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This is an author produced version of a paper published in

Education for Information (ISSN 0167-8329)

This version may not include final proof corrections and does not include published layout or pagination.

## Citation Details

### Citation for the version of the work held in 'OpenAIR@RGU':

### Citation for the publisher's version:

# The Impact on Education for Librarianship and Information Studies of the Bologna Process and Related European Commission Programmes – and Some Outstanding Issues in Europe and Beyond

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## Abstract

*The Bologna Declaration of 1999 is the basis for continuing reforms in higher education intended to support international mobility in employment within the European Union. This paper describes the standardised structure and nomenclature for courses that have been implemented, together with a credit transfer system, a quality assurance regime, and the ERASMUS and MUNDUS programmes that support international student mobility. However, the European Commission has left crucial aspects of the implementation of the Bologna principles to Member States, and several issues have arisen because of national variations. The paper expresses concerns about differences in assessment standards and conventions, and questions the relevance of various attempts that have been made to produce model lists of competences and curricula. The European Union's international assistance programmes, TEMPUS and ALFA, have encouraged collaboration in assisting development in non-member states, but with limited effect, perhaps because of organisational changes that stemmed partly from the Bologna process. The changes in higher education stimulated the establishment of a pan-European association, EUCLID: the European association for library and information education and research, but the paper argues that the expectations of the founders of the association remain largely unfulfilled, and argues for more empirical research to review issues such as the academic level at which education for librarianship is undertaken, and the need for a European accreditation scheme.*

## Introduction

The re-birth of Europe as a single educational entity has had a long gestation. For fifteen hundred years after the collapse and division of the Roman Empire, which had encompassed the whole of southern and western Europe (and the Mediterranean littoral), the history of the continent was not that of a unified entity but of numerous independent kingdoms and smaller principalities. Ethnic and religious divisions, and economic and political rivalries, particularly those

which culminated in several major wars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have shaped and continually altered the boundaries of the nation states that exist today.[1] All of these factors have had consequences in the arrangements for the formal education of librarians that began to evolve during the first half of the twentieth century.

After the Second World War, politicians' minds began to turn to the creation of international organisations that would sublimate national interests. Within continental Europe, these ideas focused initially on economic cooperation, through the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1950. Further development followed the Treaty of Rome in 1957 which established a separate European Economic Community, a customs union comprising Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of [i.e. West] Germany. Integration of these two organisations led to the creation of the European Community in 1967, and further developments resulted in its formal re-designation as the European Union when the Maastricht Treaty came into force on 1 November 1993. By then there were already 12 Member States. Subsequently, several other states in Western Europe, and many of the 'Newly Independent States' of Central and Eastern Europe have joined the European Union, which by 2013 had 28 members with a total population in excess of 500 million. Several more states are recognised as candidates or potential candidates for membership.

The nomenclature of the responsible bodies is sometimes confusing, and may be worth setting out here, if only to give some insights into a structure that at times can appear somewhat dysfunctional. The European Commission is an executive agency, ultimately subordinate to the European Parliament. The Parliament has equal legislative and budgetary powers with the Council of the European Union, often referred to as the Council of Ministers, in which Ministers from national governments meet regularly to discuss matters within the remit of the Union. The regular meetings of heads of government of the Member States, known as the European Council, have a strategic role, being charged with defining "the general political directions and priorities." None of these bodies should be confused with the Council of Europe, a separate forum for all the parliamentary democracies in Europe.

Despite some resistance from Member States to ceding powers to European Union bodies, there has been a steady thrust towards the integration of all aspects of society since the establishment of the European Community in 1967. Freedom of movement between Member States and eligibility for employment throughout the Union, without the previous requirements for visas and/or work permits, has been a central policy. Allied to this has been the need to enable employers to understand the qualifications of prospective employees from Member States with whose education system they are not familiar, and to provide the public with an assurance that practitioners, particularly in critical disciplines, had comparable knowledge and skills, regardless of where they had been educated in the European Union.

The last 30 years are generally recognised to have been turbulent times for the Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies throughout the world. The impact of major technological and social changes on professional practice have demanded continual changes in the curriculum,[2] necessitating more significant

developments in the Schools' human and material resources and in teaching methods than at any time since the first Schools were founded. The challenge of implementing these changes in Europe has taken place alongside the requirement to introduce adaptations to the Higher Education system agreed by the Council of Ministers, and implemented through the actions of the European Commission. In addition, events in Eastern Europe culminating in the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) in December 1991 brought about the sudden need to assist in the re-orientation and resourcing of the education systems in the former Communist states.

The aim of this paper is to review those changes, discuss their impact, and identify some of the issues that remain outstanding. It outlines the evolution of the European Union and the aims set out in the Bologna Declaration of 1999, which is the basis for the continuing reforms in higher education intended to support international mobility in employment. It describes the standardised structure and nomenclature for courses that has been implemented, together with a credit transfer system and a quality assurance regime, and identifies numerous issues that remain to be resolved because the European Commission has had to delegate implementation of these measures to Member States' governments. The changes in higher education stimulated the establishment of a pan-European association for the schools, EUCLID: the European association for library and information education and research, but the paper argues that the expectations of the founders of EUCLID that the association would provide the leadership to address these issues have remained unfulfilled, perhaps because of organisational changes that stemmed in part from the Bologna process that may have inhibited collaborative activities.

**The Bologna Principles**

This diversity that formerly existed in higher education systems in the Member States presented a clear challenge to the future cohesion of the European Union. Although some universities in Europe and elsewhere could claim to have earlier origins, the first degree-granting university in Europe was the University of Bologna, founded in 1088 A.D. Its historic significance led to its selection as the venue for the meeting of the European Ministers of Education from which the 'Bologna Declaration' was issued in June 1999, setting in train a reform of the higher education systems of the European Union's Member States, intended to make them more compatible and comparable through:

- "Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement, in order to promote European citizens employability and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system
- Adoption of a system essentially based on two main cycles, undergraduate and graduate. Access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years. The degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification. The second cycle should lead to the Master and/or Doctorate degree as in many European countries.
- Establishment of a system of credits - such as in the ECTS [European Credit Transfer System] – as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility. Credits could also be acquired in non-higher education

contexts, including lifelong learning, provided they are recognised by receiving Universities concerned.

