



The European Higher Education Area in 2020

*Bologna Process
Implementation Report*



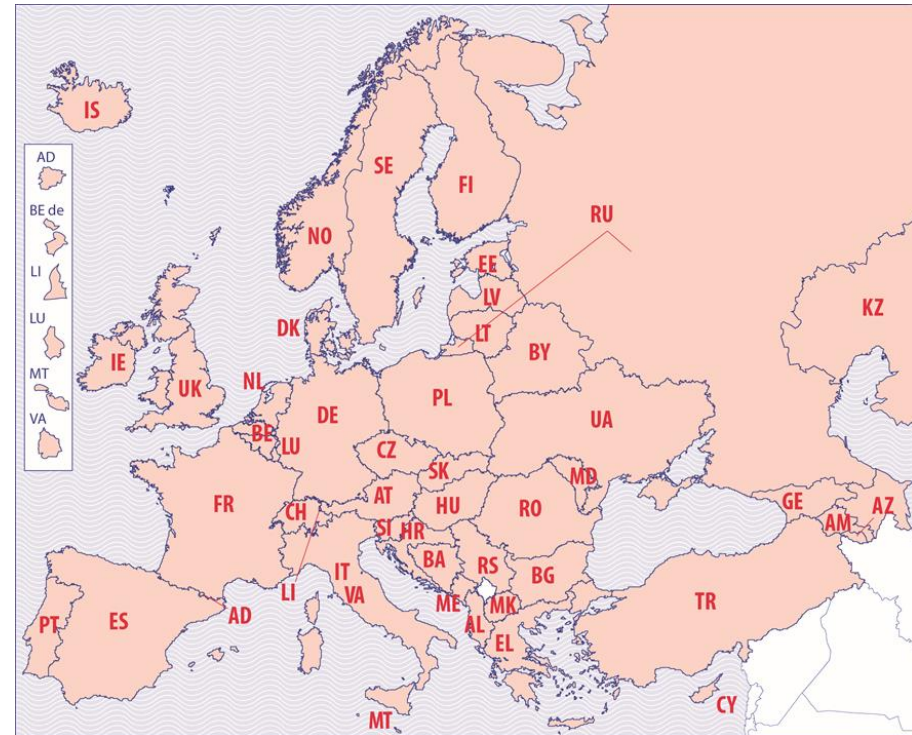
20 Years of the Bologna Process: How far have we come, and what have we achieved?

**Austrian Higher Education Researchers
meeting**

**EACEA A6 Erasmus+ Education and Youth
Policy Analysis**

EHEA today

- 49 countries (with San Marino)
- 38 million students (an increase of c18 million 60% of total in 5 countries)
- 56% of students enrolled in first cycle (BA)
- 0.95 % GDP on tertiary education (median)



Degree Systems

- Rapid and convergent reforms (esp 2000 – 2010)
 - 3 aspects relate to « *key commitment* »:
 - 1) NQF: clear 3 cycle degree structure (20 countries with further development work to do)
 - 2) ECTS: 17 countries face implementation issues
 - 3) DS: generally in place, although in 12 countries not always issued free of charge.
- Overall degree structure reforms are a success story, but....

