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HRD Masters programmes in Europe

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Conference

Fifth conference on human resource development research and practice across Europe: International, comparative and cross-cultural dimensions of HRD - Limerick 2004

Sponsored by the University Forum for HRD, EURESFORM and the Academy of HRD; Hosted by the Department of Personnel and Employment Relations, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick; 27-28 May 2004.

Conference chair: Thomas N. Garavan

Round table

International comparative analysis of HRD Masters programmes - A round-table meeting on quality improvement

[[Abstract](#) of proposal]

Panel: Joseph Kessels (chair), Sabine Manning, Monica Lee
Rapporteur: Sabine Manning

Introduction

[Aims of this meeting](#) (Joseph Kessels)

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Issues of discussion

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[Frameworks of cooperation in a European context](#)

Reference

EHRD Base > [Programmes of study on HRD in Europe: Masters](#)



Subject	International Comparative Analysis of HRD Masters programmes Proposal for a round table meeting on quality improvement
Event	Fifth International Conference on HRD Research and Practice across Europe 2004, University of Limerick, May 27 –28, 2004
Abstract	<p>Objective:</p> <p>The round table meeting focuses on the comparison of key features of the various HRD Masters programmes across Europe. The intention is to learn form the approaches, cross cultural aspects and activities that promote quality improvement.</p> <p>Background:</p> <p>The HRD profession is developing rapidly. This development is reflected in the rise of HRD masters programmes at various universities across Europe.</p> <p>The Bologna Agreement of European Ministers of Education adopted the Anglo-Saxon model of Bachelors and Masters provision, and this will be in place in Europe in the coming years. This means that the continental European university systems will transform in a radical way. According to the Bologna agreement Masters programmes will have to be officially accredited by national accreditation organisations, which is compulsory for the recognition of degrees and for obtaining state funding. This implies that HRD Master programmes need to be evaluated and assessed. International benchmark of professional and academic standards will be part of the accreditation procedures. UFHRD and Euresform are in a position to become an evaluation body for European HRD Masters programmes.</p> <p>Format:</p> <p>The Round Table meeting offers brief presentations on the characteristics of the various European HRD Masters programmes. The results of a first inventory of European HRD programmes will be presented. The presentations and results will be discussed by the various presenters and participants. The various presenters will offer information for the discussion on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Benchmarking with international academic and professional HRD standards● Intake of the students who enter the programme

- Breadth of the programme in terms of fundamental and advance subject matter expertise, professional standards, and continuous learning in a multi-disciplinary work environment.
- Teaching concepts and learning strategies
- Assessments of student work
- Faculty/staff and their content-related knowledge, teaching skills, curriculum management, and research involvement
- Facilities, services, and study support
- Internal quality assurance system
- Outcomes, results and qualifications acquired by the students
- Special Qualitative Features

Results:

The round table will offer a valuable contribution to highlighting the developments in this domain in Europe, by discussing perspectives on professional development in HRD, competency profiles, collaboration with local companies, firms and government agencies, links with related disciplines at universities, and issues that relate to quality improvement. The round table, with brief presentations and discussions could provide valuable information for setting up a system of annual benchmarking, a body of expertise, and play an important role in the further development of HRD education.

Team

Joseph Kessels (chair)

University of Twente; Behavioural Sciences - Human Resource Development

Sabine Manning

Research Forum Education and Society, Berlin (WIFO)

Monica Lee

Executive Secretary, UFHRD; Lancaster University; Department of Organisation, Work and Technology



Subject	Aims of this meeting (Joseph Kessels)
Outline	<p>This session is on discussing some of the implications of the Bologna agreement that our ministers signed a couple of years ago. This will have a major impact on the restructuring of the system of higher education in the European Union. It will also have a direct influence on the HRD programmes in the European universities. That is one of the reasons why we took the initiative to find out whether we could be helpful for each other in building a quality assurance system - whatever that may be - for our higher education programmes in the domain of human resources (HRD, HRM).</p> <p>One of the objectives of this meeting is to find out whether interested partners, parties or colleagues would like to contribute to our approaches of thinking on a European system for quality improvement that comes to higher education in our domain. We would like to propose a simple format enabling as much interaction with our colleagues as possible. So we don't have fixed paper presentations and almost no minutes for discussion.</p> <p>First I would like to invite Sabine Manning to inform us about the research she did in the last couple of months on what is happening in Europe in the domain of higher education on HRD. Then I would like to ask Monica Lee to inform us about the initiatives that emerged in the University Forum in this domain. Then I would like to invite especially those colleagues of us here in the hall who actively participate in or are responsible for HRD programmes in Europe to give some of their opinions. In the end we would like to take home some suggestions for the University Forum, which we could take up in the meeting tomorrow.</p>
Source	Recording of the presentation made in the round-table meeting at the HRD conference in Limerick, May 2004 (see proceedings).



HRD related Masters programmes in Europe

Sabine Manning

Presentation at the round table of the HRD Conference in Limerick, 27 May 2004 (see [proceedings](#))

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Outline

The question is: where do we find Masters programmes in Europe, particularly in the domain we are interested in? Masters programmes are a new phenomenon for many European countries; and those programmes related to the field of HRD may be called quite differently from country to country. An initial overview of Masters programmes related to HRD in Europe has been prepared in the EHRD Base [[Overview](#)] - this is the starting point for my contribution today [[Figure 1](#)].

You are probably familiar with recent debates in the European Union on the **Bologna process**. In 1999, Ministers responsible for higher education agreed on important joint objectives for the development of a coherent and cohesive European Higher Education Area by 2010 [[Figure 2](#)]. These include efforts

- to promote effective quality assurance systems;
- to step up the effective use of the system based on two cycles (undergraduate and graduate), which means to establish Bachelor and Masters programmes in all European countries involved;
- to improve the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies.