- Promotion of mobility by overcoming obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement with particular attention to:
  - ➤ for students, access to study and training opportunities and to related services
  - ➤ for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights.
- Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies.
- Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in Higher Education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research."[3]

The historic traditions of the Member States and the nature of their recent governments had resulted in a great diversity in the level and structure of study programmes and the title of qualifications awarded in librarianship and information studies (see, for example, the papers on the situation in several Western European countries published in *Libri*, volume 40, number 2, June 1990). Writing in 1987, Fang, Fischer and Nauta had commented on the difficulty of reaching a fair conclusion on the international equivalence and reciprocity of professional qualifications.[4] From that perspective, the Schools of Librarianship may therefore have welcomed the opportunity to implement a standardised framework when it was introduced across Europe in the early years of the new Millennium, although the imposition of the obligation to do so was an additional burden, and there was some mild resentment of the adoption of what was perceived as a British or Anglo-American model.

**The Three Cycle Framework**

In all the Union's Member States, there are now three clear cycles in Higher Education, leading to a Bachelor's Degree after 3 or 4 years, to a Master's Degree after a further 1 or 2 years, and then to the Doctoral level. In some respects, these simple, structural reforms have been very successful. Although their implementation has been time-consuming, they did stimulate reflection on curricular aims and content that might have otherwise been deferred, particularly in the countries of Eastern Europe where technical developments were taking place more slowly because of the economic problems that ultimately brought about the collapse of their Communist regimes.[5] These reforms have, however, not been without controversy, for example in Germany where the new structure did not map easily onto the traditional employment structures, and in Italy, where efforts to introduce higher level qualifications were not appreciated and fully supported by employers.[6]

**European Credit Transfer Scheme**

Students could be personally motivated to undertake international exchange programmes to improve their language skills, to have the experience of living in another country, and even perhaps to take part in a different working experience. However, a stronger argument was needed for Universities to accept

the costs that are incurred in preparing students to go to other countries, or in receiving students from other countries. The European Commission argued that students should undertake exchanges that are principally intended to obtain academic credit in the subject they are studying. It therefore set out to encourage mutual recognition of curricula or parts of curricula through the introduction of the European Credit Transfer Scheme (ECTS).

The ECTS scheme leaves individual institutions free to determine academic frameworks for programmes. Thus, there is no standardisation in the quantity of credits attached to a single course unit, which in itself is not significant, because the programme as a whole must still meet the norm of 60 credits to complete one year of academic study. However, credits are awarded at different levels, and it is for institutions to determine what proportion of credits from a different institution may be transferred to complete study at that level, and how many credits from a (usually) lower or higher level may be included. Inter-institutional agreements are needed to facilitate credit transfer for students who undertake these exchanges because local course structures may allocate different credit values and could teach particular subjects at different levels. It is not known how widespread these agreements have become in LIS, or whether it has had any effect on course structures.

**Curricular Guidance**

The commonality in educational structures has resulted in some efforts to define a common European curriculum for LIS. To facilitate labour mobility, a number of European Directives issued between 1989 and 1999 covered the mutual recognition of professional qualifications awarded in Member States, including those in LIS. However, the attention of the European Union has not yet focussed on the compatibility of LIS curricular structures and content, as it has in a few other, critical disciplines such as medicine where it has taken the first steps towards harmonisation of education and training.

Nonetheless, in 1991, the participants in the former International Federation for Information and Documentation's (FID)[*] Western European Round Table on Information and Documentation had established it as an independent body, the European Council of Information Associations (ECIA), seeking to act as the voice of the European information and documentation associations. ECIA took an active interest in professional education in the region, and secured European Commission funding for two projects, DECIDoc and Certidoc. The outcomes of these projects are intended to outline guidelines for qualifications and certification of information professionals in the Member States.[7] In the absence of any other 'modern' curricular model, the results were widely considered, particularly in the former Communist countries where the Schools were accustomed to central guidance and had little experience of independent curricular development. They may have even taken a lead in creating the Commission's mindset about the professional competencies required in the information field, an impression that may prove difficult to alter, even though formed from a limited perspective and emphasise practice rather than purpose. They have, however, served to demonstrate how a prescriptive approach is

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[*] The FID ceased to function in 2000, and was formally declared bankrupt and closed down in 2001. ECIA, which had members in 9 states now also appears to be defunct.

especially vulnerable to the passage of time; originally published in 1995, they have subsequently required revision several times.[8]

Some balance may have been restored by the report "European Curriculum Reflections on Library and Information Science Education," the output from an international conference organised by Danmarks Biblioteksskole on behalf of EUCLID (*EUCLID: the European association for library and information education and research - http://euclid-lis.eu/*) with European Commission financial support.[9] The participants included some from developing countries which have committed to the Bologna principles or may be inclined to do so. As with anything like this, however, it can only be a snapshot, and quickly becomes dated. The expectation that the curriculum will reflect the local professional context and available teaching resources is a significant consideration in the development of any LIS syllabus. Harmonisation of LIS curricula across Europe also seems likely to be resisted because of the existence of two different traditions: one more focused on the resources to be mediated (book, document, information, etc.); the other with a functional approach to facilitating user access to information.[10]

Given the need for the LIS curriculum to respond to changes and to local professional contexts, it seems unlikely that any possible eventual Commission regulation could be expressed in anything more than the generalities. Both the ECIA and EUCLID documents compare unfavourablye with the broader outlines suggested by the latest guidelines issued by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions' Section on Education and Training.[11] These implicitly acknowledge that a curriculum must reflect local circumstances and needs, but say little about the arguably more important underlying need for skills in developing and regularly reviewing a curriculum.

**Promotion of Student Mobility — ERASMUS and MUNDUS**

The creation of the internationally mobile workforce believed to be fundamental to enhancing social cohesion requires more than compatible academic structures. Under the European Commission's Directive on Rights of Establishment (effective from 4th January 1991), citizens of one country had become eligible for employment in any other country within the European Union. Encouraging student participation in international mobility was recognised as an important underpinning for future labour force mobility. The ERASMUS programme (*European Regional Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*), funded by the European Commission, was established in 1987 to facilitate the international exchanges of students and academic staff. In 1994, it became an element of the broader SOCRATES programme, which in turn was incorporated in the Lifelong Learning Programme in 2007 (http://www.lifelonglearningprogramme.org.uk/programme/erasmus). The basis of ERASMUS is agreements between individual universities, which are then allocated funds from the European Union to contribute to the travel and subsistence expenses of students spending a period of between 3 months and one academic year in another Member State, and/or staff undertaking teaching assignments for periods of 1 to 2 weeks.

