the decade, the educational equipment was no more developed or larger than 10 years before (Cabrito, 1994).

The war efforts had been negatives consequences on the population. The sadness and unhappiness got generalised on the country thanks to the increasing number of the victims and to the hard life conditions of middle and lower classes. On the other hand, the HE students protested against the war and the repression had been increased. The situation turned on so impossible that the protests had been born and had grew inside the military class itself.

#### 4 . The 1970ies and the 25 April 1974 Revolution

On the 25<sup>th</sup> April of 1974 a military coup came through. This event would modify substantially the regime once very quickly the military movement has originated a revolutionary process dominated by the values of democracy, freedom and, equity.

The decolonisation process had begun immediately and on the end of 1975 every colonies are

already new independent countries with the exception of East Timor (which, in the meantime has been annexed by the Indonesian government). On the other hand, internally, all rights and guarantees of the citizens were granted and on the 25 April 1976 it was approved by the elected Parliament the new Constitution of the Republic.

On the scope of the “left ideals” of the Revolution, Portugal had assisted, until the end of 1975 to the nationalisation of the strategic economic sectors: bank and insurance; transports; cements; cellulose; metal-mechanic industries; ship construction; chemistry; and the land property had been object of an Agrarian Reform.

With the Revolution, Portugal has initiated a new democratic period, being the aims of the new regime to build a more fair, equity, friendly and democratic society. In order to achieve them, some structural reforms, on the economical, social, cultural and educational domains have taken place.

Concerning the economical reform, the State took the control of the economy thanks to the nationalisation of the more important economic groups and activities. Simultaneously, the State has fixed a minimum salary (3,300 escudos/monthly; similar to 16.5 euros; more or less 2,200 yens), from which has benefited more than an half of Portuguese workers.

Concerning the social and cultural measures, several practices of cultural relevance had taken place near the population (theatre; traditional games and dances; enlighten sessions; etc.). From these cultural events it was expected to reinforce associative movement, to disseminate popular culture; to get close manual workers and intellectual workers, etc.

On the educational side, a new reform took place, which has led to a) the unification of the education (lyceum and technical) on a single row, similar to the old lyceum; b) the settlement of the compulsory schooling (firstly 6 years and sometime later 9 years); and c) the settlement of new forms of Adult Education in order to give to working people a second chance to learn and to have an academic diploma.

So, since 1974, as a result of the democratic revolution, all the educational system had changed a lot as well as its aims. Portugal had assisted to several transformations (Stoer, 1986), which stress a more equality society according to democratic ideals (Apple, 1996).

Among these changes it is then possible to refer the settlement of a comprehensive/compulsory education applied equally to all children under 16 years old, the transformation of an elite educational system into a mass educational system, the diversification of post-compulsory schooling supply and the democratisation of education, namely Higher Education.

## II Higher Education in present days

### 1. The social demand of Higher Education and the State s answers until 1986

Until early 1970 ies Portuguese HE System was an elite system, once it was attended by a few

members of society, which belong mostly to upper classes. The issue of the educational system was the reproduction of the dominant class, as it is stated by Bourdieu & Passeron (1964), witnessing a situation of great inequality based on socio-economic origin (Boudon, 1973). In this scope, the HE system was not a democratic one and this fact was the “natural” consequence of the very political system itself (Arnove, Altabach & Kelly, 1992), which is not a democracy.

After 1974, and as a consequence of the democratisation process of the regime and the democratisation of education, social demand for HE increased very much, as it is possible to observe in Table 1:

Table1 Number of HE students (1)

School year	Students	School year	Students
1960/61**	24,149	1990/91	186,780
1965/66**	33,972	1995/96	313,795
1970/71**	49,461	2000/01	384,322
1975/76**	70,912	2002/03	395,478
1980/81	82,428	2003/04	388,724
1986/87	116,291		

Source: Ministry of Education HE Department

\*\*Barreto *et alii*, *A Situação Social em Portugal, 1960-1995*

(1) It includes all HE demand (universities and polytechnics)

In a first attempt to answer to the HE demand, Government had increased the number of places in the existing universities. New universities were created and in the early years of the 1980ies there were already functioning 7 universities more (New University of Lisbon and, Universities of Aveiro; of Algarve; of Minho; of Beira Interior; and of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro), an independent university institute (Higher Education Institute for Work and Firm Sciences) and 18 Polytechnic Institutes (one at each capital of district).

The Polytechnic Institutes are the “heirs” of the old Post-Secondary Institutes of Engineering and Accountability. With these Institutes, it has been consecrated a dual system in Portuguese HE, like it happened on the time in other European countries, such as United Kingdom, The Netherlands or Germany.

