

# The Bologna Declaration and Its Implementation in Russian Higher Education

## Case Study Kazan State University



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## Table of contents

1.	Introduction .....	3
1.1	The problem definition .....	4
1.2	Research questions .....	5
1.3	Methodology .....	6
2.	Theoretical view of the Bologna Declaration and its implementation.....	9
2.1	New institutionalism .....	9
2.1.1	The rational economic perspective.....	10
2.1.2	The sociological perspective .....	10
2.1.3	The historical perspective.....	11
2.2	Multilevel governance.....	12
2.3	The implementation theory .....	12
2.4	Conclusion.....	15
3.	The Bologna Declaration and its follow-ups.....	18
3.1	The Bologna Declaration .....	18
3.1.1	Objectives and instruments of the Bologna Declaration.....	19
3.2	Follow-up conferences .....	20
3.2.1	Follow-up Prague in 2001 .....	21
3.2.2	Follow-up Berlin in 2003 .....	22
3.2.3	Follow-up Bergen in 2005.....	23
3.3	Implementation of the Bologna Declaration in some member states.....	24
3.3.1	The Netherlands and Flanders.....	24
3.3.2	The Bologna process in The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland .....	27
3.4	Summary .....	29
4.	The Russian Federation and the Bologna Declaration .....	31
4.1	Higher education in Russia .....	31
4.2	Russia and Bologna in 2004.....	33
4.3	Russia and Bologna at present .....	34
4.4	The Bologna process according to the Federal Agency of Higher Education .....	37
4.4.1	Reasons, ambitions and consequences .....	37
4.4.2	The objectives and financing of the Bologna process.....	38
4.4.3	The future for the Bologna process in Russian higher education .....	38
4.5	Theoretical Analysis.....	39
4.6	Conclusion.....	41
5.	The Bologna Process at Kazan State University .....	43
5.1	The central institutional administration level.....	43
5.2	The deans level.....	47
5.3	The teaching staff level .....	52
5.4	The students.....	56
5.5	Overall conclusions from the interviews and theory implication .....	59
6.	Conclusion & recommendations .....	62
6.1	Understanding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration theoretically .....	62
6.2	Implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Western-Europe and CEE countries 63	
6.3	The developments regarding the Bologna process in Russia.....	64
6.4	The implementation of the Bologna process and attitude towards it in Russia .....	65
6.5	The implementation of the Bologna process and the attitude towards it at Kazan State University .....	66

6.6	Lessons to be learned from the Bologna process in Russian higher education and KSU	68
6.6.1	Stages of the implementation theory and the Bologna process.....	68
6.6.2	Six conditions for successful implementing the Bologna Declaration .....	69
6.6.3	The implementation of the Bologna Declaration at 4 other Russian universities	71
6.6.4	Recommendations .....	72
6.6.5	Summary .....	73
6.7	The importance of the Bologna Process and its implementation in Russian Higher Education and individual institutions.....	74
6.8	Reflections.....	74
Literature	.....	77
Appendix A	The interviewed actors .....	80
Appendix B	TEMPUS/TACIS projects in Russia and Kazan State University .....	82
Appendix C	Interview questions for the different levels.....	83
Appendix D	Results from the discussion at Strategic Management and Quality Management Seminar 4, 02-10-2007 .....	85

## **1. Introduction**

The topic of this thesis is the Bologna process in Russia. This thesis will consist of two parts. The first part is a documentary study about the Bologna Declaration and its impact on higher education policy in Europe. The second part concentrates on the impact of the Bologna process in the Russian Federation. This country is a part of Europe and like 18 other countries that are no member states of the European Union, decided to implement to the Bologna Declaration and become part of it. The practical part comprises a case study on the implementation of the Bologna process at Kazan State University (KSU) in Kazan, one of the oldest cities in Russia. The study was performed from April 2007 till July 2007. KSU is one of the oldest universities in the country.

Students and to a lesser extent teaching staff have nowadays rather good opportunities to study or work abroad for a period varying from several months to several years. One could argue that this development is a direct consequence of the internalization or globalization of the world. The European Union made it possible for European citizens to seek interesting places to study or work more easily than before. Speaking from my own experience, this is not fully true, as still much paper work must be done before going abroad to study.

The European Union has many fields of interest, it develops policies for many issues, which means that the member states gave a part of the autonomy in these areas to one of the institutions of the European Union, most likely the European Council of Ministers and in some cases the European Commission (Moravcsik, 2002, p. 604-605). Unlike many other policy fields, higher education largely remained a country specific policy area. This has probably led to each country maintaining its own peculiarities in higher education.