Little appears to have been written about exchanges between Schools of Librarianship other than an early paper suggesting that many students may have

been undertaking work placements rather than studying courses, and drawing attention to the problems of adapting to popular culture.[12] For students undertaking short-term exchanges within Europe, particularly students from the less wealthy countries in Eastern Europe, financial support can be a problem, as the ERASMUS grant does not cover the entire additional cost of travelling to and living in another country. Despite these problems, ERASMUS exchanges seem to have become very popular among European undergraduate students generally, and the ERASMUS programme has encouraged the development of regular interchanges of students and staff between Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies.

Language skills have, however, been another issue. The ERASMUS programme is supported by the LINGUA programme, which encourages the teaching of foreign languages. In 1989, however, the British government objected to the programme on the grounds that its objectives were not covered by EU Treaties, and Britain was excluded from future funding.  This proved to be a short-sighted decision.  Although interest in Europe stimulated a growth in British students learning continental European languages in the early 1990s, this interest was short-lived. Declining student interest and the absence of supplementary European funding led to the cessation of language teaching in many British universities.  In any case, the content of many undergraduate LIS programmes precluded the opportunity for students to enhance their language capabilities to the level required to study in a country where another language is spoken. Consequently, at a time when there were significant numbers of undergraduate LIS students in Britain, few British students participated in exchanges because of their limited language skills.[13]

Moreover, because English is the principal second language taught in Europe Britain was a popular destination for students.  British institutions became concerned about the imbalance in numbers and the costs incurred, and restricted incoming numbers. These factors led to the innovation by a number of continental institutions of teaching some courses in English, which is probably the 'second' language most commonly taught in schools throughout Europe. There have been several excellent programmes developed, of which perhaps the first was the development of a one Semester course (now discontinued) at the Danmarks Biblioteksskole in Copenhagen. There, students from all the School's ERASMUS partner institutions throughout Europe were taught in English by staff drawn from all the partner institutions, each undertaking a one or two week contribution.

Although some students enrolling in Master's Degree programmes have already achieved a high level of competence in another language or even completed a first degree in language studies which required some time living in another country, Master's Degree programmes in LIS often seem too short to include a period of mobility between countries, particularly if the programme is of only one year's duration. However, before the Bologna agreement began to be implemented, the need to offer international LIS Master's Degrees had been recognised in some institutions. Discussions about a jointly taught programme by which students of Fachhochschule für Bibliothekswesen in Stuttgart could be awarded a Master's Degree by the Robert Gordon University ended when the German government implemented the Bologna structure and permitted the Fachhochschule to award its own Master's Degrees. For a number of years,

however, an International Master's Degree programme at the University of Parma in Italy was partly taught by Northumbria University from the U.K., although this has now been discontinued.[14]

ERASMUS funding for teacher exchanges with Schools from the University of Barcelona and Fachhochschule Köln was also used to support the development in Italy of a Master's Degree for teacher-librarians in the University of Padua[15] before ERASMUS MUNDUS, a new co-operation and mobility program in postgraduate Higher Education, came into being in January 2004 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/external-relation-programmes/mundus_en.htm). It aims to promote the European Union as a centre of excellence in learning around the world, by attracting high quality students, including some from countries outside the European Union, to register for Master's Degrees which involve attendance for a semester in each of several universities in Member States. As a result of successfully seeking funding from the MUNDUS Programme, a further Master's Degree, in Digital Librarianship, was developed by the University of Parma, with Högskolen i Oslo and Tallinn University as partners. This offers scholarships for students from any country in the world to take the Master's Degree programme, with one Semester each spent in Parma, Oslo and Tallinn. The joint development of programmes such as these are also seen as " an effective means for developing the European dimension as they adapt national regulations for recognition, quality assurance and curriculum design to a common regulation." [16]

**Quality Assurance and the European Diploma Supplement**

To support international mobility for study or employment, it was important that students, universities, and employers could understand what was offered by institutions in other countries and be assured that they were of similar quality. Traditionally universities in Europe have generally been the guardians of their own academic standards. The implementation of the Bologna process began to erode this independence, requiring universities to provide some public assurance for employers of the quality of their graduates, and the relevance of their knowledge.

To address these problems, the European Commission has been encouraging universities to establish a procedure for the regular review of programmes.[17] In Britain, for example, the process typically involves annual reviews of all pertinent data about a course (enrolments, premature termination by students, results achieved in each year's assessments, quantitative and qualitative data from surveys of student opinion, qualitative data from external assessors drawn from academia and industry, observations by staff about recent and planned developments, and the trends revealed by comparison with retrospective data), but this seems to have been interpreted in different ways in each country.[18, 19]

A further requirement is the provision of clear and standardised information about the aims and content of courses or modules, and what a student is expected to learn, how it is taught, and how it is assessed. There would thus a transparent basis not only for informing their prospective employers, but also for informing student choice and for enabling the continuing validity of the course to be considered during the quality assurance reviews that should be carried out internally on a regular basis and, ideally, periodically by external subject

experts. To promote the necessary transparency, a requirement that every graduating student should receive the European Diploma Supplement automatically and free of charge was prescribed by a Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Higher Education in 2003.

The European Diploma Supplement is designed as a supplement to the conventional degree certificate, providing a description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued by graduates to explain the qualification in an internationally understandable form. In a standard format, it contains information on the holder of the qualification, the qualification, the level of the qualification, a full academic transcript including an explanation of the institution's marking scheme, information related to the programme of study, and brief descriptions of the Higher Education sector in the country and of the awarding institution.[20] It does not seek to address the national variations in professional terminology that have arisen during the last century, and which the International Standards Organisation struggles to address.[21,22] It may, however, begin to lead to some rationalisation of assessment methods, and ultimately to a reconsideration of the level at which LIS is taught.

**Assessment**

Although the quality assurance regime goes some way to underpinning the values implicit in the ECTS scheme, one of the most difficult issues in comparability of qualifications has so far been left to local agreements within ERASMUS partnerships. Understanding differences in national approaches to assessment has been a key to successful transfer of credits between institutions. Conventions vary. For example, in Britain an excellent piece of work would rarely be awarded much more than 70% in a subjective assessment, whereas up to 100% could be awarded in Denmark. The aggregation of these percentages, transferred in a non-moderated form between countries, could distort a student's overall result.