In spite of these measures to increase the number of places in HE institutions, the system did not reach to answer to social demand. In fact, from the comparison of the numbers of applicants to HE and the number of applicants enrolled, it may be concluded that those ones are always more than the existing places. See Table 2:



Table 2 - Demand for HE and public supply (\*)

School year	Applicants to public universities (freshmen)	Number of Applicants enrolled	Number of applicants not enrolled
1986/87	31,973	15,266	16,707
1987/88	31,065	17,184	13,881
1988/89	37,625	19,233	18,392
1989/90	51,779	21,023	30,756
1990/91	58,867	24,446	34,421
1991/92	55,342	27,250	28,092

Source: Ministry of Education Department of HE

So, in order to solve or to diminish the problem of an explosive demand for HE, governments had created some administrative obstacles in the access procedures to the HE system, which, in fact, will imply a non democratic access to HE, which still remains (Cabrito, 2002). Among those procedures it must be noticed:

- The settlement of one year of voluntary social work, at the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, which corresponded to the end of secondary education, in late 70ies. This measure has not been well succeeded, because, among other reasons, young people are not prepared for this kind of work and that measure has been abandoned quickly.
- The settlement of a "one preparation year" to enter university, including 5 national examinations about different subjects that the students must do (it last until 1986).
- The reform of secondary education, which has been enlarged of one more year. Secondary Studies started to finish at the 12<sup>th</sup> grade (it is still the present situation) with national examinations.
- The settlement of a *numerus clausus* that is the settlement of a specific number of places each year for each subject and each institution. Once the number of vacant places is lesser than the number of applicants, these ones were placed on a queue according the criteria defined to enter HE (namely the marks of secondary education, the marks of national examinations and the marks of specific examinations done for each HE institution). This measure had begun to be used in early 80ies, and still remains.

## 2. The State's answers after 1986: HE and private initiative

Nevertheless, those measures were not enough to satisfy social demand of HE. As a consequence, the Government had searched for other solutions and he had found as "best solution" the opening HE to private initiative. Thus, in 1986, the Government had decided to allow the creation of private universities and private polytechnic institutes.

This decision symbolises the beginning of the privatisation of Portuguese HE. So, since

1986/1987 both private universities and polytechnic institutes are being created and they have grown thanks to the students that do not reach to enter Public HE. Let's observe Table 3:

Table 3 Enrolment in HE (1)

School year	Applicants to public universities (freshmen)	Number of applicants enrolled		
		Public HE	Private HE	Total
1986/87	31,973	15,266	6,407	21,673
1987/88	31,065	17,184	8,041	25,225
1988/89	37,625	19,233	7,946	27,179
1989/90	51,779	21,023	15,500	36,523
1990/91	58,867	24,446	20,475	44,921
1991/92	55,342	27,250	20,701	47,951
1992/93	59,166	28,571	23,811	52,382
1993/94	58,431	30,476	21,146	51,622
1994/95	66,871	31,891	25,007	56,898
1995/96	80,576	33,473	29,617	63,090
1996/97	68,798	32,873	26,750	59,623
1997/98	54,950	35,452	21,614	57,066

Source: Ministry of Education Department of HE

(1) It includes all HE demand (universities and polytechnics)

So, as a consequence of the incapacity of public supply in answering to social demand of education and to the Government policy, it has been the Private HE System that answered to the pressure of social demand since mid 1980ies. That situation probably explains why Private HE, in general, had a worse quality than Public HE. In fact these institutions had a guaranteed public and consequently they did not need to make a very strong investment in equipments (such as labs, computers and, experimental goods) and, in human resources, to get students. In fact:

- Most teachers of private universities are, firstly, teachers of public universities. That is, private universities, in general, still do not have their own teacher body completed;
- the teachers which constitute the teacher body of private universities came from public universities and they have reached their teaching and researching qualifications in the public sector;
- private universities provide especially "paper and pencil" courses (social sciences, literature, humanities, business and administration, economics) instead of scientific studies (biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, etc.).

Anyway, gradually, and in spite of the effective growth of public supply, private sector had grown on

an annual rate higher than the one of public sector, as we can verify on tables 4 and 5:

Table 4 Number of students enrolled on HE, public and private sectors

	Public HE	Private HE	Total
1980/1981	74,599	7,829	82,428
1990/1991	135,350	51,430	186,780
2000/2001	270,312	114,010	384,322

Source: Ministry of Education Department of HE

Table 5 Percentage rate of the evolution of students enrolled on HE, public and private sectors

	Public HE	Private HE	Total
90/91-80/81	81.4	556.9	126.6
00/01-90/91	99.7	121.7	105.8

It is important to say that nowadays, there is a strong decrease of HE demand. This situation is due to two main reasons: a) the demographic decrease of Portuguese population as a consequence of a extremely low female fertility rate (less then 1.4); b) the falling of some of the expectations Portuguese people have concerning HE, once nowadays Portugal has a high rate of unemployment between HE graduates, because Portuguese firms still can not absorb the amount of qualifications and competences available.

This situation affects especially private HE sector, on one hand because it is more expensive and, on the other hand because public places available are sufficient to satisfy all (or almost all) HE demand. And, once the quality of private teaching is not, in general, better than the quality of the teaching of public institutions, there is no reason to be enrolled in the majority of private HE institutions. See tables 6 and 7.

Table 6 Number of students enrolled on HE, public and private sectors

	Public HE	Private HE	Total
2000/2001	270,312	114,010	384,322
2002/2003	285,362	110,116	395,478
2003/2004	282,215	106,509	388,724

Source: Ministry of Education Department of HE

Table 7 Percentage rate of the evolution of students enrolled on HE, public and private sectors

	Public HE	Private HE	Total
02/03-01/00	5.6	-3.4	2.9
03/04-02/03	-1.1	-3.3	-1.7

In order to defend themselves from this decrease, some private universities and polytechnic institutes are negotiating among themselves some ways of convergence and fusion.