But European ministers of education realized two things; first that higher education in Europe was falling behind the USA, whereas “a Europe of Knowledge is an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship.” And second they realized that they had to promote mobility within the Europe by the removal of obstacles for the graduate labour market and for students during their studies (Bologna Declaration, 1999). Therefore the ministers of education from the 29 countries signing that Declaration, declared their participation in the harmonisation and compatibility of parts of higher education in Europe.

The Bologna Declaration is not a policy initiative of the European Union. Later on, it will become clear that more countries than the 27 member states of the European Union participated in the Bologna Declaration and its follow up conferences.

From a personal perspective, the topic, the Bologna process in Russia, was chosen on the basis of a seminar in St. Petersburg, where I was introduced to the main project of quality management in Russian higher education. My interest to choose the Russian Federation for the thesis goes back to previous times I spent in Russia, including the Minor internship which took place also in Russia, since then I am intrigued by the cultural differences between Russia and the Netherlands.

## **1.1 The problem definition**

The Bologna Process (1999) has started rapid changes in many European countries in the last eight years. The desired outcome of the Process is to achieve a single European Higher Education Area (EHEA) which enables increasing mobility of students and graduates by way of reaching more compatible degrees. Some of the main instruments are co-operation in quality assurance in the 45 Bologna Process countries, culminating in ENQA guidelines (the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) *European Standards and Guidelines* of 2005 (ESG), and developing comparable curriculum units through a unified credit system (ECTS). In the line of this process, further elements were added to the Bologna agenda. Originally there was the two-cycle system, Bachelor/Master. This was extended with the PhD as the third cycle, during the Berlin Follow-Up conference in 2003. Furthermore the social dimension of higher education was added during the Bergen Follow-Up Conference of 2005. Countries involved all have their own and sometimes different reasons for implementing the Bologna Process.

Russia identified the importance to join the Bologna process both at Federal and institutional level. It is interesting to find out what the main motivations are for the Russian Federation and individual Russian Universities to get involved in the Bologna Process, what they expect to gain from the Bologna process and how this is going to be operationalized. How does this work in the sense of co-operation between the federal government and the universities on this issue? Since the federal government is responsible, amongst other things, for providing a legal framework and funding of the universities, it is to be questioned to what extent the universities comply with a process like the Bologna process? Because Russian universities tend to be independent, slow in transition and do not receive that much funding in absolute terms from the Federal government anyway.

This study should provide a basic framework about the Bologna process and its subsequent Declarations and how these are perceived in the Russian debate. In this thesis we define the Bologna process as the implementation of the Bologna Declaration and the following declarations with their main elements:

- The Bologna Declaration:
  - The elements of the Bologna Declaration:
    - o Degree structures (Bachelor, Master)
    - o Curriculum restructuring:
      - make flexible curricula (in accreditation) with the use of ECTS
      - modernize the content of curricula
    - o Provide degrees that are relevant for the labour market
    - o International student mobility
    - o Graduate employment on international labour markets
    - o European dimension in quality assurance
- The Prague Convention: general acceptance of Bologna objectives
- The Berlin Convention: PhD added to the Bologna Process
- The Bergen Convention: social dimension of accessibility to higher education

This basic framework is a part of the first theoretical part of the thesis. It forms the basis for studying the impact of the Bologna process in a non European Union country: Russia and the case study at Kazan State University. The second and more empirical part focuses on Russian higher education and the consequences of the Bologna process in Russia and in particular at Kazan State University.

## **1.2 Research questions**

From the aforementioned problem statement we can deduct the central research question of this study, which is the following:

*Why is the Bologna Process important in Russian Higher Education and individual institutions and how is it implemented?*

This central research question can be further specified in the elements that are considered important in the Bologna process and how it is perceived in the Russian Federation and Kazan State University. It is regarded that the Bologna Declaration, theory on implementation of policies and empirical research, can shed light on this question. Therefore the following specific research questions have been formulated:

1. *How can the implementation of the Bologna Declaration be understood theoretically?*
2. *How is the Bologna Declaration implemented in Western-Europe and CEE countries?*
3. *What are the developments regarding the Bologna process in Russia?*
4. *How is the Bologna process implemented and viewed in Russia?*
5. *How is the Bologna process implemented and viewed in Kazan State University?*
6. *What lessons can be learned from the Bologna process in Russian higher education and KSU?*

Obviously, the ultimate goal is to find the answers to these questions during different stages of gathering information which are the theoretical framework, the document study, the empirical research and the analysis of the empirical data.