It was reported at a EUCLID meeting held in Amsterdam during the 1998 IFLA Conference, in a presentation about one ERASMUS partnership of 7 institutions (teaching Engineering) in different countries, that there were 7 different national conventions being applied to the assessment of students' work, which required to be matched against each other. The following table, based on comparisons that were made between some marking conventions in Europe and the USA for use by the international faculty members during the International Graduate Summer School at the former College of Librarianship Wales gives an indication of some of the complexities involved.

| American Letter Grade | Alphabetical Mark | Numerical Mark | British Honours Class |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | A+ | 90 | |
| | A | 80 | |
| | A- | 75 | I |
| | A— | 72 | |
| | AB | 70 | |
| | BA | 69 | |
| | B++ | 66 | |

| | B+?+ | 65 | II(i) |
|---|---|---|---|
| B | B+<br>B+? | 64<br>60 | |
| | B?+<br>B<br>B?- | 59<br>57<br>55 | II(ii) |
| C | B-<br>B—<br>BC | 54<br>52<br>50 | |
| | CB<br>C+<br>C | 49<br>47<br>45 | III |
| | C-<br>CD | 44<br>40 | |
| D | DC<br>D+<br>D<br>D-<br>DF | 39<br>38<br>37<br>36<br>35 | Pass |
| F | FD<br>F<br>FZ | 34<br>1-33<br>0 | Fail |

Table 1. American and British marking schemes (Source: College of Librarianship Wales)

The potential implications for courses such as LIS taught in some 200 universities across Europe's 28 countries are enormous. Some institutions are now experimenting with new approaches to grading students' work. With employers calling for greater clarity, can it be long before action is taken at inter-governmental level?

**Teaching Methods and Cognitive Development**

New approaches to course documentation are providing greater clarity and transparency in what is being assessed and the mechanisms for doing so. However, another of the issues that has not been addressed in the regular inter-governmental reviews of the Bologna process is the absence of any guidance on teaching methods and the development of cognitive skills. These seem to have attracted equally little attention from LIS educators, whose traditional emphasis on content and professional practice received further encouragement by the introduction of technology over the last thirty years. The standards applied by teachers awarding grades/marks have so far been quietly ignored, other than a passing note in the recent IFLA guidelines.[23]

On completion of a Bachelor's Degree programme, an undergraduate should be able to demonstrate a systematic understanding and a critical awareness of the subjects studied, and should have begun to develop the skills of analysis, criticism, and evaluation vital for their lifelong learning. Didactic teaching methods, reliant on memorising textbooks or the teacher's notes, are all too common in many countries, partly because of the scarcity of LIS literature in the local language, and partly because of a combination of large student numbers, small numbers of teachers and the nature of local assessment regimes, but are

unlikely to underpin the necessary cognitive development. All too often, the graduates from such programmes are little more than technicians.

It is undeniable that the librarian must be much more than a technician. If he remains a technician because his university education has been limited to professional techniques which are undervalued outwith the profession, librarianship will never achieve the status it seeks. How could a librarian's education enable him or her to take his place as the equal of Deans and Vice-Presidents in Universities, or senior managers in corporations? More than thirty years ago, Havard-Williams noted that "the position of graduates with a Bachelor's Degree [in librarianship] is still ambiguous" and suggested that the future lay in the development of a professional cadre with an academic degree in a subject other than librarianship and a post graduate professional qualification.[24] It is arguable that a Master's Degree based on 3 or 4 years of prior university study in another discipline would attract students from a variety of academic backgrounds, thus securing for the profession a more versatile work force. As the published literature in disciplines that attract larger numbers of undergraduate students tends to be more substantial, it is arguable that the teaching could also be more likely to produce graduates with the necessary cognitive skills. Do the European Schools need to revisit the debate about the level for professional education, and reach a mutually agreeable conclusion?

**The Master's Degree, and Professional Accreditation**

The issues surrounding the level of professional education were largely ignored in implementing the Bologna 3-cycle structure. The debate about the level of professional education has been an issue in Europe from time to time since the American Library Association (ALA) first decided to accredit only Master's Degrees taken after candidates had completed a Bachelor's Degree in another discipline. However, many European institutions had no experience of teaching postgraduate LIS programmes, and national educational structures offered them little opportunity to do so. The imposition of the Bologna framework left no time for a debate about the role and nature of Master's Degrees in education for librarianship. Thus, different patterns of postgraduate provision now co-exist across Europe. A Master's Degree may be intended as a first qualification in Librarianship and Information Studies for graduates in other disciplines, or as a programme of advanced study in the discipline for those who have already completed a Bachelor's Degree in Librarianship and Information Studies. In some countries, both these models can be found.

The scarcity of LIS literature in many European languages probably also contributed to holding back the development of Master's Degree programmes. At the conclusion of a Master's Degree, an information professional should have acquired the cognitive skills that underpin competent and reflective professional practice. Arguably, they could only do this if they are able to examine and critically evaluate a wide range of current research and advanced scholarship in our field. This raises questions about the need for and usefulness of language skills. High level reading skills in one of the main international languages tends to be limited to a small percentage of the population, and in any case a "major problem for students who are reading a foreign language text for content is the lack of background knowledge".[25] How then could the reading needs of postgraduate students be adequately met?

A further twist to this debate has been given by a growing influx of immigrants into the U.S.A. from countries that had developed their own professional programmes, implicitly challenging the ALA declaration that a "Master's Degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association is the appropriate professional degree for librarians." ALA therefore set up an *ad hoc* mechanism to advise on whether the qualifications held by these immigrants were of equivalent standing. Most employers in the USA accepted the ALA guidance, but recently, for legal reasons, ALA was compelled to abandon its longstanding arrangements to evaluate foreign degrees. In 2000, it amended its policy statement to include "a Master's level program in library and information studies accredited or recognized by the appropriate national body of another country."

Effectively, this was an agreement to accept Master's Degrees that had been accredited by the British Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), which are the only countries that had an established tradition of accreditation by the relevant professional bodies. However, Britain is one of the countries where the two models of Master's Degrees co-exist. There are several specialised Master's Degree programmes accredited by CILIP that could be taken either as a first professional qualification by graduates in other disciplines or as advanced study by a student who had taken a Bachelor's Degree in LIS. It would, therefore, perhaps not be surprising if no serious thought was given by CILIP to the international implications of this issue when it recently offered to accredit a Master's Degree in Germany to which admission is on the basis of a Bachelor's Degree in librarianship.[26] For CILIP, the attraction was, no doubt, the potential to offset its declining membership. For potential students of the German programme, no doubt one of its attractions, in addition to its recognition in Britain, may be its acceptance as an accredited degree by ALA.