### 3. The State's answer after 1992: privatisation the financing of public HE

The opening of the HE to private initiative it has not been enough to solve the problem of the surplus of students face to the number of places available, namely because some students did not enrol themselves on private HE because the high price of the monthly fee.

In fact, one important part of the students which are enrolled on private HE belongs to the most favored groups of society which had not good marks in secondary school and in examinations to entry public institutions once they knew that they always can took the hypothesis of entering on a private institution and after the graduation they will get a job on a firm of their family, friend or some acquaintance. On the contrary, youngsters from lower classes they must have good performances both on secondary school and on examinations to enter to HE system, once they have not enough money to go to a private institution (Cabrito, 2002). Table 8 witnesses this situation:

Table 8 Social composition of Portuguese HE students, public and private sectors (%)

Class	Public HE	Private HE
Upper class	14.4	26.4
Upper middle class	32.2	27.2
Middle class	39.6	37.1
Lower class	13.8	9.3

Source: Cabrito, 2001.

As it can be observed, most students enrolled on private education belong to the upper classes, fact that also explains the difference of the average budgets from the two kinds of students, as Table 9 indicates:

Table 9 Monthly average budget of the student's families, in Euro

All students	Public HE	Private HE
371 (49,467 yens)	344 (45,867 yens)	456 (60,800 yens)

Source: Cabrito, 2002.

Once the opening of HE to private initiative was not enough to minimise the pressure of the demand, the Government, in 1992, had presented to the Parliament a new law, which settled a fee to students enrolled in public HE. This new fee would be the actualised value of the fees existing during the old regime.

This event turned very difficult poor people enter university. And in 1992, in a total contradiction to European tradition that considers the HE as a public good to be enjoyed by everybody freely, in Portugal this law turn the HE closer to a private good.

In the meantime, the changing of Governments led to the approval by the Parliament of three laws about the financing of Public HE.

#### *Law by Decree 20/93*

Coming from a centre-right government, this law symbolises the neo-liberal ideas preponderant. This decision and the opening of the HE to private initiative are the most polemic decisions any time taken concerning Portuguese Public HE.

But, this Law did not reach to solve the problem. This law only had contributed to a diminishing tendency of the demand, because it discriminates young boys and girls coming from families that could not effectively pay the fee which would increase every year until the value of 25% of the real cost of a place in the university will be reached.

In practice, the value of the fees had reached about 15% of the real cost of a HE place when this Govern was replaced by a socialist one. This augmentation has been accompanied by several forms of students protest because, if someone observe the weight of the amount paid for each student to be on public universities considering their average family budget. Please observe table 10.

Table 10 - Shares in aggregate budget of spending on fees, 94-95 (in %)

Social Class		Upper Class	Upper Middle Class	Middle Class	Lower Class
Public HE	Fee (1)	420	420	210	210
	Income (2)	1,846.5	1,668	855.5	706.5
	(1)/(2)x100	22.7	25.2	24.5	29.7

Note: This law previewed two values for the fee, concerning students budget. So, it was 420€ and 210€, respectively to high and low budgets, Cabrito, 2001

#### *Law by Decree 113/97*

The situation turns up more peaceful and quiet after the elections of 1995. The new Government, coming from the Socialist party, has been more sensitive to social questions, namely concerning education which is, according to the Prime Minister, "his passion".

In accordance with this, and also in order to diminish the students protest, the Government had suspended fees on years 1995 and 1996 and, in the meantime Minister of HE had studied a new solution.

In 1997 a new law concerning the financing of HE was approved by the Parliament. This law also elected the students as HE source of financing, but there were some great differences between it and the old law:

- a) the new law stated that the fee is not a partial payment of the real cost of education; it became a frequency rate indexed to the “minimum salary” in a way that each student would pay each school year as much as the monthly minimum salary;
- b) the poorest students will be helped with a grant whose value would vary according to their families budget;
- c) the fees must be used in the amelioration of teaching conditions;
- d) it was previewed a social loan policy, in order to guarantee to all students that no one would be put aside from HE studies because of economical difficulties.

For several reasons, the Law by Decree 113/97 did not correspond to the objectives announced by Prime Minister. On one hand, for the students that had applied to the grant, the amount received was not enough to allow poor young people to study.

On the other hand, the promised social loan policy was never implemented. Finally, the financial problems of the very Government lead to a diminishing of State's participation on the budget of universities. As a consequence, universities were obliged to use the amount got with the fees not in the amelioration of the teaching system but “to get the doors opened”, that is, to pay their workers (including teachers) and to pay administrative and maintenance expenses.

#### *Law by Decree 37/2003*

The financing situation of both Public HE and students had changed with the new Government after 2002 elections. In fact, this Government, belonging to the centre-right embraces some liberal ideas which brought the “market” inside HE Public Institutions.

Starting on year 2003 and according with the new law of financing public HE, the Law by Decree 37/2003, the Government had “liberalised” the value of the fee. The fee is no more indexed to the minimum salary and it is up to institutions the responsibility of settle down its amount. However, the fee must be included in an interval defined by the Government.

