

# =TOWARDS STRONG CREATIVE ARTS DISCIPLINES IN EUROPE=

## Position Paper of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) and the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA)

The European Association of Conservatoires (AEC) and the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), representing more than 600 European higher education institutions in the arts and music with over 400,000 students annually studying at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle study levels, have been actively aiming at the implementation of the objectives set out by the European Ministers of Education in the *Bologna* process. This has been done in collaboration with European higher education networks and organisations, such as EUA and EURASHE.

Higher education in the arts and music is provided in over one thousand institutions across Europe, including specialist academies such as Conservatoires, Écoles des Beaux-Arts, Academie di Belle Arti, as well as departments/faculties of Universities, Hochschulen and Hogescholen with or without university status, as well as in private art schools. These institutions offer specialist education in architecture, dance, design, fine art, media arts, music and theatre at a higher education level characterised by the four interdependent elements - production of knowledge, its transmission, its dissemination and its use in technical innovation - described by the European University Association (EUA) as being necessary to play a central role in the development of the European knowledge-based society.

Over the past years ELIA and AEC, through collaboration with the ERASMUS Thematic Networks for the arts *inter}artes* and for music *Polifonia*, and other European projects in the SOCRATES and ERASMUS MUNDUS programmes, have developed a substantial body of expertise in the main *Bologna* issues. Through developing this expertise we are now able to act as European reference points for higher education in the arts and music, offering services and professional guidance to higher arts education institutions, the Ministers of Education, the European Commission and other stakeholders in the following fields:

### Sectoral Qualifications Frameworks

Trans-national lifelong learning reference tools for ensuring comparability and greater transparency have been developed in the arts and music, which also provide improved accessibility of information about the disciplines for the general public. These tools include descriptors, learning outcomes and competences at BA, MA and PhD levels for music, dance, design, fine art and theatre according to the Tuning template. In addition, discipline-specific *Bologna Dossiers*, including a dictionary/glossary of terms, guides, handbooks and background papers, have been created<sup>1</sup>.

### Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Tested criteria, guidelines and procedures for institutional and discipline peer review, as well as a register of trained and tested experts have been developed for the arts and music.

### Doctoral Programmes and Research

A comparative overview of doctoral programmes and research practice across Europe, national research profiles, a panel of experts, and identified and disseminated best practice have been produced.

### Professional Practice Development

Best practice examples across Europe in preparing students for the workplace and a pilot 'tracking' system to follow students' professional development have been developed, as well as a European-wide mapping exercise on the latest trends and new and rare competences in the rapidly developing creative professions.



## The External Dimension of the *Bologna* Process

In the ERASMUS MUNDUS project *Mundus Musicalis* a subject-specific approach to an intensified global cooperation and the enhancement of the attractiveness of European higher music education is being explored.

Across Europe the *Bologna* implementation is facilitating the rethinking and rewriting of arts and music courses and curricula, enabling teaching staff to respond to the changing needs of the students, the market place and the societies we live in. It also provides for variety and flexibility in the design of courses and encourages innovation within an agreed overall framework. The process allows for the richness and diversity of higher arts education and the important and substantial contribution that graduates in these subjects make to industry, commerce, culture and society.

The creative industries sector is internationally expanding at a faster rate than that of the rest of the industrial and commercial economy in Europe. Increasing demand for communication in all of its manifestations, rapid developments in technology, and expanding public interest in the arts and media, all contribute to the demand for education in disciplines associated with these activities<sup>2</sup>. Graduates in arts disciplines have demonstrated that they are equipped with the appropriate skills and abilities to operate effectively in the marketplace. In particular, they display resourcefulness, entrepreneurial skills, and the capacity to establish new and innovative enterprises.

Taking these successful outcomes as a starting point, we invite the Ministers:

1. To recognise higher arts and music education at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> levels in all *Bologna* countries and to resolve persisting problems in some countries where the 2<sup>nd</sup> and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles are not yet established in our sectors.
2. To recognise and acknowledge artistic development and research taking place in higher arts and music education as being at a level equivalent to other disciplines of higher education and fully contributing to the European Research Area.
3. To retain a strong emphasis on cultural diversity and artistic practice, whilst supporting the need for greater transparency and readability of qualifications as the platform for a stronger, more integrated European space of higher education.
4. To engage in a more subject-specific approach during the next steps of the *Bologna* process, so that the implementation of the *Bologna* principles is ensured at all institutional levels. As a consequence to consider organising an official *Bologna* seminar on higher arts and music education during 2008-2009 in collaboration with the relevant European associations.
5. To acknowledge and make use of the developed expertise in the field of quality assurance and enhancement.
6. To make use of the tools developed (descriptors, learning outcomes, competences, etc) for the establishment of sectoral national and European qualifications frameworks.
7. To fully invest in modern, well-equipped higher arts and music education to maintain and further develop its unique qualities in an increasingly digital society and economy.

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.bologna-and-music.org](http://www.bologna-and-music.org) and [www.inter-artes.org](http://www.inter-artes.org) for more information about these publications

<sup>2</sup> 'Study on the Economy of Culture in Europe' – study DG EAC 03/05 executed by the partnership KEA European Affairs, Media Group (Turku School of Economics) and MKW Wirtschaftsforschung GmbH (September 2006)