At the very least, CILIP's action in accrediting that Master's degree appears to undermine the original principle that underpinned ALA's recent decision and ALA's possibly implied expectation about the nature of undergraduate studies completed by holders of accredited Master's Degrees. At the very least, ALA may need to review its requirements for accepting Master's Degrees accredited in other countries, and possibly be more explicit about its expectations. EUCLID'S only joint conference with the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) took place in Potsdam, Germany in 2003 before this issue emerged.[27] Could a further exchange help to crystallize views about the level of professional education for LIS in Europe and other countries where the Bologna agreements are being implemented? It will not be an easily concluded debate. In some countries, there is no tradition of admitting to Master's Degree programmes students who have no grounding in the same subject at undergraduate level, and there is therefore the potential for major resistance to such a change within the wider academic community.

It also raises the question of whether some equivalent to the European Foundation for Management Development's EQUIS scheme (http://www.efmd.org/html) is needed for accrediting Schools of Librarianship across the Union. EQUIS evaluates whole Schools, and assesses not just their degree programmes but all their activities including research, continuing

education provision, and how the balance between academic quality and professional relevance is provided by close interaction with practitioners.

**Recruitment to Undergraduate Programmes**

The level of courses is one of several complex issues that will need to be addressed in future. Indeed, circumstances may force the European LIS community to reconsider its position.  As Large observed, variations in the level at which LIS is taught are a barrier to cooperation in international development of education for librarianship,[28] a challenge well illustrated by attempts to establish a joint German-Italian programme.[29] As a result of recent global economic and social trends, the challenges that face higher education have never been greater.

One of the features of the contemporary economy is the redistribution of income between the historically wealthy nation states and those ~~who~~ that have been less fortunate~~ – whether nation states or individuals and groups in society~~. The complexity of the current world economy demands a national labour force that is better educated to enable a country to cope with these global trends. The European Union's recognition of the need to develop a knowledge--based economy encouraged Member States to increase the number of students that are admitted into the higher education system. The demands of the labour market for employees with more specialised and relevant knowledge have been a particularly significant driver in diversification in the range of programmes that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offer to local students. This led to a significant increase in the number of Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies in some countries (e.g. Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden). The need to restructure programmes to adapt to Bologna principles provided an opportunity for many Schools to reconsider the content of their courses in the light of emerging job markets, developing new courses and expanding the range of specialist subjects that are taught.

However, much of the change encouraged by the European Union has so far impacted most noticeably on undergraduate studies in the field. These changes have met with mixed success. The number of students enrolling in traditional LIS undergraduate courses in the long established Schools in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands has withered, and several Schools in those countries have closed. Others have survived only by diversifying their course content to incorporate broader elements of communication studies, business studies, and computing, diluting the librarianship content; in some cases, leading to mergers with other departments. In Spain, the number of Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies grew dramatically as the country's economy was modernised with an infusion of European development funds in the 1990s. Now, reports suggest that some of the Schools in Spain are struggling to recruit undergraduate students.[30] Anecdotal evidence suggests that recruitment into some undergraduate courses in Germany is also weak, while, at the same time, it is said to be stronger than ever in Sweden. The reasons for the apparently different patterns of recruitment into LIS undergraduate programmes are not entirely clear, and need to be thoroughly investigated. Are these local phenomena, or the first signs of trends to which Schools in the other Member States need to respond?

**Doctoral Degrees and the Recognition of Research**

European traditions have also produced different models at the Doctoral level. In most countries, the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) was awarded on the basis of a substantial piece of independent research leading to a thesis embodying an original contribution to knowledge; in others, substantial elements of course work are required; and sometimes these systems co-exist in the same country. In some, the intellectual level required for the award of a PhD was little different from a research Master's Degree in another country. In some of the Communist countries, the highest level of academic work included a requirement for a demonstration of capabilities in one or more foreign languages (for example through the preparation of critical reviews of high level foreign language publications) and led to the award of Candidate of (the Academy of) Science.

Perhaps the most difficult challenge in developing a European model lies in the Republics formerly within the U.S.S.R., because their academics could only undertake the highest levels of study in librarianship under the aegis of the Moscow State Institute of Culture. There was thus little or no local experience of teaching and supervision at this level. In the last few years, the Research Councils in the U.K. have made evidence that formal training in research methodologies will be provided a requirement for the award of their scholarships, and this training has thus become normal provision for all research students in the UK, but it is not clear how widespread this practice is. In some countries the high level training in research supervision necessary to underpin LIS students at Doctoral level may have to be sought in other disciplines, where there is a greater possibility of finding the expertise. This could be beneficial. The students might be exposed to research in those other disciplines that has a bearing on library and information work that is all too often ignored in LIS research.

An alternative model might be seen in the Scandinavian LIS Schools. There the Schools of Librarianship began to work together in the Nordic Network in the 1970s, discussing and implementing a number of collaborative activities including sharing overseeing the development of research students.[31] However, such a model is dependent on the availability of adequate funding for inter-institutional travel. A similar model has been established by the 4 Scottish Schools with funding from the (U.K.) Economic and Social Science Research Council. Informal discussions have take place about a proposal for MUNDUS or TEMPUS funding to support the development of these skills in some institutions across Europe and the former Soviet Union, but have not crystallised as yet.

The development of an LIS research community is further hindered by the severely limited funds available for research at national and international level, compared with the physical and life sciences. From the beginning it has been stressed that one of the aims of EUCLID should be to facilitate partnerships to undertake bilateral and multilateral ventures to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the EU's scientific and technological development research programmes.[32] Paradoxically, the lack of research expertise has constrained involvement in those projects in the information field that have been funded by the European Commission under the Framework R&D programmes. These have been heavily oriented towards digital information systems. A few

project bids have included libraries, but it is difficult to identify any involvement of LIS educators in most successful partnerships.[33] Moreover, there is little evidence of published research outputs from those projects in which they have been involved, nor have the wider opportunities for research and publication offered by the TEMPUS (*Trans European Mobility Programme for University Studies* - http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/index_en.php) and ALFA (*América Latina Formación Académica* - *http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/latin-america/regional-cooperation/alfa/index_en.htm*) international development programmes been taken up to any great extent.