Table 11 Evolution of fee value in public HE institutions (approximately, in euros and yens by year) until school year 2005/2006

School Year	1995/96 - 2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/...
Value in €/year	1 minimum salary. 300€ (40,000 yens)	Variable, between 453 and 852 € (60,000 up to 113,600 yens)	Variable, between 488 and 880 € (65,066 up to 117,333 yens)	Variable, between 495 and 912 € (66,000 up to 121,600 yens)	Value increasing every year, settle between a minimum vale and a maximum value

The financing struggle of HE public institutions is still bigger, once the Government, at the same time, had diminished even in real terms its participation in the budget of Public HE institutions. With

this policy, the boards of HE institutions became students' public enemy once they are the boards that must fix the value of the fee within the interval fixed by the Government.

In 2004 another government came through, as a consequence of a political problem that had conducted to anticipated elections. The new Government, coming from the Socialist Party, have embraced, still now, the existing law.

At the same time HE institutions try to get more students, through some kind of advertising, once the State's participation depends of the number of students enrolled. Consequently, HE institutions provide similar graduation studies with different fees. In time, this situation can lead to a "balkanisation" of HE System and to the increase of the inequity already exists.

In fact, the students must choose the Institution using the knowledge they have about all, which is influenced by the advertising concerning the excellence of the teaching and of the teachers, the flexibility of the curriculum etc., in a process that penalise those with less knowledge of the reality (Eicher, 1998). On the other hand, the situation leads to a competition for students and financing sources among HE institutions, putting the market in-doors.

### III Main characteristics of Portuguese HE

Nevertheless the complexity of any educational system, it is possible to state that most important aspects that characterise Portuguese HE are:

- a (polemic) dual system
- the existence of public and private institutions
- the financing system of public institutions
- the collegiate governance
- the access conditions
- a tendency to be an elitist system.

#### 1. The dual (or binary) system

HE System in Portugal is composed by universities and polytechnic institutes, both public and private ones.

Table 12 The binary system, 2005/2006

	Universities	Polytechnics	Total
Public	14	35	49
Private	11	98	109
Total	25	133	158

Source: Luisa Cerdeira, Working Paper, February 2006

Universities and Polytechnic Institutes are different kind of HE institutions for some reasons, namely:

- The universities:

- Develop general studies

- Do fundamental and applied research

- Grant different diplomas: graduation (4 or 5 years); post-graduation (master and Ph.D.)

- Do post-doctorates

- The Polytechnic Institutes:

- Develop a more applied teaching, more vocational and tied to a profession and to the market

- Granted 3 years graduation diplomas

- Grant a 3+2 years graduation diploma.

Being the heirs of the old Post Secondary Institutes, Polytechnic System has a low social status. Students entering them are especially young people coming from lower classes who did not get marks high enough to enter universities. Once they must be closer to the professions and the market, more importance is given to technical and vocational subjects in the *curriculum* (Cruz & Cruzeiro, 1995)

However, in the meantime, the Polytechnic Institutes turned up so close of the universities that nowadays there is not any 3 years diploma. In fact, in order to minimise the differences in the way society looked up to students from the university and students from the Polytechnic system, and the very institutions themselves, the Polytechnics Institutes had begun to offer a 5 years diploma (in two phases: 3+2 years) similar to the university one.

On the other hand, thanks to the Law of Autonomy of HE Institutions, the Polytechnics have adopted a policy of making partnership with universities, in order to may some applied research and in order to grant masters diplomas.

So, nowadays, although the fundamental legal references for universities and polytechnic institutes were still different, paying attention to what each kind of institution can or cannot do, in practice the two pathways are very close and some movement are being made to integrate polytechnics in universities, as University Schools.

This situation leads to a dual system where both systems are very close and where the liaison of Polytechnic Institutes and the economical and industrial tissue is very weak, contrary to what was expected from this HE sector.

## 2. The existence of public and private institutions

### a) Students and injustice



In a decision contrary to the European tradition, Portugal had opened HE sector to the private initiative, in 1986. With this policy, the centre-right government had tried to achieve two great objectives, simultaneously: to offer more places for HE social demand, without any public costs; and, to stop the increase of HE demand.

However, once HE represented, especially for young adults coming from the lowest classes, the best way to climb up on the social hierarchy, the demand for HE did not stop to increase. This situation led to great injustice and unfair situations on Portuguese HE.

In fact, for students coming from the higher classes, private institutions turn to be another hypothesis for them. If they did not enter public HE they always can enter (because they have money to pay) in a private institution. On the contrary, for young people coming from the poorest classes, private institutions are very difficult to reach and they must enter public institutions. If, for any reason, they did not enter Public HE they must wait for another year to apply another time to Public HE. In the meantime, their colleagues who had monetary capacity to apply to Private HE, they can already be studying in order to get their degree (Cabrito, 2002).

b) Subjects and courses available

Public HE offers all kind of subjects and disciplines. On the contrary, private HE offers mainly humanities and social sciences, that is, the “paper and pencil” courses.

Private HE develops mainly subjects that do not need for laboratories and other expensive equipments. This situation turn to be unfair, namely for two reasons: a) the expensive disciplines are exclusively offered by the State; b) young people that did not reach to enter in Public HE in some scientific subject did not have any other hypothesis; but, on the contrary, if it is a social science subject they could go to private education.