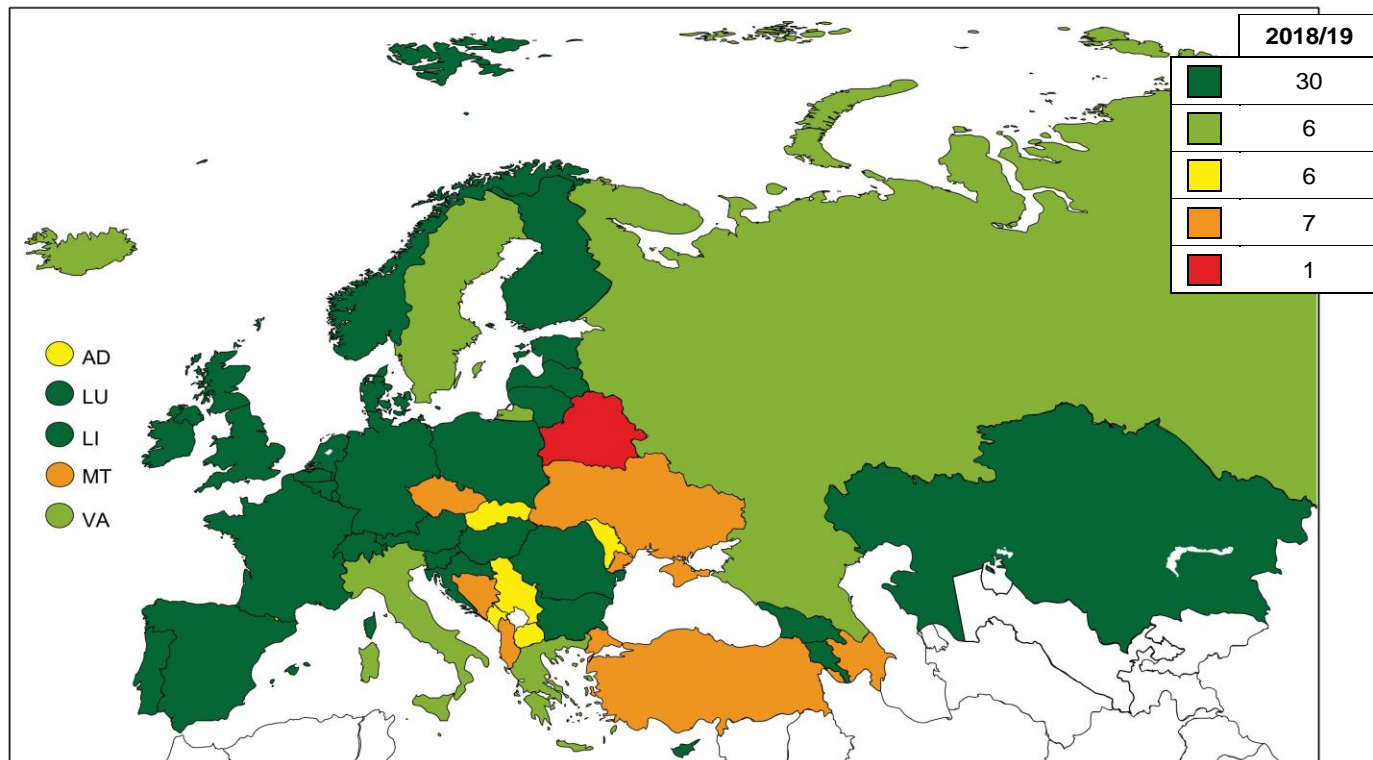
Noteworthy outcomes

- In some countries typical study paths have become longer: 4 yr cycle became 3 + 2 with second cycle as the main exit point to labour market (in about half of EHEA)
- Why? No EHEA vision of proportion of students that “should” enter labour market after first cycle; lack of involvement of employers; failure to reform public sector recruitment; funding of HEIs -> strive to encourage students into second cycle...

Quality Assurance

- Major changes over the 2 decades
- Almost all countries now have internal and external quality assurance systems in place on a system-wide scale
- ESG 2015 has consolidated the EHEA model and provided conditions for trust between systems