### **1.3 Methodology**

In this section we set out the methodology that is necessary to connect the theoretical part to the research questions that will be discussed. The central focus is the perception and implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia in general and in one higher education institution, Kazan State University, in particular.

The first part mainly consists of desk research in which the most suitable theory is sought and selected as well as the principal document analysis regarding the main research questions is presented. From a theoretical perspective we will focus on the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia and KSU. We will explore the relevance and explanatory power of the theories that focus on new institutionalism, multilevel governance and the implementation theory. The literature study on the Bologna Declaration and the different follow-ups exclude the follow-up in London (May 2007) because the field research took place before and during this follow-up.

The second part, the field study, particularly consists of document analysis regarding the Bologna process in Russia and interviews with different actors. Different stakeholders were interviewed. For example from the federal level I interviewed a representative of the Federal Agency of Higher Education. At the institutional level many interviews with various stakeholders within KSU were held, which gave a rich and wide-spread view on how the Bologna process is seen within this university. The main stakeholders within KSU were administrators, deans, professors and students.

By interviewing those different stakeholders, one can find out how actors at different levels look at the Bologna Declaration. From each of these levels, at least one person could be

interviewed. In total I have got independent perspectives from over 20 respondents. Whether the results from the interviews are representative for the whole higher education system remains to be seen. Though, it gives a rich and well elaborated case study for a typical Russian state university.

External validity is important because the study concerns generalising from a phenomenon studied in one case (KSU) to a broad perspective comprising all universities in Russia, where the question is whether the findings in KSU could be representative for similar universities or all universities. This is difficult to say, because environmental settings, organizational structure and of course the selection of other units (interviewed actors) within KSU could lead to other results, which could result in other conclusions (Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002, p. 87). Kazan State University is a classical university which means there are many faculties and that the university has a largely autonomous position. The number of respondents in the university is very large because there are many faculties and therefore was important to select representative respondents to have a representative sample of respondents. It is about getting representative respondents, meaning that traditional and new faculties should be included in the research (Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002, p. 55-56).

A note to the selection methods of the respondents is that half of the respondents were advised to be interviewed by persons within KSU. In particular Mr. S.A. Yerofeyev was a key person who enabled me to have easier access to other actors, which were interviewed later, although still some of them were a bit reluctant or even refused. Only once an interesting respondent refused to be interviewed. In other words this is the 'snowball method', where the first respondent suggests other interesting actors, and those actors in their turn can suggest again other actors. The snowball sampling method was used in this research because Mr. S.A. Yerofeyev knows many deans from different faculties, and therefore could provide me with respondents for the interviews. Without his help, it would be much more difficult to locate and contact those persons (Babbie, 2004, p. 184). And after contacting, it was much easier that someone (S.A. Yerofeyev) from the International Office persuaded them, instead of me. Which creates the image of a snowball getting bigger and bigger in a period of time. This is a method of nonprobability sampling. It is a method in which the units or actors are selected in a way where probability theories are not the solution to select units (Babbie, 2004, p. 182).

The other half of the interviewees were my own choice, selected in a purposive or judgmental sampling (Babbie, 2004, p. 183). This means that the actors were selected based on my judgment about their value to the research. The criterion was to have a wide range of faculties in the research, which was the reason why I selected traditional faculties, such as



Physics and Mathematics, and social science faculties to have a balance between those two criteria in the overall group of respondents. This method has problems with questionable representativeness, because it would be impossible to enumerate all possible respondents who might be proponents or opponents. The persons that were advised to talk to, are both opponents and proponents of the Bologna Declaration. Therefore to some extent excluding selection problems with only positive or negative cases.

Another issue, the language barrier during talking with of respondents, was minimized because respondents that did not speak English were interpreted by the official interpreter of KSU.

This is how the actors for the interviews were selected for the interviews at the different levels within Kazan State University, including the students from different faculties. The interviews will be analyzed in the fourth chapter (federal level) and the fifth chapter which is focused on KSU. Groups of questions will be analyzed for the different levels, thus first there is the stratification to the federal level, central institutional administration level, faculty level, teaching staff level and student level.

Now it is time to move on to the theoretical part of this study consisting of the theoretical perspectives, the Bologna Declaration and follow-ups. Followed by the second part; the Russian education structure and the actual research at KSU.