However, from late 1990ies socialist Government make a rule which states that private institutions can offer new subjects and courses only if they offer one scientific course for each three social sciences course. So, nowadays, private education does also offer studies in domains like biology, genetics, chemistry, and engineering. The only subject that private education is forbidden by Law to offer, still now, is medicine.

c) The role of each sector

As we already previously notice, Private HE has developed on a so strong rate of increase that, nowadays (2003/2004), about 27.4% of HE students are enrolled on Private sector.

Nevertheless, before the actual decrease of HE demand, which affects Public and Private HE, the percentage concerning Private HE had reached to the 29,7% on 2000/2001 (Ministry of HE/Department of HE).

### 3. The financing system and some new problems

In what concerns private HE institutions, their funding comes especially from fees and other payments that students must do (for instance: the repetition of an examination to pass or to get a better mark; some equipments, etc.).

Public institutions are funded mostly by the State although its participation on institutions budgets is diminishing. Consequently these institutions must search other financing sources, such as students fees, oriented market research, counselling, etc.

Table 13 State participation on Public HE Institution s budget (%)

	State financing	Other sources
1993	92	8
1996	87	13
2001	82	18

Source: Luisa Cerdeira, Working Paper, February 2006

The diminishing of State contribution is accompanied by the increase of students fees which reach nowadays around 15% of institutions budget.

As it was previously focused, the “freedom” given to the boards to fix the value of the fee is, in fact, a “poisoned present” once now the boards have the responsibility of increase the fees as a survival measure, even if they do not agree with Government s position. In consequence, in some institutions where the fee is just decided by the boards without any negotiation with the students, the institutional “climate” had turned complex, hot and hard.

On the other hand, this measure has introduced competition for students between HE institutions, once the State s contribution, among other indicators and rates, depends on the number of students enrolled. As a consequence, different institutions provide the same graduation but at different prices, giving place to an uncertain situation which principal loser is the student.

In fact, student must choose based on some criteria that he do not know or understand, such as the academic level of teachers; the quality of the teaching and the research; the quality of labs and other equipments; the acceptance of the graduates by the market; and/or just the value of the fee. In consequence, students well informed can choose better than the others, implying a very unfair situation once the information is never equally accessible to and understandable by everybody (Eicher, 1998).

This situation is more unfair once nowadays the fees are not used to ameliorate teaching and learning conditions, as it was stated by the Prime Minister in 1995. In fact, the fees are one indispensable funding source of HE institutions which insure their survival.

On the other hand, facing the need of “diversify funding sources”, HE institutions are forced to

multiply their teaching and scientific production, and to find new buyers. As a consequence, the institutions will be more fragile to defend themselves of possible interferences on pedagogical and scientific orientation by the market forces.

#### 4. The Governance: autonomies and internal decisional organs

##### a) autonomy and power of tutelage

One of the most important conquests of Portuguese Universities has been the approval of their autonomy in 1988, by the Parliament. According to this approved *Resolution on University Autonomy*, Government only holds the power of Tutelage.

So, universities are entitled to pedagogical, scientific, administrative and financing, and disciplinary autonomy. The pedagogical and scientific autonomy are two old characteristics of universities, namely in Portugal. Considering the fact that the universities are the “source of all knowledge”, they are autonomous concerning knowledge production, scientific research, teaching contents and pedagogical methodologies.

This autonomy, however, was not a “given” thing. On the contrary, the Academy since centuries ago that fights for those capacities, explaining that the need of being autonomous in the production of knowledge is indispensable once knowledge do not serve one class, one party, one community.

However, to be administrative and financing autonomous are “rights” most difficult to get. In Portugal, these autonomies were gradually obtained and, since the 1990ies universities manage the state money and private budgets, as well as their patrimony, etc.

The disciplinary autonomy means that it is the very institution whose punishes infractions did by their teachers, researchers and students according to the law.

However, through the use of the power of Tutelage, the Government may seriously influence the future of the University. In fact, the State decides about the number of students that can be enrolled each year; it has the capacity to fix the university budget by using a formula in which the number of pupils enrolled, the ratio “students *per* teacher”; the ratio “students *per* not staff personal” are some of the factors

So, universities can define their teaching and research strategies, and manage their personnel and funds. Nevertheless, this autonomy is still compromised, once in financing terms universities still depend on the State budget.

##### b) The management organs of a University: the case of the University of Lisbon

In Portugal there are two kinds of universities: the “old ones”, which are like a “federation” of faculties; and the “new ones”, that are “integrated universities”. However, in spite of some specific differences, in general the Governance is similar in all universities: there are similar organs, with similar management competences.

One of the characteristics of these organs is the existence of elected members in their composition. Taking the University of Lisbon (one of the oldest) as a representative example of Portuguese Public Universities it is possible to enumerate the different organs and their competences:

The University Assembly (elected by the teachers) approves the amendments of the University Statutes; approves regulation concerning Rector's election; elects the Rector; etc.

The Rector (elected by the Assembly) safeguard the compliance with the University's statutes; represent the University; chair the Assembly, the Senate and other University's collegiate organs with casting votes; secure the academic, administrative and financial management; nominate the Vice-Rector (up to a number of 3) and the Pro-Rectors (up to a number of 6); etc.