## Continuing Professional Education

The development of the skills that practitioners will require in order to be able to continue to learn throughout a working life has received some attention in the Union.  Meeting in Lisbon in 2000, the European Council called for Europe's education and training systems to be:

> "modernised in response to the demands of the knowledge economy and the increasing socio-economic and demographic challenges confronting the Union in a globalised world." [34]

Subsequently, in September 2006, the European Commission issued proposals for the establishment of a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.[35] Essentially, the Proposal is for the introduction of a reference tool for the comparison of qualifications, across disciplines and across national boundaries. It is based on 8 levels, defined by the learning outcomes that are expected to be achieved in terms of knowledge, skills, and competences. Levels 6 to 8 are intended to map on to the 3 levels of Higher Education defined in the Bologna agreement, which has resulted in much restructuring of university programmes and qualifications during the last few years. Significantly, it also introduces, across the whole spectrum of lifelong learning and at every level, the principles of Quality Assurance that also form a key element of the Bologna process. However, as a result of the consultations that have taken place, the Commission has accepted that the national education and training authorities and sectoral stakeholders can only be expected to commit to the Framework on a voluntary basis, and it is not clear to what extent the LIS Schools have begun to implement the Bologna principles in their Continuing Education provision.

## Promotion of the European Dimensions of Higher Education

The 'cultural' differences within European librarianship gained a new dimension in 1989/90 when the political make-up of Central and Eastern Europe changed dramatically. Discussions about cooperation had focused on the potential in Western Europe, for example in discussions at the Workshop arranged in Paris in 1989 by FID's West European Round Table on Information and Documentation.[36,37,38] The authorities in most Communist countries had generally discouraged contacts with foreign "intellectuals", except under carefully controlled conditions. Contacts between Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies in Western Europe and the Schools in Central and Eastern Europe had previously taken place under the aegis of the IFLA Section on Education and Training or of the FID Education and Training Committee, or occasionally as a result of individual interests and initiatives. Travel outside the Communist block was inhibited by controls on the availability of exit visas and convertible

currency. The prevailing political philosophy and economic circumstances had produced totally different approaches to professional education in Eastern Europe. A major effort had to be made to build contacts and partnerships between countries that had been separated by the 'Iron Curtain' (for example, in Poland [39],[40],[41]).

The European Union immediately put in place major programmes for technical cooperation with its neighbouring countries, the 'Newly Independent States' of Eastern and Central Europe: an economic development programme (PHARE - originally created in 1989 as the *Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring Economies* programme, and subsequently extended to cover ten countries), and an educational programme, TEMPUS, intended to support the collaborative development of higher education systems and institutions. The TEMPUS programme was established in 1990. Its remit was subsequently extended, and TEMPUS now supports the modernisation of higher education institutions and systems (HEIs) not only in Eastern Europe, but also in the Western Balkans, and in the Mediterranean countries of North Africa and the Middle East (TEMPUS-MEDEA). Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it also supports, through a sub-programme TEMPUS-TACIS (*Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States*), partnerships between HEIs in the European Union and in the former Soviet Republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia. This provides assistance for the HEIs to develop and introduce new curricula, teaching methods or materials, as well as enhancing academic quality assurance procedures and generally modernising the management of higher education at national and institutional level.

TEMPUS has funded a number of cooperative projects between LIS Schools in Eastern and Western Europe. Some significant efforts were made through the TEMPUS programme by a number of the Schools in Western Europe in almost every one of the emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, supporting not only changes in education for librarianship but also library development.[42] Numerous partnerships between Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies were established that included staff and student exchanges as part of projects to help develop the curriculum and equipment resources in the former Communist countries.[43,44] There is no doubt that these were demanding in terms of the staff time involved.[45] However, an evaluation of one of these TEMPUS projects did point towards the staff development benefits that stemmed from it for the West European Schools involved.[46]

The focus of TEMPUS shifted further East as the former Communist countries in Eastern Europe completed sufficient democratic and economic reforms to permit the European Union to accept them into membership and thus into the ERASMUS scheme. Attempts to secure TEMPUS support for library education development projects then focused on the former Republics of the U.S.S.R..[47] However, shifts in the European Commission's priorities also re-focused the TEMPUS programme on the broader educational underpinning required to facilitate the integration of the states of Eastern Europe that applied to join the European Union, and the impetus for curricular modernisation and resource enhancement *per se* gave way to an emphasis on the implementation of the Bologna principles at governmental and institutional levels. Moreover, the European Commission's budget, as well as subject to overall constraints, was being stretched to cover a wider range of political commitments, making it more difficult to secure funds for stand-alone

library-related projects. Nonetheless, some project proposals were successful, not least in signalling the availability of Schools in the newer Member States in Eastern Europe as partners in TEMPUS rather than as beneficiaries from it.[48,49,50] The assumed benefits of a European perspective on the development of higher education have also been recognised, for example in Kazakhstan, where the Ministry of Higher Education requires agencies undertaking the new accreditation process for universities to include foreign participants in the panel, and one agency has already invited a British librarian to take part in the accreditation reviews of two universities.

Although it is not compulsory, the European Commission gives strong encouragement to the implementation of the Bologna principles by the beneficiary countries. The MED-CAMPUS programme with the Mediterranean states, later renamed TEMPUS MEDEA, the ALFA programme in Latin America, and the INCO programme with developing countries in general[51] all support cooperative educational developments. A significant number of countries have joined the Bologna process.

Higher education libraries may have benefited indirectly from other projects, but only a few specifically library development projects have been funded, for example by TEMPUS-TACIS,[52] ALFA[53] and, in the Arab world, by TEMPUS-MEDEA.[54] International collaboration between Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies could make a significant contribution not only to the development of library and information services, but also indirectly to economic and social progress.[55] This was recognised by a substantial grant from the separate European Union development assistance budget that supported an Anglo-Danish project to modernise libraries and education for librarianship in South Africa in its immediate post-apartheid transition.[56,57,58,59,60] As yet, however, even though the European Commission has prioritised the development of the 'Information Society' in its international programme of cooperation, these opportunities for international cooperative activity do not appear to have been successfully exploited by any great number of LIS Schools. It is not clear whether the limited involvement of LIS Schools reflects a lack of interest or ambition, low prioritisation in the allocation of scarce human resources, or failure to submit convincing requests for funding.