## **2. Theoretical view of the Bologna Declaration and its implementation**

In this chapter we explore how the implementation of the Bologna Declaration can be understood theoretically. Three theories regarding policy analysis are discussed and evaluated on the basis of their relevance and explanatory power for the focus of this study: the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russian higher education. These are the new institutionalism theory, multilevel governance theory and the implementation theory.

### **2.1 New institutionalism**

The first approach in this chapter is new institutionalism. When we talk about the Bologna Declaration and new institutionalism (Witte, 2006, p. 33), the relation between institutions and individuals is of key importance. An institution can be seen as relatively stable collection of practices and rules which define the behaviour for specific groups in certain situations (March & Olsen, 1998, p. 948). One can argue that countries, EU institutions, national authorities such as the Ministry of Education and higher education systems are all institutions according to this definition. All four of them provide general rules and procedures which define the expected behaviour from its subjects. For example rules and procedures in higher education systems which deal with admission procedures, degree recognition and mobility. Although the theory has a broad perspective of the definition of an institution, it is not only similar to a type of government or organization, but also similar to a set of rules and norms that influence the behaviour of actors in a certain area of life (e.g. marriage, education).

Individuals are the individual higher education institutions and the individual administrators within the higher education institutions. The main question about new institutionalism seems to be how institutions influence the behaviour of individuals. The theory has three perspectives to answer that question. There is a rational economic perspective, a sociological and historical perspective. An institution therefore could be very different from the sets of rules and norms that stand for an organization (March & Olsen, 1998, p. 948). The three perspectives each have different definitions of institutions, which is one of the main sources for criticism for the theory of new institutionalism (Witte, 2006, p. 33). All three perspectives will now be shortly introduced.

### **2.1.1 The rational economic perspective**

First, the economic or rational choice perspective on institutionalism is basically about making decisions based on rational choice or economic models. For example the basic idea of cost benefit model where one makes a rational decision based on the economic reasoning. In such model the benefit(s) are supposed to outweigh the costs. This economic model contains the assumption of actors maximising their self interest (Simon, 1959, p. 256). Economic scholars attempted to make economic models more realistic by adding aspects like information asymmetry, transaction costs and principal-agent difficulties (Williamson, 1979, p. 250, Coase, 1960, p. 15). Though a concept like ‘bounded rationality’ contests the idea of making economic models more realistic by adding transactions and information asymmetry. Simon contests the concept of rational decision-making by human beings, because they are bounded in their capability of processing all available information or uncertainty (Simon, 1959, p. 256).

The aspects of economic self interest could be identified as results from institutions in the economic environment which bind the actors to rules, law and contracts. This indicates a clear distinction between the institutions and the actors, in other words the rules and players that should interact according to these rules. For example political institutions provide the rules to shape the behaviour of the actors in maximising their self interest. One can use this assumption for political decisions, since the economic institutionalism calls for a comparison between the two. Political outcomes are the result of actors playing the game which is confined by rules and laws, the institutional settings influence the results of the political outcomes or decisions (Witte, 2006, p. 34). In this view the implementation of the Bologna Declaration can be seen as a predominantly economic process that focuses on the costs and benefits of each step of the Bologna process. Each of the Bologna objectives would be deliberated during the implementation, and this would result in an interpretation of the implementation based on a positive cost benefit analysis. A negative cost benefit analysis basically results in considering not to implement this certain objective.

### **2.1.2 The sociological perspective**

The second perspective is the sociological institutionalism, which is about using the organizational part of sociology to politics and the political field (March & Olsen, 1984, p. 738). It is about institutions which are not understood in terms of including only formal rules and procedures, but also symbols, rituals and beliefs (Powell & DiMaggio, 1996, p. 909),

moral assumptions that together provide frames of meaning for guidance of human actions (Witte, 2006, p. 34). Sociological institutionalism makes a distinction between institutions and cultures. The relation between institutions and individuals is about social structures affecting the preferences and identities of individuals together with the influence on the calculations of individuals (March & Olsen, 1984, p. 739). In this view the implementation of the Bologna Declaration can be seen as a sociological organizational process, where not only the different institutions guide the implementation, but where the success of the implementation also depends on the socialization, morality and legitimacy in the behaviour of actors in terms of support for the Bologna process, its legitimacy, culture and custom (Powell & DiMaggio, 1996, p. 915)