The University Senate function in plenary sessions; it has some committees (scientific, disciplinary; coordinating; etc.) and its function is to decide about scientific, pedagogical, administrative and financing questions of the University; is composed by inherent members (as the Rector; the Presidents of the faculties; etc) and by elected teachers and non teachers from the faculties.

The Administrative Council, composed by the Rector, a Vice-Rector and the Administrator manages all administrative and financial services, namely the accomplishment of the budget.

The Administrator is chosen by the Rector and reports upon him; and manages the administrative and financial services; the academic services; the technical and planning services; and the external relations services.

Those are, in a very summary way, the decisional organs and their competences, in the University of Lisbon. But, being a "federation" of faculties, each faculty has also its management organs. Taking as the model the Faculty of Psychology and Sciences of Education of the University of Lisbon, it is acceptable to present as normal decisional organs at any faculty:

The Assembly of Representatives (elected), composed by teachers and an equal number of students and no teaching workers, decides about the Statutes of the faculty, elects the board/management council; etc.

The Board/Management Council (elected, composed by teachers, students and no teaching workers), manages the day-to-day of the faculty; makes a proposal of budget and of fees; manage state budget and own budget; etc.

The Scientific Council (composed by inherent and elected members, all of them being teachers, in equal number), decides about all scientific problems, such as the creation of a new course or a new subject, the presentation of a research project or the teachers schedule.

The Pedagogical Council (composed by teachers and students, elected, in equal number), decide about pedagogical problems and all kind of questions students may present.

The New Universities did not have faculties, but departments, such as Department of Sciences, of Mathematics, of Chemistry, of Economics, of Social Sciences, etc. Each Department has a Chief of the Department, whose authority is delegate by the Rector, to whom he must be responsible. In general, in these universities there are similar organs to those of the olds universities.

One of the basic characteristics of Governance in Portuguese Universities is the collegiality. However, this is nowadays at risk, once Governments and some politicians refer, for the future, new forms of Governance of the University, settled down on no elected directors or collegiate decision taken processes.

## 5. The access to HE

The Constitution of Portuguese Republic states that everybody has the right of education in all levels (pre-school; basic education; secondary studies; higher education) which must be provided by the State and free of charge (or as an objective to reach).

In these circumstances, the access to the HE in Portugal is universal: any boy and girl independently of his/her sex, race, social status, geographic origin, religion, political ideas, etc. may apply any HE Institution if he/she had finished the Secondary Studies (the exception to this rule concerns individuals more than 23 years old which may apply to HE independently of the academic diploma he got).

However, there are some facts that contribute to some inequality on the access to HE institutions. In fact:

- a) All applicants to HE must have finish secondary studies and must do the some specific examinations, which vary according to the scientific domain but which are the same for all students, independently of the institution he had applied. To apply to an HE institution the final mark (calculated through a formula which includes the marks the students had got on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, on the 12<sup>th</sup> grade national examinations, and on the specific examinations), must be higher than 9,5 points (in a scale from 0 to 20 points).

Paying attention the final mark the applicants are put in a queue and they get a place, until

all the places available are filled. Those who do not reach to enter must apply to the private institutions or must wait another year to apply again to Public HE.

Thus, once the Minister of HE settle down yearly the number of places vacant for each institution, the universality of access to HE is conditioned by the *numerus clausus*.

According to these factors, the access in HE institutions, especially the public ones, is a result of a strong competition among the students, both in Secondary Studies and in the national examinations, being more punished those students who came from poor academic contexts (Cabrito, 2002).

- b) There are other situations that transform access to HE into an unfair competition. In fact, those students who leave outside the urban centres are in a worst condition to get a place on the system, once they may be misinformed (Eicher, 1998). On the other hand, there are more obstacles to their entry: they are far away from the principal cultural manifestations; they must to displace from their houses; they need more money because they must pay for the transportation, food and accommodation; etc. (Cabrito, 2002).

Obviously, the access to Private HE is easier, once the students just need to have the secondary studies diploma. In private institutions, candidates must also do some examinations, but these ones are decided by each private institution, namely concerning the subjects examined, their difficulty degree, etc. In principle, once the number of places available is greater than the number of applicants to Private HE, all of them will enter the institution.

#### 6. HE in Portugal: still teaching for an elite

To be enrolled in HE students must pay a fee payment which increases yearly both in public and private institutions and which can create a discriminative situation, according to the students financing capacity.

However, these inequalities are more complex when all the costs related to the enrolment in HE are considered.

In fact, if it is considered as cost of education not only those administrative ones but also the cost of books and other didactical materials, and the expenses students must do with transportation, accommodation, food and clothes, illness and pleasure (Oroval & Molto Garcia, 1984; Johnstone, 1986; Cabrito, 2002; OCDE, 1998) it is possible to realize that students (and/or their families) must expend a lot to be in any HE institution.

OCDE (1998) states that student s average expenses are, in OCDE countries, around 40% of all costs of HE (that is all the expenses that the State and the students must do with HE). Portugal presents a high value considering the OCDE average.