This is a very ambitious agenda, if you think of how slowly educational systems tend to move and how diverse the traditions are in Europe.

Let us first look at the **progress** made in establishing Masters programmes in general, quite apart from our special area of interest [[Figure 3](#)]. According to the reports of the latest Bologna conference, held in Berlin in September 2003, we can distinguish roughly between four groups of countries.

First, there are countries which have already got Masters programmes for a longer time, that is, prior to the Bologna agreement. The UK is obvious, so is Ireland. Less expected might be the other four countries: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Portugal and Sweden (the latter, however, with a more specific structure).

The second group includes countries where the first Masters programmes have just been introduced, and a full-scale introduction is planned, namely Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland.

A few countries, forming the third group, have got definite plans for the introduction of Masters programmes; these are Finland, Hungary and Romania.

The last group consists of countries which envisage the introduction of Masters programmes, without giving dates; this applies to Denmark, Poland and Spain. There are, in fact, already examples of Spanish Masters programmes in our overview.

We now turn to the development of Masters programmes in our domain: **HRD**. How can we define this field in Europe? You may remember the map we created for describing the broad field of HRD for our resource base [\[Figure 4\]](#). This map covers several subject areas like HRD/ HRM (in a specific sense), competence development, continuing vocational training, knowledge management, learning in organisations, and work based learning. We have agreed on this spectrum of HRD related activities in Europe in the context of research.

However, in trying to find Masters programmes, those subject areas have turned out to be less useful. This is because teaching has got a different logic, by being tied to national systems of higher education. We therefore had to find a somewhat different approach. Starting out again from a broad context we adopted a functional approach. Joseph Kessels provided a very useful working definition for our domain:

"higher education programmes that deal with learning, development and education in a corporate setting" [\[Figure 5\]](#).

By virtue of this definition we could free ourselves from the specific terminology of 'human resource development' that might not be applicable throughout European countries. The subsequent mapping of Masters programmes, in fact, produced a great variety of **terms**. These are associated with different traditions of language and culture in the countries concerned. To demonstrate this situation let me select some simple examples [\[Figure 6\]](#):

'Human resource development' - this is an obvious term used for Masters programmes in the UK, in Ireland, also in the Netherlands and some other countries with English programmes.

When turning to France, you might find a programme title which reads fairly similar: 'developpement des ressources humaines'. However, as we just learned from an intervention by Jean Woodall, there are different connotations even with this kind of concept in France; and there is not a clear-cut concept

of HRD as such; there is quite a variety of other issues that are addressed in France.

Finally, in German speaking countries, you might find it very difficult to make yourself understood if you talk about 'human resource development', let alone 'HRD'. Instead, you can find the term 'Personalentwicklung' (personnel development), which is quite common, but not the same as HRD.

This set of examples leaves out the much more diversified region of Central and Eastern Europe. As we heard from Devi Jankowicz about the situation in Poland, for instance, there is no research area of 'HRD', but research concerned with labour market questions, skill development and societal approaches.

Now, returning to our functional definition, we can identify quite a range of Masters programmes across Europe - about 80 in the initial overview. These have been compiled according to both nationality and subject matter. As an interim outcome, let me present a rough mapping of **fields of study** which turn up in the collection of Masters programmes [Figure 7]. The terms presented here are exclusively in English, either original terms or translations from other languages.

To start with the central term 'HRD', only very few programmes carry this title. Even in the UK, as already observed by Peter Kuchinke in a recent study^[*], there are rather programmes of HRM, including HRD, than specific HRD programmes. In the rest of Europe there is hardly any evidence, except for the Twente programme of HRD chaired by Joseph Kessels.

As already indicated, a lot of programmes are concerned with HRM or strategic human resources, often including HRD. Further programmes are offered in business studies or management, with an element of HRM or HRD included. These are quite common throughout Europe, also in the related programme type of 'Masters in Business Administration' (MBA). This broad subject field of business and management may be regarded as fairly established and traditional.

On the other hand, there are lots of programmes in quite different subject fields. Fairly close to HRD you can find programmes related to organisational behaviour or entrepreneurship, for instance 'organisational behaviour' in the UK and Switzerland, 'leadership and organisational development' in Germany, 'leadership and organisational psychology' in Norway, 'entrepreneurship in dynamic business contexts' in Sweden.

A further subject area of HRD related programmes focuses on learning, knowledge and intelligence, partly in connection with management. Examples are 'adult learning and professional development' in the UK, 'competence management' in France, 'knowledge management' in Sweden, 'management of people, projects and processes' in Germany.

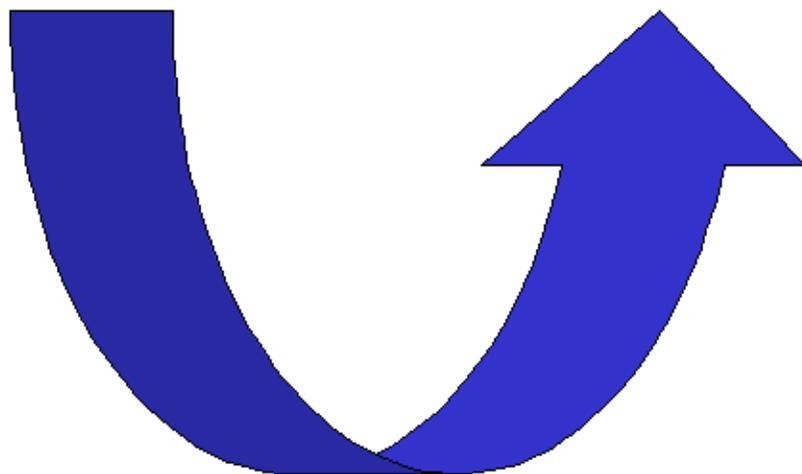
You can also find those concepts of learning and knowledge as part of broader programmes in business and human resources. It is worth while looking at the individual components of such a course or at the structure of its syllabus. Behind a general programme title, such as 'strategic human resources', you may discover a diversity of subject components, mandatory or optional. Examples include 'innovation and knowledge' in an Austrian programme, 'learning company' in an Irish

programme, 'work and learning', 'fostering learning' and 'learning in practice' in Swedish programmes.