### **2.1.3 The historical perspective**

The third perspective is the historical institutionalism. This stream can be positioned in the middle, between the rational economic perspective and the sociological perspective. It integrates both other perspectives of the new institutionalism. Basically historical institutionalism sees institutions as more than just an arena for strategic interactions, because also the influence of institutions on the interests and ideas of the actors plays a role. Historical institutionalism is about explaining different national policies to similar political challenges and how those policies might evolve during a period of time in one of more countries. In case of the Bologna Declaration, this could be useful especially if a comparison would be made between different countries about the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. Political institutions in different countries each have a different perspective or different interests which results in non similar policies regarding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. The political and economic traditions have a role in this process as well and contribute to the differences (Witte, 2006, p. 36). But if we only focus on the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia, the historical perspective of new institutionalism may not be the most appropriate framework to use because the main focus is not comparing different countries or analyzing the evolution in one country over time where the Bologna process that started in 1999, is not long enough to make such an analysis, certainly not in Russia as they only started in 2003.

## **2.2 Multilevel governance**

The second potential theory to use is multilevel governance. It can be defined as negotiated, non hierarchical interactions between institutions at international, trans-national, national, regional and local level. If one looks at the European Union for example, there are multiple levels of governance involved in governance issues. Next to various levels within the EU bureaucracy one can think of national authorities but also regional and local authorities as well as branch organizations and individuals. The regional level and the local level are becoming involved in governance. Even other systems of society would be a part of multilevel governance (Witte, 2006, p. 26).

An issue worth considering is that the institutional levels do not necessarily interact in a sequential way, but for example the international level can interact with the local level, in which the national and regional levels would be bypassed (Peters & Pierre, 2001, p. 132). This definition of multilevel governance could apply to the Bologna process. The entire process consists of actors from international level, national level, regional level and local level. The individual higher education institutions or their representative bodies can be seen as a separate level in this multilevel governance model. Since the Bologna Declaration itself is not legally binding, the national level would seem the level with the most difficult task, because on the one hand it committed to the Bologna process and on the other hand they deal with one another and the European Union organizations and they have to persuade and push the higher education institutions to participate in the Bologna process and make it all happen. Changes which are likely to be made at the national level could easily be slowed down or blocked by individual higher education institutions. As mentioned before, universities and professional higher education institutions are not the type of institutions that change rapidly. It would be even more appropriate to say that higher education institutions tend to decide for themselves what is good for them, partly because of a lack of a true hierarchy and their autonomous position (Witte, 2006, p. 28-29). Analyzing the Bologna process in this perspective would mean that one looks how the different levels cope with the Bologna Declaration and influence each other during the implementation at the different levels and how those different levels interact with each other during the implementation process.

## **2.3 The implementation theory**

The implementation theory focuses on only one part of policy processes. It addresses the stages of a policy process, which begins with problem formulation, designing solutions,

implement and evaluate the policy. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983, p. 35-39), are the founding fathers of the classical approach of implementation analysis. The theory can and will be used in this thesis to predict whether parts of the implementation of certain policy will succeed or fail (Witte, 2006, p. 19).

The implementation process also consists of a few stages. The first is the policy output of the deciding actors, who design policies that usually aim at solving particular problems. This is where the main problem is identified, where the agenda-setting takes place, which can be external or internal. External means that the public opinion resulted in putting the topic on the agenda, internal means the opposite (Graaf, van de, H. & Hoppe, R., 2004, p. 183). The first stage also identifies instruments are available, which statutory objectives and guidelines have to be met and where the objectives of the policy are stipulated, which apply to general and individual cases (Mazmian & Sabatier, 1983, p 36). The second stage is compliance by the target groups, where the actors may be stimulated to comply with the agreed policy. In addition to that, policy failure is a common problem. Therefore it is important that the political, social, cultural and economic circumstances of the individuals upon whom policy success depends, are motivating them to behave in policy preferred behaviour (Nagel et. al., 1990, p. 77). In other words the policy design should have a certain level of preference by the target groups to become successful. The third stage is the actual implementation by those who have to put the policies in practice. This has two aspects, first the implementation has a certain impact which is not emphasized by legal objectives and two, the long-term changes in politics and what the policy initially meant to emphasize. The actual impact of policy output may be different from what is emphasized by the policy, if the involved actors do not comply with the intended output of the policy implementation. The fourth stage is the evaluation of the implementation after it is completely implemented. During this stage, it is evaluated whether the implementation has led to the desired policy results (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983, p. 35-39). These stages are the ideal stages, in reality they might differ from this perfectly staged process.