Table 14 - Public cost (State cost) and private cost (students and/or their families) of Public HE, in 1994/1995, in euros and percentage

Euro			%	
State	Students	Total	State	Students
3140.0 (418,667 yen)	4002.5 (536,000 yen)	7142.5 (954,617 yen)	44.0	56.0

Source: Cabrito, 2002

According to the figures, in Portugal the most important financing source of Public HE (and the Private one, obviously) in 1995, were the students and their families. According to these numbers, to be a HE student in Portugal is more difficult than to be a HE student in a lot of developed countries which are members of the OCDE. In that situation, it is expected that the majority of the students belongs to the higher classes.

In a static analysis, it is possible to state the weak degree of equity of Portuguese higher education nowadays by comparing the social origin of the Portuguese population and that of the higher education students. The following table, give us this possibility, concerning year 1995.

Table 15 Social composition of Portuguese population and HE students, public and private sectors (%)

Class	Portuguese population	HE students
Upper class	9.9	17.6
Upper middle class	12.2	30.9
Middle class	39.9	39.0
Lower class	38.0	12.5

Source: Cabrito, 2001

Table 15 witnesses that wealthier classes the upper and upper middle classes- representing around 22% of Portuguese population, they almost are the majority of higher education students (48.5%). On the contrary, the lower class is underrepresented. In fact the 38% of Portuguese population that constitute the working class only contributes with 12.5% to the university studies.

This situation is still more significant if it is be compared social origin of Portuguese population with social origin of HE students by legal type of institution. In this comparison, it is possible to conclude that this inequity is even stronger concerning Private HE, as it can be observed at Table 16.

Table 16 Social composition of Portuguese population and higher education students, public and private sectors (%)

Class	Portuguese population	Public HE	Private HE	All HE students
Upper class	9.9	14.4	26.4	17.6
Upper middle class	12.2	32.2	27.2	30.9
Middle class	39.9	39.6	37.1	39.0
Lower class	38.0	13.8	9.3	12.5

Source: Cabrito, 2001.

Although the data presented on Tables 15 and 16 were referred to 1995, the situation ten years after had not changed. On the contrary, the preliminary conclusions of a study about financing HE that is being carried on by the Administrator of University of Lisbon on the scope of her Ph. D., point exactly in the same direction (Cerdeira, 2005).

This unequal participation of Portuguese social classes in HE studies is a very illustrative indicator of the lack of equity of Portuguese HE. In fact, although HE is opened to anybody, the real picture shows that in Portugal, HE does not reach yet a universal characteristic. In fact, only about 20% of the Portuguese young people aged between 18 and 25 years old are engaged on HE.

#### IV Portugal and the Bologna Process: trends for the future

##### 1. The Declaration of Bologna and the objectives of the Bologna Process

The Treaty of Rome, in 1957, which had created the three European Communities (EURATOMO, CECA, CEE), stated that it is necessary to promote the free circulation of individuals, goods and capitals, in order to get an harmonised economical and political space.

In fact, in the European Economic Community, the free circulation of goods, capitals and people is indispensable to the harmonised development of all countries. The Social Cohesion that the ECC, later EU, wants to develop among all its members needs a free circulation of all kinds of means of production. And, goods and capitals free circulation is already a reality since 20 or 30 years ago, in spite of the changes always needed according to the evolution and the development of the countries.

However, concerning the circulation of the workers the situation is not solved yet, although some consensus is already got. But, and especially when people have in mind the qualified workforce, the free movement of "human capital" has been extremely difficult. To make it easier, some comparative indicators must be accepted by all countries.

It is the existence of those indicators that will inform, for instance, a Dutch entrepreneur about the competences owned by a Portuguese worker he wants to employ. With those indicators, acting like a reference, both the Dutch entrepreneur and the Portuguese worker know what each one can



expect from the other, either in competences the worker must carry on or in work conditions the entrepreneur must offer.

In order to “facilitate” this comparison, and paying attention to the great importance of HE in the definition of development strategies which contribute to the advance of societies and their position in the international market, it is necessary for EU Governments an agreement on what HE means, as well as its strategic value, having into consideration the differences between HE Systems (Williams, 1990) as a result of each country historical development (Henkel, 1999).

In order to build that agreement, in May 1998, four Ministers of Education (from Germany, France, Italy and United Kingdom) had signed the Declaration of Sorbonne, which pointed to the creation of a European Space of Higher Education.

In June 1999, 29 European Ministers of Education, thus surpassing the very EU space, had signed the Declaration of Bologna. This declaration pointed the characteristics that the European Space of Higher Education must present. It must be coherent, compatible, competitive and attractive for the students and third countries, until 2010.

As a consequence, some actions have been made and the implementation of the principles of the Declaration of Bologna had begun, in a process known as the Bologna Process.

So, the aim of the Bologna Process is the creation of a European Space of Higher Education which will promote the mobility of teachers and students and the employability of the graduates. To get these objectives, the process has been initiated with a deeply debate and analysis of the HE European Systems, their comparison with other HE Systems and, finally a flexible proposal in order to get their “harmonisation”.

The Bologna Process represents an important challenge that must be coherent with the Lisbon Strategy (2000), which pretends to transform Europe in the economic space more dynamic and competitive in the World, knowledge-oriented and which guarantees a sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and more social cohesion.