Stage of development of external QA systems



Dark Green = EQAR registered agency

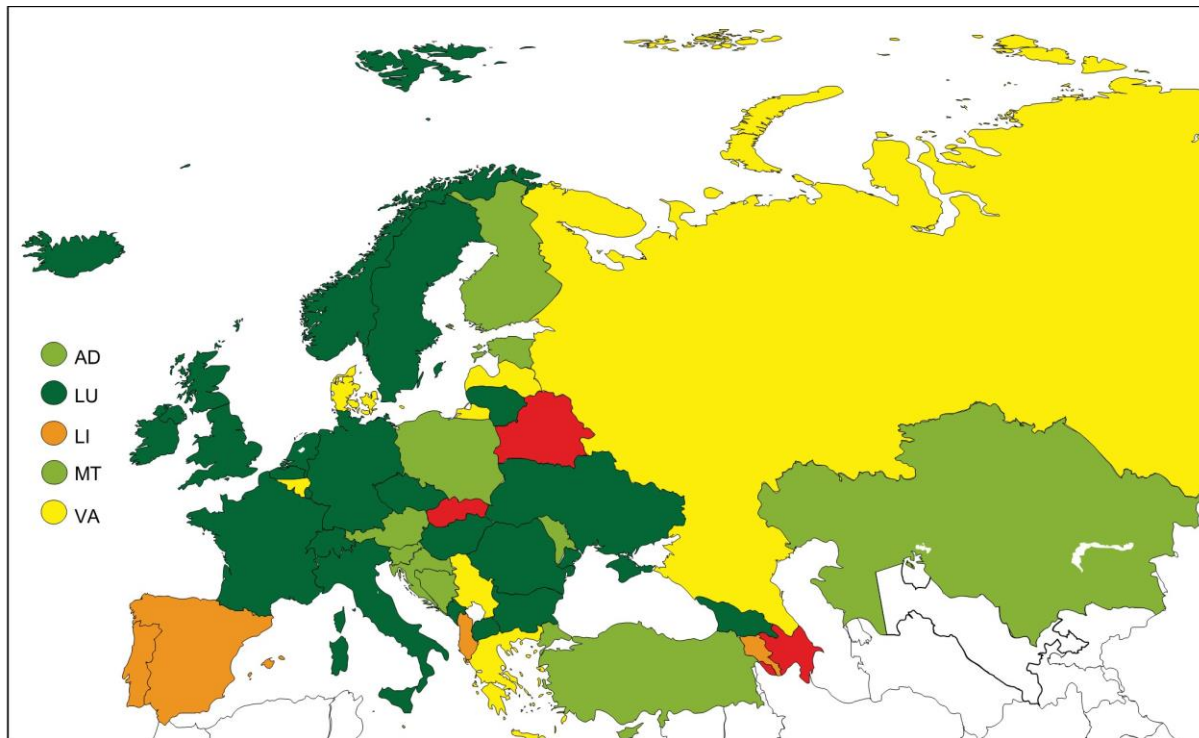
Light Green = ESG-aligned but not EQAR

Orange: QA system not yet aligned to ES

Red: QA system not established

• Yellow = EQAR agencies in some cases

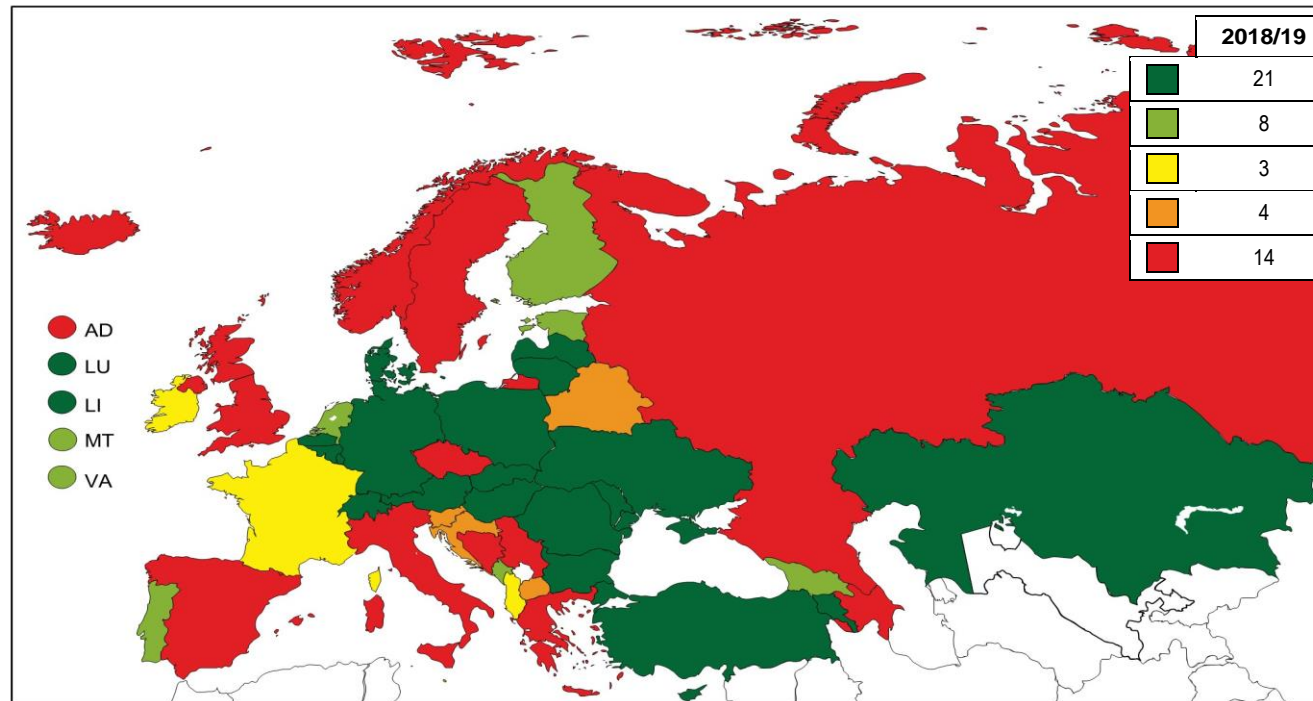
Level of student participation in external QA