To conclude this brief overview, you may be aware of the variety of programmes confronting us. The broad subject field of HRD, as we define it in functional terms, is very much interlinked with the field of vocational education in Europe. A lot more analytical work needs to be done, of course, for building the resource base on Masters programmes in our domain. But this first glance may help us set the scene and broaden our view on what we can expect.

[*] Kuchinke, K.P. (2003). Comparing national systems of human resource development: Role and function of post-baccalaureate HRD courses of study in the UK and US. In Human Resource Development International. Vol. 6, No 3, pp. 285-299.

Masters programmes related to HRD in Europe



www.ehrd-portal.org

An overview provided by WIFO as part of the EHRD Portal

Bologna process

29 European countries >

European Higher Education Area by 2010:

- promote effective **quality assurance systems**,
- step up system based on **two cycles** (undergraduate and graduate),
- improve the **recognition system** of degrees and periods of studies.

Progress with Masters

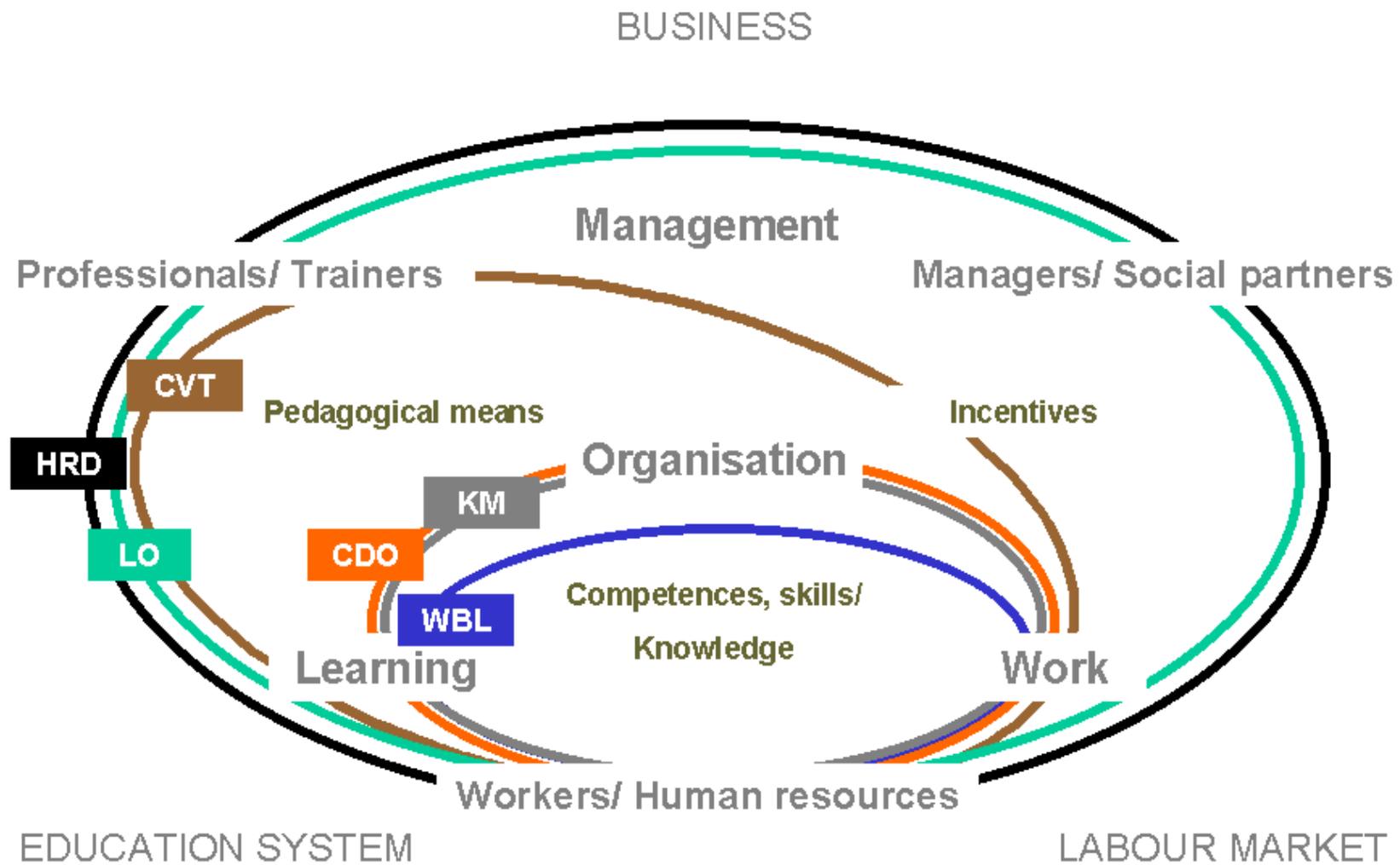
Masters programmes available (prior to Bologna)	BG, CZ, IE, PT, SE, UK
---	------------------------

First Masters programmes introduced	AT, BE, CH, DE, FR, IT, NL, NO
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Introduction of Masters programmes planned	FI, HU, RO
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Introduction of Masters programmes envisaged	DK, ES, PL
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Major areas of human resource development in Europe (EHRD)