In this context, education and training must be oriented to the creation of more and better jobs and to the creation of high standards of quality of life. In order to get this it is indispensable to adopt educational measures that can contribute: to the reduction of the dropout rate; to stress the wish of knowledge; to develop long life learning schemes.

In order to reach those objectives, they were been identified six action axes:

- adoption of a comparative system of HE degrees;
- adoption of a two-cycle based HE System (actually now a three-cycle based HE System);
- settle down of a credit system;
- promotion of mobility;
- promotion of European cooperation in the quality evaluation domain;

- promotion of a European dimension on HE.

So, the objectives of the Declaration of Bologna, which were confirmed in Prague, 2001, and Berlin, 2003, pretend the adoption of a HE System structured on three cycles, which will have different orientations according to individual and academic objectives, and depending on the profession and the employability.

Thus, nevertheless the freedom each country has to manage its HE System and, consequently the differences that it will be certainly found in the future, according to each country context, some consensuses were already got in the Bologna Process, namely:

- the existence of three cycles, corresponding to the HE diploma, the Master diploma and the Ph. D, usually in a 3+2+3 years of duration model;
- the number of credits needed to get each diploma;
- the way how to measure those credits (taking into account the number of hours the student works in each subject; etc.);
- the number of credits that each school year values (60 credits *per* year);
- the minimum and the maximum amount of credits in order to get a diploma of the first cycle (it will be variable, between 180 and 240 credits).

## 2. The implementation of the Bologna Process

The implementation of the Bologna Process carries the development of a lot of measures. Among them it can be picked:

- the consolidation of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which allows students comparison using academic qualifications;
- the recognising system of the academic diplomas;
- the supplement to the diploma, which describes the context within students had got their diplomas;
- the promotion of students, teachers and other staff mobility;
- the promotion of a European dimension of HE;
- the promotion of students participation in all activities, namely in teaching quality evaluation;
- the stress of the attraction of European HE, namely through grants conceded to foreigner students;
- the stress of Life Long Learning, using the ECTS in professional valorisation.

Obviously, all these measures will be gradually developed and they oblige to a lot of changes in the different HE Systems namely in what concerns to: the curriculum; the courses structure; the pedagogical and didactical techniques used; the evaluation processes both of the students and of the institutions; the educational quality evaluation process; the teacher work; etc.

### 3. The European Credit Transfer System

In order to compare the several HE diplomas an individual can get at European countries, the Bologna Process proposes a system which allows the measure of the students work to get the diploma: the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

The ECTS is a system which attributes to a certain number of hours needed by the students to “study” a certain number of credits. In that way, each student gets his credits according to the work he has done.

So, in the ECTS, the student s work is expressed by a number of credits which pays attention to the whole working hours in all activities of the student. And these activities are the classes, the projects, the research, the work on the terrain, the study itself, the tutorial and the evaluation process.

With this evaluation system, Europe HE assists to a change of the educational paradigm: from a teacher teaching centred model into a student learning centred model. So, the ECTS allow the transfer and the accumulation of credits, concerning different training levels and the use of those credits to get an academic certification.

Obviously, to implement this System, some educational reforms must be done, namely on the scope of *curriculum* and pedagogical organisation; on evaluation and accreditation processes; and, on students mobility.

### Final remarks

To settle a HE System adaptable and flexible enough to be performed in every country of the EU without the vanishing of each country tradition is not an easy job. So, it is not surprising the fact that some questions can be put on (and ought to be) and some doubts can be expressed.

And, certainly one of the more expressive doubt concerns the “model” of HE System that has been choose: the Anglo-Saxon. This model is characterised by cycles shorter than in Continental systems. In fact, the duration of whole cycles is about 8 years (to get the Ph.D.), comparing with the minimum of 10 years needed to get the Ph. D. in every EU member except United Kingdom and Ireland.

Once adopted the Anglo-Saxon model, some questions may arrive. This article will finalise, exactly, exposing some of these possible questions, which are inside “every mind” in Portugal and, probably, in other countries:

- Is it possible to the students to develop simultaneously general competences and vocational competences, during the three years of the first degree, which must prepare them to a profession?
- Is it possible to guarantee students personal development and the entry in the work market, with the competitive capacity needed?
- Which is the place of Universities and Polytechnic Institutes in a System where the first cycle that the Universities will provide is equal to the one provided by the Polytechnic Institutes (short and vocational and market oriented)? The same question can be done for the University Technologic Institutes, in France; for instance.
- Paying attention that in general the Governments will finance only the first cycle, is this "HE reform" one way to help States to save (one year) money?
- Once students must pay fees to attend the second cycle, is it possible that poorest students will abandon HE at the end of the first cycle, situation that will increase the inequity already existing?
- Is it possible to state that this Reform will lead to the appearance of a small number of universities of excellence, in prejudice of most universities and other HE institutions?
- Is it possible that this Reform leads to a "unique thought" that will model the New European Space of Higher Education?

Many other questions and doubts may arrive as a consequence of such a change European Union is making on HE domain. Obviously, in this moment is hard to answer to any of these answers and to evaluate the Bologna Process. The time will be the judge. And in 2010 there will be the first evaluation of the new system in every country of EU.

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