Dark Green = Students full members/fully involved: in: Governance structures; external review teams; preparation of self-evaluation reports; decision making

- process for external reviews;
- Follow-up procedures

Level of openness to cross border QA of EQAR registered agencies



Dark Green = All institutions and programmes + EQAR criterion;
red = No openness

Noteworthy outcomes

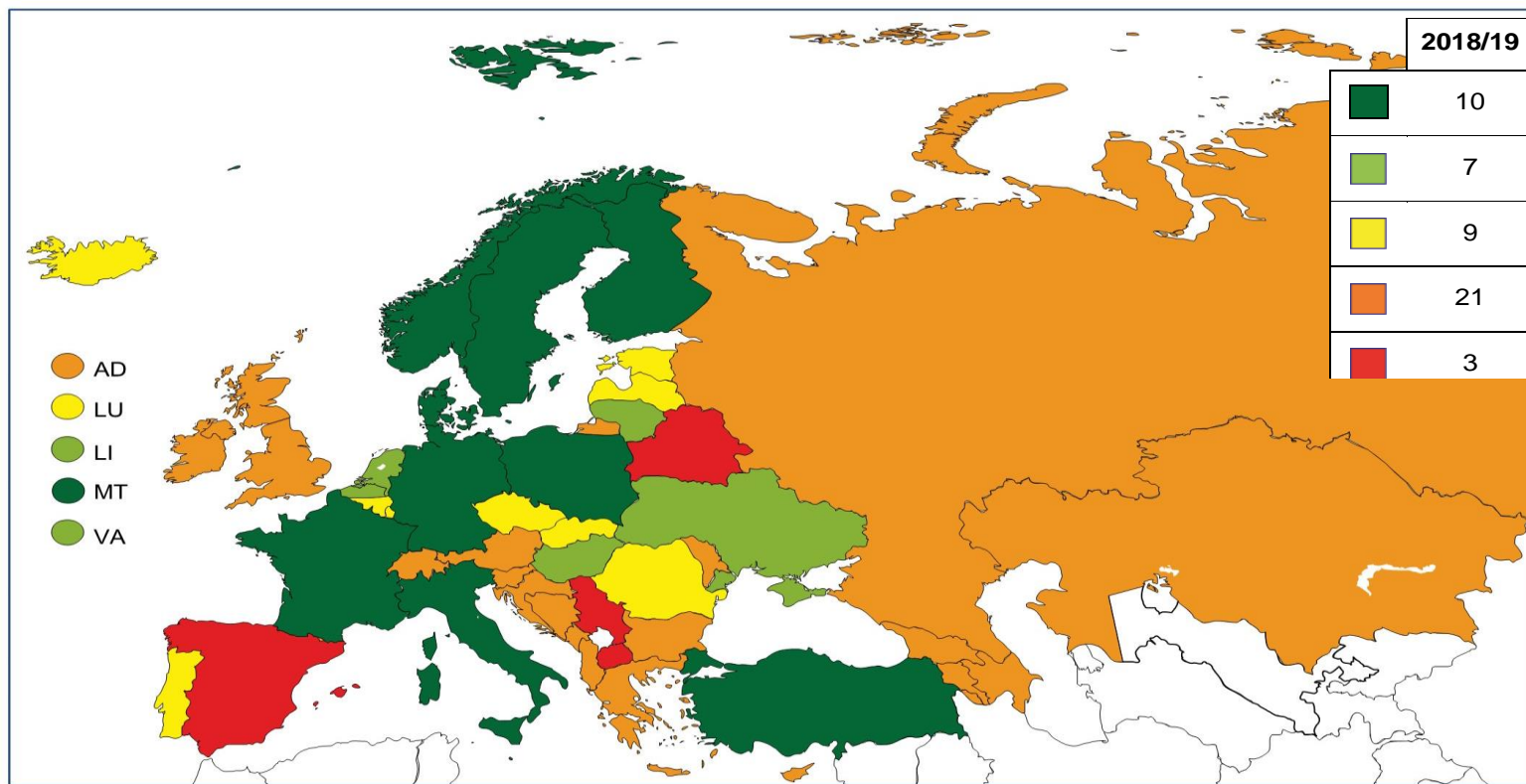
- **European cooperation in a domain of national responsibility has been remarkably strong...**
- **ESG have been very successful – clear reference**
- **Stakeholders (ENQA, EUA, EURASHE, ESU) have taken ownership at EHEA level**
- **But it seems that QA may not be enough to create trust between systems**