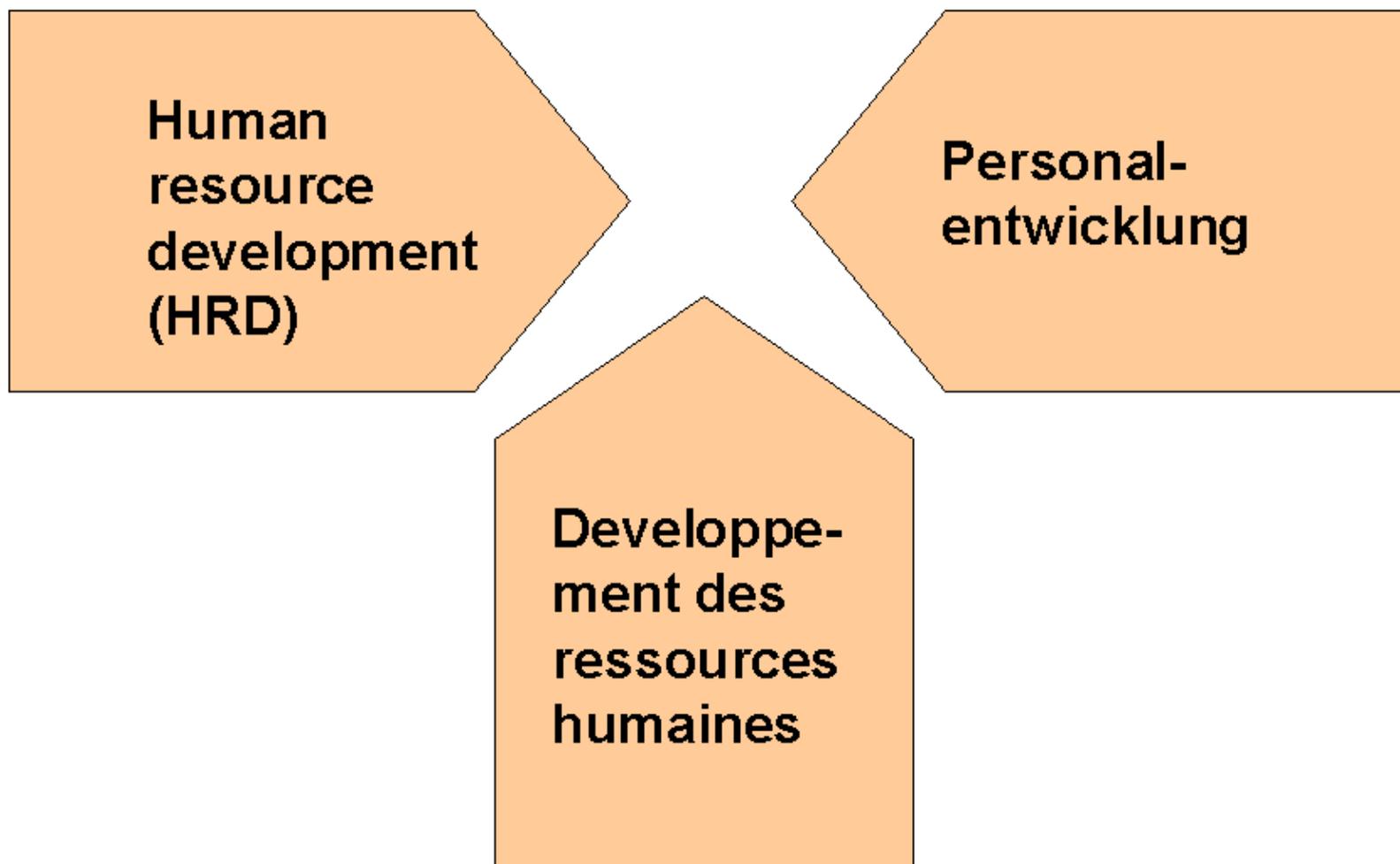


Masters programmes related to HRD

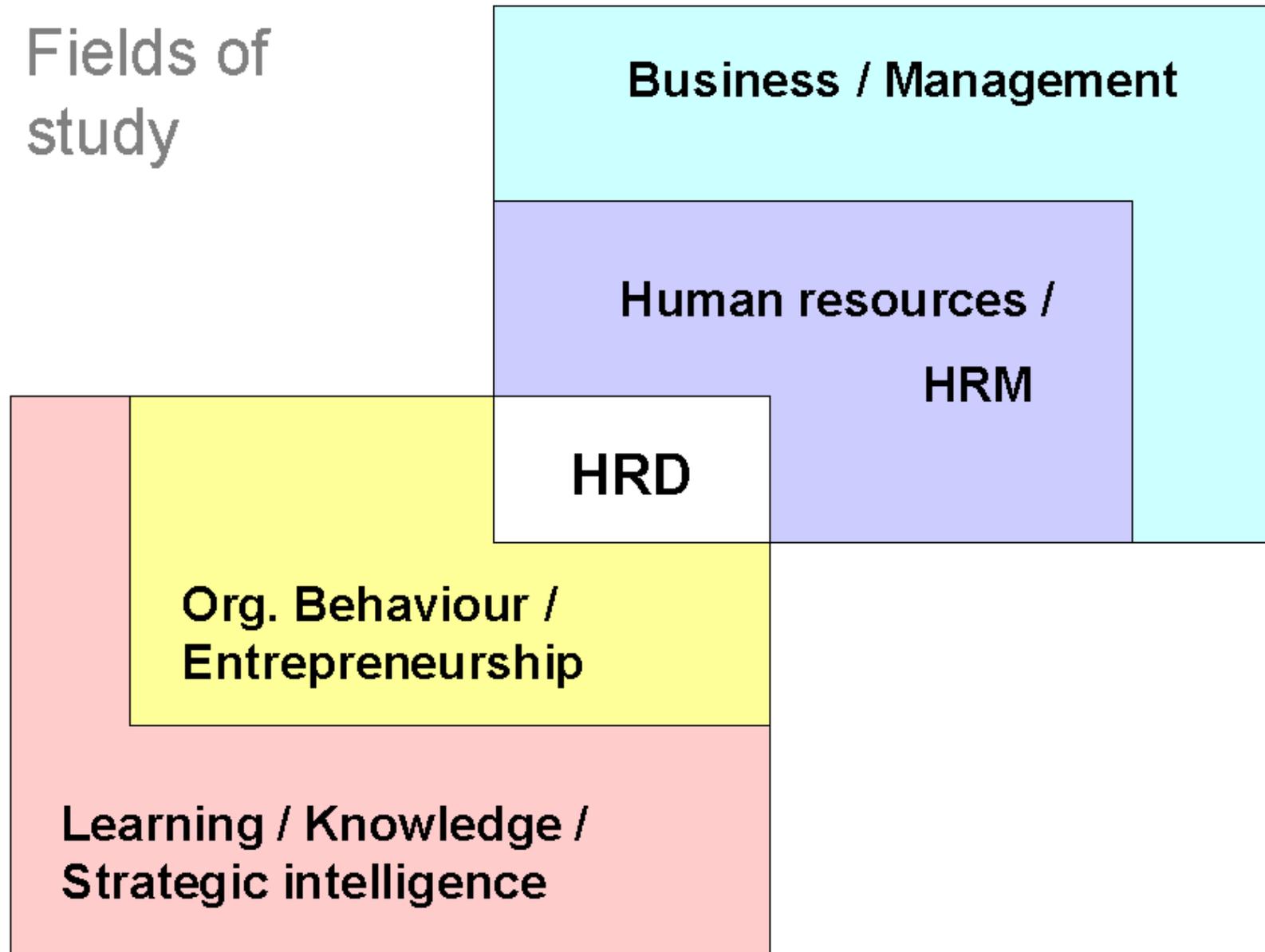
**Higher education programmes
that deal with learning, development and
education
in a corporate setting**

Working definition by
Joseph Kessels, 2003

Contexts of culture and language



Fields of
study





Subject	HRD Masters programmes in Europe
Context	The statements on this subject have been compiled from the discussion at the round table (see proceedings).
Discussion	<p>Participants: Pia Bramming [PB], Joseph Kessels [JoK], Monica Lee [ML], Kathy Monks [KM], John Walton [JW], John Wilson [JWi]</p> <p>[PB] I am from the Copenhagen Business Schools. For the past few years I have been coordinating a programme of HRM. We are not on your list up there, so I am a bit in doubt about what kind of programmes we are talking about. Is it graduate education? The terminology 'Master education' is one we are using for people who have a graduate education and are coming back. So it's just to know what kind of students we have in mind.</p> <p>[JoK] The main idea is that, based on the Bologna agreement, the whole of Europe will move to one university system. You know it's very different over the countries, as it has been developed in history. So all these European university systems will move to a three year Bachelor programme, followed by a one or two years Masters degree. For the Anglo-Saxon countries this might sound familiar, but for countries like Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Southern European countries it is different, because they are still based on a traditional Latin system.</p> <p>[JWi] May I ask you just a question about Euresform: What is Euresform, was it a project? Has it ceased to exist as a project, or is it a project that is continuing informally?</p> <p>[ML] It is officially a sub-set of the University Forum. Euresform was initially an EU project; the EU funding helped develop this. Since then, when that funding stopped, it just continued informally. It still operates, the certificate is still awarded, but it has lost a lot of the momentum it had before, partly because the partners are quite few at present. it's the French part that has dropped out. That was because of internal political problems that they had.</p> <p>[JW] Euresform actually predated the funding that was obtained from the EU by something like two years. It started off as a network of universities across Europe. The original network was the UK,</p>