**Impact on the Academy – Organisational Profiles**

The explanation may lie in the attitudes of senior institutional managers. The impact of the Bologna process has been felt, indirectly, in the organisational profile of education for Librarianship and Information Studies. In some countries in Europe (e.g. Czechoslovakia, Italy, Poland, Spain), professional education in the pre-Bologna era was entirely undertaken in universities. In others (e.g. Austria, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the U.S.S.R., and the United Kingdom), professional education had been conducted mainly (but not exclusively) in other types of Higher Education institution outwith the university sector. In some countries, independent HEIs specialising in the discipline had flourished; in some cases alongside departments in more broadly based HEIs (e.g. Bulgaria, France, Germany, United Kingdom), or even funded outwith the main Higher Education system (e.g. Denmark). In the post-Bologna era, these institutions have been granted degree awarding powers, including the right to teach Master's Degrees, although not all have yet moved to

offer Master's. While retaining their traditional names, many (e.g. the Dutch Hogeschool and the German Fachhochschule) now present their institutional title in English as '*University of Applied Sciences.*'

The convergence of national and international soft indicators, ranking institutions and discipline-based units within 'league tables,' has fostered the vision that there is one good way, and only one, to produce and judge quality in higher education and research.[61] Although not solely attributable to these factors or the implementation of the Bologna principles, it is noticeable that several of the specialist institutions, e.g. in Germany and the United Kingdom, have ceased to be independent. It may be that, in some cases, reflection on the implementation of the Bologna principles may have drawn governments' attention to what may have been seen as organisational anomalies. In some countries, the consequent re-organisation has resulted in greater autonomy being delegated to institutions. It is almost certainly the case that the support available within larger organisations has made it easier for the Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies to cope with the additional bureaucracy that the implementation of the Bologna principles has required, as well as the changing resource requirements of the discipline. Another explanation may be that governments perceived the need for the diversity and multi-disciplinarity in academic content already noted in this paper, and concluded that they could best be achieved within more broadly based institutions.

Whatever the reason, some have become part of large, multi-disciplinary HEIs (e.g. Fachhochschule für Bibliothekswesen in Stuttgart became part of Hochschule der Medien), while others were transferred into the traditional University sector where they were expected not only to teach at a higher level but also to engage in research activities (e.g. the College of Librarianship Wales, which became part of the University of Aberystwyth). Not re-aligning institutional structures and efforts to meet the demands of the so-called 'New Public Management' style "is assumed to be a costly if not suicidal strategy if the process is to be adopted elsewhere," despite resistance or even rejection by faculty members, who consider them to be management fads.[62] Paradoxically, it may be these organisational changes that have created constraints on international engagement by some LIS departments. However, some universities have been better able to harness the drive for administrative rationalization with the legitimate academic ideals of faculty, even in small disciplines such as LIS.

Studies have revealed a considerable degree of variation in institutional motives and adaptation to internationalisation.[63] For example, strategic decision-making about some institutions' internationalization policies have focused solely on student recruitment and the development of commercial partnerships,[64] possibly restricting the ability of LIS Schools and staff to engage in activities perceived as more altruistic but less beneficial. The diverse needs of higher education, and the European Union's wish to promote the spread of the Bologna principles, suggest that some HEIs have yet to recognise that a university is an entity of differentiated components, and that they need to apply greater flexibility and autonomy in supporting international initiatives by individuals and departments.

**Impact on the Academy - the Foundation of EUCLID**

Coming together to share experiences and establish a common view to put forward to decision makers has much to commend it to small disciplines when academic and political environments are becoming unified. More immediate benefits can also make it worthwhile for Schools of Librarianship and Information Studies to collaborate. For example, while Continuing Professional Development programmes cater for updating the knowledge and skills of the practising professional, the needs of the teacher of librarianship and information studies go beyond these, as it is necessary to consider how much needs to be taught, and when, and how to devise the most effective means of achieving this (and, usually, to decide what has to be squeezed out of a crowded curriculum to make room for something new). The LIS Schools tend not to be large organisations within which experience and ideas can be easily shared with people equally familiar with each specialist sub-area of the discipline, but regular interaction with colleagues from other institutions can offer opportunities for this.

In addition to these factors, the unique combination of circumstances in Europe created by the emergence of the European Union and the collapse of Soviet dominance in the East made clear the need for a forum to share experiences and understandings between Schools if an appropriate degree of commonality was to be achieved as well as a basis for partnerships for student exchanges and joint research projects. Informal discussions between the Heads of several Schools in various countries of the European Union and Eastern Europe resulted in the wide distribution of invitations to a conference in October, 1991 at Fachhochschule für Bibliothekswesen in Stuttgart to discuss cooperation between the library and information science educational institutions throughout Europe.[65, 66]

Twenty-six representatives of departments from fourteen countries accepted the invitation to attend the meeting in Stuttgart. The participants agreed to establish an association to be known as *EUCLID: the European association for library and information education and research*. The aims of EUCLID were agreed to be:
• To facilitate exchange of students among the institutions.
• To facilitate exchange of staff among the institutions.
• To encourage the mutual recognition of curricula or parts of curricula.
• To develop cooperation on research projects.
• To develop cooperation with other international organisations.
• To exchange mutual information about development in curricula and research.[67]

### EUCLID's Conferences

One of the first activities in which EUCLID was involved was a workshop bringing together LIS education specialists from Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, held in Bratislava in 1994, jointly funded by UNESCO and the TEMPUS Programme.[68] Subsequently EUCLID has consolidated its activities and acted as an umbrella for a number of regional studies of professional issues executed by the Danmarks Biblioteksskole. However, despite organisational and financial structures designed to be inclusive, EUCLID has shown little appetite for encouraging participation by the 200 or so institutions teaching in related fields in Europe, and its active membership remains relatively small. To be fair, it must also be said that the focus of the LIS academic community on personal research interests, curricular and resource issues, and in some cases institutional survival,

has probably not been conducive to considering some of the broader issues that EUCLID was established to address.

There has been one clear success for EUCLID. Many of the people who founded EUCLID wanted their students to have the same opportunities that they had enjoyed, particularly the opportunity to meet colleagues from other countries and to develop professional and personal friendships as a foundation for future international cooperation. Thus, the concept of an annual Conference organised as a collaborative exercise in project management by groups of students from two or three Schools of Librarianship and Information Sciences was supported by Schools of Librarianship and Information Sciences in Budapest, Oslo, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Tampere, Sheffield, Stuttgart, and Szombathely; hence its acronym BOBCATSSS. The Conference was first held in 1993, largely thanks to the efforts of Dr. Ruud Bruyns of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam, who originated the idea as a means of stimulating understanding and cooperation between new generations in Europe. This has become a major annual international conference, with the theme determined by students from the organising Schools, and the papers by students, educators and practitioners subject to a rigorous refereeing process by the students. Subsequently several other Schools became involved and, in 2000, the BOBCATSSS Conference was formally taken under the wing of EUCLID.

EUCLID's Executive Board meets annually, and its General Council is held every third year, usually in association with the BOBCATSSS Conference. While an important event, BOBCATSSS is no substitute for meetings designed to drive forward the European agenda. However, EUCLID has also held a number of conferences on European themes for its member Schools, for example on "Restructuring and adapting LIS education to European standards," held in Thessaloniki in 2002.[69] It also participated in a joint meeting with EBLIDA[1] in Lisbon in 2007 to debate the implications of the European Commission's proposals for Continuing Education.

