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**The Bologna Effect: Perspectives on Influences and Changes  
in Higher Education**

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## Editorial

Building on our rich and diverse European cultural heritage, we are developing an EHEA based on institutional autonomy, academic freedom, equal opportunities and democratic principles that will facilitate mobility, increase employability and strengthen Europe's attractiveness and competitiveness. (Ministers responsible for Higher Education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process, London Communiqué, May 2007)

This statement, taken from the London Communiqué as the outcome of the fifth and most recent Ministerial Meeting, held in London, 17–18 May 2007 represents the essence of the spirit of the Bologna Process.

This issue attempts to look at the Bologna Process and its implications, at a point in time when, ten years since its inception with the Bologna Declaration in 1999, five ministerial meetings have taken place, many initiatives and efforts made and achievements reached in ways as diverse as its forty-six participating countries.

The next upcoming Ministerial Meeting, which will be hosted by the Benelux countries and will take place on 28–29 April 2009 in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, aims to look back and reflect on progress achieved and challenges encountered toward to the goal of EHEA by 2010, as well as to look ahead to future efforts and remaining tasks in furthering the EHEA beyond 2010.

This issue presents a selection of perspectives on the Bologna Process but also on the current state of higher education in Europe in general, as well as on the impact the Bolognal process has had on a variety of levels.

From a transatlantic point of view Brookes and Huisman undertake a comparative analysis of US and European policy documents as they relate to the goals and elements of the Bologna Process, Kim discusses the implications of policy innovations on US Higher Education policy.

Mobility is one of the priorities set in the London Communiqué for the work to be done working towards the 2009 ministerial conference; in this context Marimon, Lietart and Grigolo look at this issue and present four different higher education models, each with its own implications for mobility.

Since the implementation of the goals of the Bologna Process take place in specific geographic, cultural and historic contexts, this issue will also present a number of concrete initiatives and projects on national level in select countries, e.g. Kovtun and Stick discuss “a taste of Ukrainian Bologna”, examining the perceptions of stakeholders in higher education at a Ukrainian higher education institution; Sanchez presents a pilot scheme concerning the introduction of the ECTS in language studies at Spanish universities.

In the spirit of the London Communiqué and the upcoming Ministerial Meeting in April 2009 this issue strives to contribute diverse and reflective views of different aspects of the Bologna Process at this point in time:

As we look ahead, we recognize that, in a changing world, there will be a continuing need to adapt our higher education systems, to ensure that the EHEA remains competitive and can respond effectively to the challenges of globalization. In the short term, we appreciate that implementing the Bologna reforms is a significant task, and appreciate the continuing support and commitment of all partners in the process. (Ministers responsible for Higher Education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process, London Communiqué, May 2007)

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