The Netherlands, France and Spain. The idea was to get some form of commonality in terms of the way that HRD programmes were actually being developed. One of the key issues was the issue of exchanges. The programmes in France and the Netherlands involved exchanges of periods of time going to a country that was other than their own. The network provided lots of opportunities for that.

What has happened over time is that some of those programmes have, for various reasons, disappeared. Probably the persons involved moved to another university or whatever. Also, the Bologna agreement caused certain delaying strategies, it created a hiatus, I think, in terms of the collaborative arrangements between universities in this programme.

[KM] I run a Masters programme in HR strategies at Dublin City University. I am wondering whether you need to differentiate between postgraduate students who go straight on from an undergraduate degree and obtain a Masters degree as part of a five-year programme and those professionals who come back into do a Masters degree after five or more years of work experience. For post-experience students there is little interest in an international qualification, because having a Masters degree plus experience will take them anywhere in the world. The undergraduate may be more interested in such a qualification, but if the programme is offered in a new country it is probably by default internationally recognised, so that student could actually work anywhere in Europe. So I am not quite sure where this initiative would be geared.

[JoK] Yes, there are two interesting points to it. For many European universities the idea of the split between the Bachelor and the Masters, giving Bachelor students the opportunity to go and work for a couple of years, will be quite new. Many continental universities are not used to return students to an additional Masters programme, because in many countries there is an undivided four- or five-year programme. So that will be very new for many European universities to deal with, to have students who are adults with work experience.

Another point is that most universities now will be in competition with private institutions. Within the Bologna agreement, private institutions also have the opportunity to be recognised and to offer official degrees. That will also be very new for most European countries. And that's why this accreditation system comes into play. So, even for nations or for students who never had the intention to go abroad, to have internally their degrees recognised, the university has to go through such an accreditation procedure.