Recognition

- **Main principles of LRC in legislation in most systems**
- **Gaps - particularly with regard to article VII (recognition of refugee qualifications)**
- **Automatic recognition at system level seemingly improving – but still conceptual challenges**

Can recognition be automatic if higher education institutions have legal competence for recognition decisions?

System level « automatic » recognition



For all EHEA countries



No automatic recognition

Noteworthy outcomes

- LRC has proved to be an excellent basis for recognition
- Failure to implement LRC properly - in HEIs - has led to a more ambitious (but arguably less clear) concept of Automatic Recognition
- Recognition of prior non formal and informal learning has been slow to gain ground
- Recognition of microcredentials will pose new challenges..

Internationalisation

- Internationalisation and mobility have often been mixed
- 20% by 2020 target not met, (and we're not even close)
- But it's more complex
- At Master and doctoral level, levels are close to 20%.
- Increasing numbers of students make % improvements difficult to attain

Noteworthy outcomes

- **Significant mobility between cycles has not materialised**
- **International joint programmes/degrees: a hallmark of European higher education...**
- **But still very few European students experience this form of programme**
- **Potential for change with European Universities Initiative**

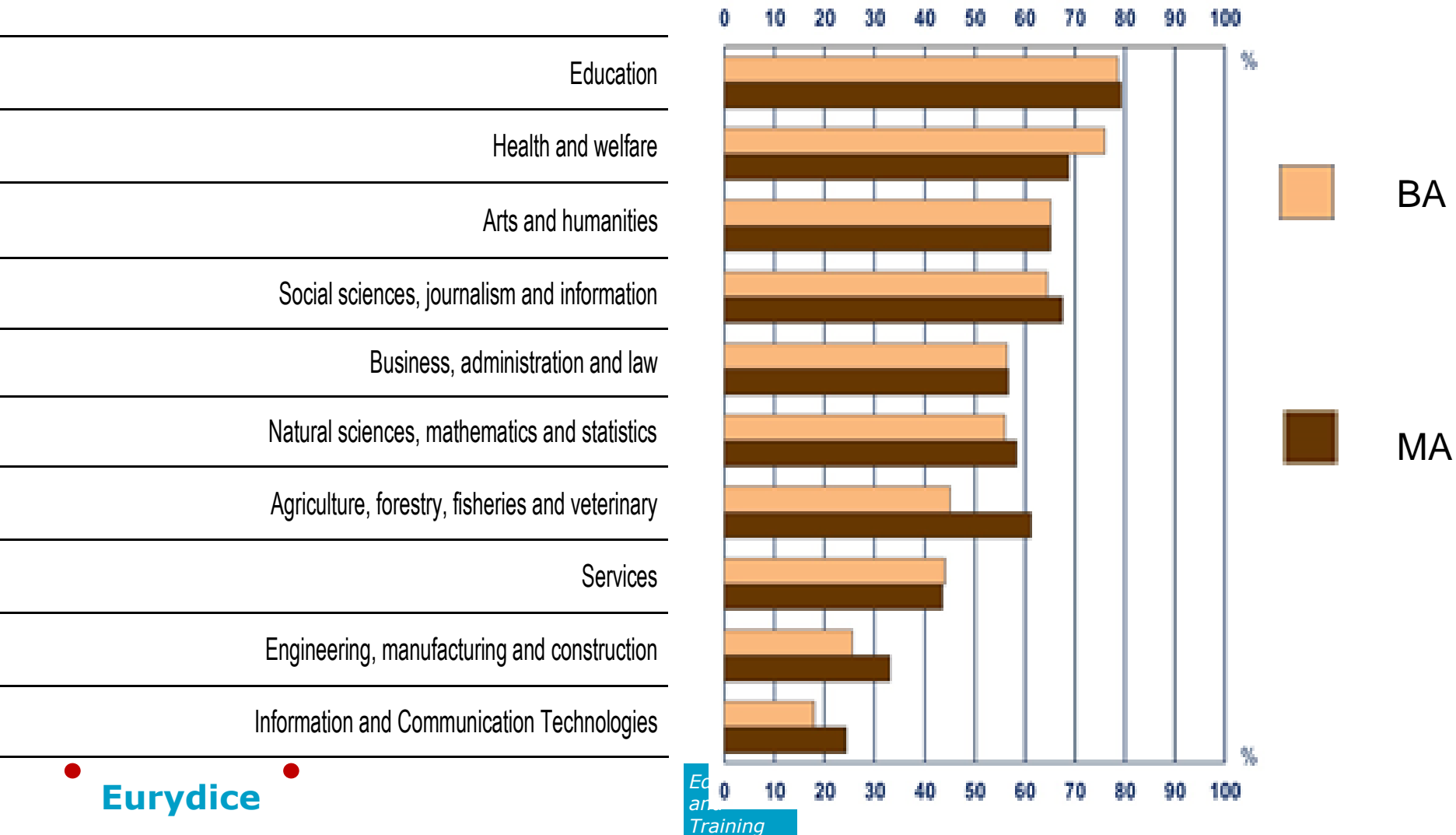
Social Dimension

- **Bologna has produced positive rhetoric on social dimension... But reality has been slow to follow**
- **2009 all countries committed to producing social dimension strategies.**
- **Very few have done it (although Austria is a positive exception)**

Social Dimension

- High parental level of education continues to be a strong predictor of higher education participation
- Foreign-born students have lower participation rates compared to native-born counterparts in more than two-thirds of countries.
- And while women are the dominant gender in terms of participation, gender differentiation by subject area is significant

Percentage of women in BA/MA by discipline



Noteworthy outcomes

- **Political will has been inadequate, & SD has always been a secondary consideration**
- **Issues are complex...**
- **Adoption at Rome Ministerial Conference of Principles and Guidelines for the Social Dimension may give new energy to tackle this agenda**

Final thoughts on the future

- How to handle issues of values? This is creating divisions (recently over Belarus)
- Tendency for EU centrism – but helped by peer learning (as non EU EHEA countries have innovative ideas/approaches)
- Main question is not, « will Bologna/EHEA continue, but what will it do? »

Thank you! Questions?

Bologna Process Implementation Report 2020 on Eurydice website

- https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/european-higher-education-area-2020-bologna-process-implementation-report_en