**Internationalisation – the Broader Debate**

While library and information services have been affected indirectly by the European Union's framework programmes' underpinning for the development of an information society, as well as by the changes sought in higher education, libraries remain a national or local responsibility, and the European Union has no remit to intervene in or regulate library matters *per se*.[70, 71] Awareness of the changes that technology has made in the international dissemination of information and knowledge has become a requirement for practicing librarians and information workers responsible for facilitating access for multicultural immigrant or academic communities.[72] The teaching staff participating in European exchange programmes and development projects may have become internationalised in some way, as suggested by Pors,[73] but the impact on their academic work has not been fully evaluated. The only significant contemporary study suggests that little progress in internationalisation has been made by the

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[1] EBLIDA is the European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations, an independent umbrella association for library, information, documentation and archive associations and institutions in Europe. URL: http://www.eblida.org/

LIS Schools in Europe.[74] Could this be because the priority focus for curricular content remains their local job market?

Some questions remain to be asked about the internationalisation of the LIS curriculum in Europe, and what it means. Internationalisation has been defined as essentially concerned with:
- the inclusion of universal, general principles
- the specification of general variables that might be particularised within national, cultural or historical settings
- a recognition of organisations or associations of an international character and impact
- an awareness of the international diffusion of knowledge.[75]

For curricular content to be described as international, therefore, cross national comparisons need to be embedded in every element of a programme, and not simply contained in a single course unit or module. Students must also develop a deep understanding of comparative methodologies, so that they are not only familiar with how things differ in other countries, but also understand why they differ. At a time when American professional influence seemed to be globally pervasive, Sharify reported that internationalisation was interpreted by Schools of Librarianship in the U.S.A. as offering 'international' courses focused on regional or national manifestations of publishing and the book trade, bibliography and development of collections of foreign publications, types of library services and information services, archives, aspects of professional practice, and foreign languages for librarians. There were also courses on professional organisations, international relations between libraries, and planning library and information services for developing communities.[76] While many of these may have simply described superficial differences in foreign countries, there appears to have been no similar contemporary study of LIS courses in Europe, and an investigation now would need to probe much deeper.

**Future Developments**

The description of activities in this paper is largely limited to those reported in publications that have appeared in English, as well as conversations between the author and acquaintances from continental Europe. A geographically wider description and discussion of the issues raised here, perhaps organised by EUCLID, might lead to different conclusions.

The influence of the European Commission on LIS education in Europe has been indirect and limited. It might seem unfair to suggest that the difficult problems in LIS education (and in some cases in higher education generally) are the ones that have not yet been addressed at the European level, but that is the reality. It would be easy to attribute the European Commission's failure to address the issues raised in this paper to the consequences of the economic and political challenges that currently confront the Union, but in any case the European Commission does not have the capacity to oversee the detailed implementation of policies approved by the Council of Ministers. Moreover, the particular interests of a small academic discipline such as Librarianship and Information Studies, however critical it might believe that it is in facilitating the development of the Information Society, have not yet appeared on the radar of the Council of Ministers and the Directorate General for Education and Culture. It is more a

matter of concern that the Council of Ministers and the Commission have ignored - whether deliberately to avoid cultural or political confrontations, or simply through incompetence, is a matter for debate elsewhere – the need to delegate responsibility and prescribe mechanisms for implementation of policies. This is one of the roles for which EUCLID was established, but it has not been assigned that responsibility. In the absence of delegated authority, progress still requires a champion, but EUCLID cannot be said to have energetically sought to adopt that role.

The next steps in implementing the Bologna principles must include a debate about the extent to which librarians could take advantage of the possibilities of international job mobility. Employers' willingness to accept professional degrees in Librarianship and Information Studies awarded in countries that have acceded to the Bologna process has not yet been tested to any great extent. The usefulness of the European Diploma Supplement in defining the equivalence and reciprocal acceptability of professional education programmes in LIS for transnational employment purposes seems a distant goal. Guidelines on the description of the curriculum and resources could offer employers some assistance in comparing programmes of study, only if they provide a framework that is easily understood and applied consistently by the international academic community.

However, this is not a simple matter. The evolving implementation of the Bologna principles must avoid any accusation of cultural imperialism when encountering established national traditions. Terminological differences are not the only issue. Librarians seeking to cross borders in search of work will need not only understanding of differences in professional practices, but also an understanding of cultural differences, "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the member of one group or category of people from another." [77] There may be easily perceived differences in the 'professional culture' of the various countries, but understanding the culture of other groups influenced by their social class, gender, educational level, and other background factors is a more complex challenge, and - as Hofstede pointed out - many different cultures will be found in a single country. [78, 79]

The way in which these cultural differences affect interactions between information professionals and information users, and between information professionals and the decision makers in the organisations they serve needs to be fully understood. As Witt commented recently, professional education will need to become far more complex and nuanced in preparing librarians and other information specialists for a globalised context. [80] This would:

> "provide insights into practical issues when library professionals move across boundaries. They also point to serious theoretical and intellectual problems connected to the process of globalisation or internationalisation. These issues become more and more serious as the process of internationalisation takes speed. It is of course true that we also witness a process especially due to multiculturalism and the technological development that tend to decrease the national differences, but many of these differences are very much embedded in local and national value systems and they will probably live on for many decades to come." [81]

A great deal more empirical research, at both national and international level, is needed to underpin the foundation for any internationalisation of course content,

to resolve issues of assessment, the academic level at which LIS should be studied and its accreditation, to stimulate collaborative activities, and to raise the profile of LIS education at the political level in Europe. These are roles that EUCLID was set up to perform or at least encourage. Despite some recent efforts to engage with the practitioner community in Europe as represented in EBLIDA, there is little sign that these are receiving attention.

## Author

Professor Ian Johnson took part in the meeting at which EUCLID: European Association for Library and Information Education and Research was established in 1991, and served as Chairman of its Executive Board from 1998 to 2002. He held senior managerial positions at the Robert Gordon University from 1989 to 2007, and served as Chairman of several other British and international bodies concerned with education for Librarianship and Information Studies, and as Chairman of the IFLA Professional Board. He has led or participated in several projects concerned with the development of libraries and Schools of Librarianship in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, in Latin America, and the Arab world that were sponsored by UNESCO, the European Commission, and other agencies. He is currently Joint Editor of *Libri: international journal of libraries and information services;* and a member of the editorial boards of *Education for Information*, and *Information Development.*

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