The third point is what we know of these accreditation or evaluation procedures in countries where we already have these systems. It is a very burdensome administrative process, and nobody enjoys it, it is just extra work. This is why we were thinking in our discussion: Can't we make something inspiring out of that? Can we turn this whole process into an inspiring process for doing something that we enjoy ourselves in terms of exchanging ideas, helping each other to compare approaches, to encourage diversity? For this system has a strong power to make one pick the same comparable system. I think one of the interesting points in Europe would be to have a very diverse system, but

still have a comparison of quality. It would be an interesting challenge to find out how we could do that.

[JW] Let me come back to the issue whether a Euresform certificate additionally might be significant. The key thing about this certificate is that it involves some form of international experience. You should not only know the basics or ground rules of HRD, but you also need to demonstrate a knowledge of HRD practices in a country other than your own, and some competence in operating in that country. This seems to add to the professional competence, also of practitioners. That can be very attractive if you work for a multinational corporation or want to develop your career route across Europe.

Source

Recording of the round-table discussion at the HRD conference in Limerick, May 2004 (see [proceedings](#)).



Subject	Accreditation, assessment and quality systems
Context	The statements on this subject have been compiled from the discussion at the round table (see proceedings).
Discussion	<p>Participants: Pia Bramming [PB], Nick Clarke [NC], Joseph Kessels [JoK], Monica Lee [ML], Gary McLean [GMc], Paul Smith [PS], John Walton [JW]</p> <p>[JoK] It's not very easy for the ambition to act collaboratively in setting up some kind of quality improvement system, because it raises the question: what do we have in common, what is the focus there? But may be, the Bologna agreement made it necessary to have new programmes accredited in the next years.</p> <p>Accreditation is one of the requisites for recognition of degrees in Europe, and in many countries it is also a prerequisite for getting state funding. This accreditation will be done by independent accreditation organisations. Some countries are already quite advanced in this process, and other countries are slowly getting up. This might be something for us to be aware of, especially for those who are responsible for those programmes, and to play an important role in European exchange in this domain.</p> <p>Therefore I would like to invite Monica to inform us about what we are trying to do in the University Forum to help this process.</p> <p>[JWi] A question for clarification. You mentioned accreditation, and I wonder whether you can elaborate on what you mean by accreditation. At the moment, there are a lot of pan- and national issues involved with the Bologna agreement, not the least of which is the duration of study which is quite different in Britain to other parts of Europe. So there is an issue of standardisation. My concern is this notion of accreditation, which is what our discussion is about. Certainly in Britain universities have a charter which allows them to award degrees; they are self-awarding. They may have external assessment as part of teaching quality assurance, but they have their independence towards degrees. Now, can you elaborate on this whole issue?</p> <p>[ML] I shall try and do that! The University Forum has for some while now been considering this issue through joint intervention because of the Dutch need for some sort of quality assurance</p>

system, which in the UK we don't actually need because we do it ourselves. We don't have to do it for that purpose, and indeed the different systems across Europe make that a problem.

The University Forum, set up in the early 90s, established a system of accreditation and a certificate of professional recognition, based on learning outcomes, which was used both in the UK and across Europe. That was through Euresform, which was a sub-body of the University Forum. This Euresform certificate still exists, but the body of the Forum has moved much more into a wide organisation, looking at and working with research and practice in the human resources. We felt, particularly because HRD has not so long been understood as a discipline, that if anybody was going to provide a European quality assurance system in this it may as well be us. Therefore we ought to at least consider it and throw up some ideas, rather than just wait for somebody else to do it.

The way in which we had been thinking was to revitalise the Euresform branch of the University Forum. John Walton played a leading role in establishing Euresform and the certificate of professional recognition. This was in the early 90s, and the way in which at that time we managed to avoid some of the national differences was based on learning outcomes and, to some extent, on the accreditation of prior learning. So instead of saying that this course matched with that course, we developed a system of learning outcomes that we thought an HR professional working internationally ought to be able to meet. So that included intervention in another country. If those courses or, in some cases, individuals met those outcomes we could say: yes, as a group we recognise that and certify it. It is a very pretty certificate with logos all over it.

[JW] I was involved, as Monica mentioned, with the development of the Euresform certificate. It was impossible to get a common university qualification, because there were all sorts of differences in national practices and approaches. One country, for example, would emphasise economic aspects of HRD and another one would emphasise learning. The times scales were different too; this was pre-Bologna. So we tried to develop a high level of aggregation that each university across Europe that was interested could buy into. To begin with, there were something like 20 outcomes that would be somewhere embedded in the programmes.

We also avoided certain issues, for instance having external examiners evaluating other people's programmes. It was quite important, since there were a lot of political issues here. Another issue had got to do with language. We had the certificate in two languages, both in English and in French. We had to go backwards and forwards, to the various countries involved, to ensure that in either English or in French it actually made sense. That involved quite a lot of rewriting and re-structuring of some of the work. So actually constructing such a certificate is a very time-consuming, laborious, fascinating process, but it might be useful to supply that form of background anyway.

[ML] Yes, as John said, we spent a lot of time on that. It was very well received by participants and also by the institutions involved. One of the other aspects of it, because of the need to do

international interventions, was that Euresform also managed swaps of staff and students, and still does, so it actually enable people to do that.

Jim Stewart, who is the chair of the University Forum, and I had a meeting with John Konrad about issues of accreditation. He is working a lot with the Bologna agreement, for instance in a project which is trying to tune the Bologna agreement, to work out what is happening. One of their main problems is how to account for the accreditation of prior learning across different countries. We brought in the issues around Euresform too.

One of the problems in taking forward what we have been thinking through was financing. He has suggested that there would be the possibility of doing a research project through the EU around establishing the accreditation of prior learning. Effectively we might try revisiting the whole Euresform experience . Obviously, this would have to be done by institutions, but the University Forum could support this by promoting a partnership.

In the same way, we could as a Forum develop the certificate and ways of continuing to swap students and staff in a wider area, perhaps including the US, and so develop an certificate of international recognition, through learning outcomes. At the same time, through those means, we might be able to create a body of experts that could serve the Dutch needs, or as a panel be able to say: this is the sort of standards we would expect for an international HR professional.

So the discussion about Euresform is bringing in those ideas. Is there an opportunity to revitalise those ideas? Are there institutions here which would be interested in revitalising this or be part of this?

[PS] I've just got a slight concern with Masters programmes. We have already got quite rigorous quality systems university-wide. We also got a professional body, accreditation as well, where we meet professional standards of bodies like the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development. I just wondered about the type of quality system you talk about: Is this going to be an extra layer on top? Where would we have to meet those new standards or new systems if we go ahead?

[ML] That's certainly where we come again to the original Euresform discussion because it sounds like it's another hurdle to jump through if you want to get more content or another way of looking at things. This is one of the reasons why we ended up looking at learning outcomes or the ability to show that individuals have reached particular outcomes, particular ways of doing things.

And, as you say, in the UK we already have the CIPD and accreditation possibilities. But the CIPD doesn't seek, as far as I understand anyway, to offer international recognition. The one thing that we found, certainly in terms of the Euresform experience, was the ability to provide an international or European certificate that showed people had the skills to work internationally – in countries other than their own. one of the existing accreditation takes that extra step. The idea was that if someone had this certificate he or she would say that all these institutions recognise this.

Another issues we had to face was that no one institution wanted another one to accredit them or say that they were right. But all the institutions collectively agreed to these learning outcomes. Therefore we used the logos of all those institutions. So then the student can go with this certificate and say: All the institutions have agreed I have reached this standard across Europe. And the institutions can say: This is a European or an international recognition.

Can I just add one point about student experience. If we got together research projects around this, we would have to look closely at the accreditation of prior learning and different implications of that. Then we would be able to accredit that experience or understand better what that experience was, how those students met some learning outcomes already. Those without experience would have to do other things, a course or whatever. These are all issues we would have to struggle with.

[NC] I am just wondering about the idea of learning outcomes. What's wrong with the ones we have already got from Euresform. They were at Masters level.

[ML] The idea would be to do this with a much wider group of institutions and, hopefully, to develop some learning outcomes that are truly cross-European or fully international. But we have already done a lot of groundwork.

[NC] My other question is about accreditation: What are the resources available, how is that going to work? Presumably those programmes have to demonstrate that method of learning outcomes to somebody, maybe a group of experts. Where are those resources?

[ML] That would be one of the questions!

[JoK] The system as it has developed for instance in the Netherlands is quite advanced in this. It starts out from national accreditation organisations, and so-called VBI's (Validation and Assessment Institutes), which are independent from the universities and appointed by the local or national governments. They will work with accreditation examinations, and the universities will have to pay for that. So there is also a business aspect in it. And it will be a lot of work, so it will cost a lot of money for the universities to do. So you also feel there is quite a resistance from the universities to get involved in such a process. On the other hand, if you don't get this recognition you risk losing the state funding. So this puts a lot of tension on the universities.

I have the impression that the Netherlands are very much in front of the development in Europe, but I don't know whether this is wise. But we do expect that other countries need to go through such a procedure as well, and hopefully the system will change, because it's not very encouraging. On the other hand, if we come up with an interesting alternative that really makes sense in terms of creating

a stimulating community that talks about quality improvement in higher education, for instance in our domain. That would be a great advantage.

When the system continues like now, we will have some official body that's not interested in HRD or related topics. To assess a programme they will ask questions like: Is your programme based on an international benchmark of HRD standards? What about your intake of students? What about the qualification of your staff? Is your staff involved in doing research in the domain that you are teaching? Tell us about the assessment of student work. What are your specific facilities? Etc. You notice that this is not very encouraging when it comes to advancing our domain of study.

[ML] Can I add to that just briefly: an example of what used to happen in Lancaster through the Euresform certificate. We didn't go for assessing the course, that the whole course met the standards. We would say that individuals could, if they wishes, show that they met these learning outcomes. We would charge them an extra for that, not a lot, but just on top, if they wished to get this certificate. So the normal course ran as always, but for individuals we put together a little portfolio that was based on their work in the course and outside the course, if that's any help, and we charged them the examinations.

[PB] I totally agree that it's very important that an accreditation shouldn't promote some kind of things, but that it should promote diversity and variety. But, on the other hand, my experience from the Copenhagen Business School is that accreditation and international accreditation in one way or another is going to be forced upon us. Therefore I agree that we can just as well move on and do some pioneering work and make some space where it can be possible to promote this variety.

The Copenhagen Business School has been very much involved in the Bologna discussions. It has been working with competence profiles, trying to make every education at the school develop these. That's quite a big work, and I think that some experience from that would be helpful here. It's the same problem of allowing for diversity and, on the other hand, promoting some kind of quality.

[JoK] This would be very helpful.

[GMc] It might be of some value just to share with you the struggles of the Academy of HRD around the issue of accreditation. We've had a committee on accreditation for about five years. There is so much dissension around this issues, and nothing ever happened. There are lots of concerns about legal implications, for instance if you choose not to accredit an organisation, and the organisation takes you to court. The US, as you know, is a very litigious society, and that was a huge concern for the Academy.

What has happened out of that lack of action is that there is an entrepreneurial group that got together and said: We are going to develop standards of accreditation for HRD based on the AACSP

standards for business schools. I haven't heard a lot of enthusiasm from my colleagues about this. The person who was in charge of the organisation - the first university that got accredited was hers. Which raises some interesting concerns around conflicts of interest when you are not truly independent. That's a concern I would have for the University Forum. you are talking about membership, accrediting members. I think that is a huge issue around accreditation.

But, if something does go forward, there is this group that has created a whole set of standards for HRD. It might be worth taking a look at what they put together and see if it has value for Europe.

Source

Recording of the round-table discussion at the HRD conference in Limerick, May 2004 (see [proceedings](#)).



Subject	Frameworks of cooperation in a European context
Context	The statements on this subject have been compiled from the discussion at the round table (see proceedings).
Discussion	<p>Participants: Joseph Kessels [JoK], Barry Nyhan [BNy], Kiran Trehan [KT]</p> <p>[JoK] So there are a number of issues we would like to discuss with you. First of all, we are interested whether this is a problem for you. Is there something we could do in a European context?</p> <p>There are some formalities. For instance, according to the Bologna agreement, a Bachelor degree stands for 180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) points, and one European Credit Transfer System point stands for approximately 40 hours of full-time study or something like 200 papers literature research. A Masters programme stands for 60 (ECTS) international or European credit transfer points. That gives you these quantitative ideas.</p> <p>For the universities that ECT System will be important in their exchange of students. For instance, if we want to send students of our university at Twente to Oxford: what is the Oxford programme worth while in terms of European credit transfer points. So that's the need for a more formal approach from the boards of universities.</p> <p>For us, in the meantime, it could help us to nurture a discussion on several issues. If you take a high standard programme on Masters level dealing with education, learning development, human resource development, what do you look for: Do you look for these more formal aspects? Is there some benchmark on international academic standards? Do we have in the domain of HRD specific standards that we would like? Do we want to get involved in the whole discussion of standards? Do we prefer a more output oriented approach? How do we deal with new developments in many universities, such as work on portfolios, a more competence based approach? Or do we still base our programmes on 19th century subject matter topics?</p> <p>So when we would like to cooperate we would have to discuss these things and try to find out: Is there in the University Forum a platform of interested colleagues who have a responsibility for Masters programmes to collaborate on that? And that is very much where I would like to invite you and hear your opinion about this.</p> <p>[KT] We run a Masters degree in Strategic Human Resources. It was Euresform accredited in the</p>

early days; John Walton came and actually helped shape that. We have done this in terms of the individual students. We just put that in addition to their course field, and that hasn't caused many problems.

But the key point I really wanted to make was: It is interesting hearing the kind of language of accreditation, standards, quality and control. That discourse is often very off-putting for people like myself because it feels like yet more control and yet more conformity. I am wondering whether there is something about the language that we use that actually doesn't do us justice.

[BNy] You have just stolen my point! I am working for Cedefop, which is an European agency. The EU is pushing us, to a certain extent: all these qualification frameworks on the vocational side, which is different again to the university side. I am quite concerned about this massive move towards standardisation. I think universities are saying we have to do it, in order to be funded. Governments, too, are pushing it, to control, to get value for money, which is the current kind of discourse everywhere. But I think that people at our level are kind of reconciling to this movement that is coming, and how we can best cope with it, preserve our professional integrity.

You put forward your definition of HRD, which is kind of corporate and company focused. This is probably the way that I would begin to look at HRD. I think in universities it's ridiculous that there is no cooperation between education departments, teacher training, adult education departments and business schools. Basically they are all addressing the same fundamental objectives. This to me is the real problem, the heart of the issue.

I know that there has been the EQUIS movement, I don't know how this relates, and the EFMD (www.efmd.be/equis/equisnot.htm). There are also lots of business schools over the world, which are following a very uniform, kind of standardised, normative model that has come from the excellent business schools in the US. They are very much into business, one sector of the economy. They are not looking at the educational policy and the field of vocational education. They are splitting off the workers from a kind of management development.

So there's lots of questions. My conclusion is that the role of this group here and the University Forum is to try and create some sort of framework within which different groups of people could communicate. There is for instance a vocational education department at this university, dealing with training of carpenters and mechanics. I don't think there is any communication with the department of employment and personnel development, even though this school is called after Jim Kemmy, who was a stonemason. He was a very interesting man, but he might be horrified that a business school was called after somebody who was very much socialist in his orientation.

I know that it may not be very practical what I'm saying, but this is just a general comment.

[JoK] That's what I am saying: We should take this advantage of the European movement towards accreditation of the higher education system to start talking to each other, to cooperate and try to

inform each other. So it's a good movement to this end.

Source

Recording of the round-table discussion at the HRD conference in Limerick, May 2004 (see [proceedings](#)).

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In 1999, Ministers responsible for higher education from 29 European countries signed the Bologna Declaration. They agreed on important joint objectives for the development of a coherent and cohesive **European Higher Education Area by 2010**. These include efforts to promote effective quality assurance systems, to step up effective use of the system based on two cycles (undergraduate and graduate) and to improve the recognition system of degrees and periods of studies.

More information on the Bologna process and related events can be found below:

- > the [Bologna process](#) in a dossier provided by the [E-Education-Europe Observatory](#);
- > activities and documents in preparation for the [Bologna Bergen Summit](#) in May 2005.

This initial overview is centred on **Masters** programmes (second cycle of higher education). The fields of study selected for this overview are related to a broad **definition** of European HRD. The **progress** in implementing Masters programmes in Europe is briefly documented. The **directory** includes examples of Masters programmes according to the Bologna terms, supplemented by cases of International or European Masters programmes (e.g. MBA). The overview is underpinned by an analytical **review** of the evidence. An update on the **discussion** of issues related to the implementation of new Masters programmes concludes this presentation.

[Definition and key terms](#)
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[Directory of HRD related Masters](#)

Issues raised in connection with establishing the new Masters programmes were discussed at the round table **'International comparative analysis of HRD Masters programmes'** at the International HRD Conference in Limerick, **May 2004**:

[Proceedings of the round table](#), including a contribution on [HRD related Masters programmes in Europe](#) (Sabine Manning).

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