When we link these stages to the Bologna process we can observe the following: The first stage was completed in 1999 when the ideas for the Bologna process were established in the Bologna Declaration. The second stage was reached by the voluntary acceptance and commitment of many European countries of the Bologna Declaration. The third stage is the implementation which is a current event, Russian higher education may be expected to lag behind most of Western Europe because Russia joined the Bologna process in September 2003, later than the Western (and many Central and Eastern) European countries. Therefore it

is not possible to say anything about the fourth stage, perhaps in 2010 when the Bologna process should be complete, one could evaluate the completed implementation in the countries that started later than 1999, like Russia.

The Bologna Declaration is in itself indeed policy to be implemented, the implementation analysis can be useful because it can provide insight in the peculiarities of the Bologna Declaration. However there are some weaknesses of the implementation theory that need to be considered. There is for example no causal model, the implementation theory does not have a causal explanation of implementation processes. It is Sabatier (Sabatier, 1991, p. 147-148) again who tries to solve this by identifying factors for success or failure of implementation. The factors include consistency of objectives, usage of the correct tools, financial means for implementation, commitment and interest, legislative support for the implementation and certain social or economic changes after the implementation (Witte, 2006, p. 19-20). I think this list of factors is useful for analyzing the implementation of the Bologna process as well.

Another weakness is a possible inadequacy of the top-down perspective. The policy intended to be implemented could result in very different outcomes than expected. Also the top policy makers might expect other implementation results than what is achieved in practice. In relation to top-down issues, the goals of the analysis can be ambiguous. Complicated policy implementation like the Bologna Declaration has to deal with multiple actors, which all have different ideas about implementation. This is interesting if the multilevel governance theory will be chosen, but that will be decided at the end of this chapter. For example it would be interesting to see how multilevel governance can be identified within the Bologna process. To what extent are there negotiated, non hierarchical interactions between institutions at international, trans-national, national, regional and local level in Russia? The different levels and stakeholders might devolve to each other, which could be the case within the university or even within a faculty. At the end of this chapter we will see if this a realistic question to be answered.

This may lead to the next weakness of the implementation theory, namely the blurring of phases. Blurring of phases is a common issue in the implementation process. In many implementation processes the phases are not proceeding in an orderly fashion, they are not sequentially executed, instead during the whole implementation process it is not identifiable to say which phase is currently executed because they can go back in the process, or add new things later on, which all make the implementation process more blurred. The interpretation of the Bologna Declaration is slightly different in each country, and the time planning is

different in certain countries depending on the date they joined. This means that if one looks at the Bologna process in general, the countries are in different stages on the implementation, which might look like a disordered way of implementation the Bologna Declaration (Witte, 2006, p. 21). But also within countries the higher institutions differ and within those higher education institutions faculties may differ. The Bologna Declaration would be a good case to test this theory because it involves many different stages and stakeholders, with much of room for divergent national interpretations and policies which could ultimately lead to chaos in the implementation.

Another perspective towards the weaknesses is written by Mazmanian and Sabatier. They argue that successfully implementing of policy, in this case the Bologna Declaration, depends on six conditions (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983, p. 41). This list is very similar to what Witte used, though this is much more detailed than mentioned on the previous page.

1. legislation or legal mandates that clarify transparency in resolving goal conflicts.
2. legislation identifies factors and linkages that gives sufficient jurisdiction
3. legislation structures the implementation process to maximize probability that actors perform as desired
4. leaders of the implementation process have substantial skills and are committed to the process
5. the process is supported by several groups and key actors
6. the objectives are not undermined by changes in socioeconomic (funds and moral aspects) conditions or conflicting public policies.

The first three conditions are most important for the Bologna Declaration from a legislative and legitimate point of view. The first three are always required (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983, p. 42), to have at least a decent framework to begin with. The last three are important from an actor support point of view. Since a framework itself is not enough for implementing policy, it needs skill, qualification and commitment from the involved actors, besides enough funds to realize the implementation.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

In answering the research question on how the implementation of the Bologna Declaration can be understood theoretically, we arrive at the following conclusions. Because this thesis is to a large extent about the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in one country, the implementation theory, and the general ideas surrounding it, are most suitable for the thesis.



The other two theories are less interesting, because they do not explain how the implementation of the Bologna Declaration can be analyzed. Compared to the other two theories, new institutionalism focuses on how the outcome of a process can be analyzed given different circumstances such as sociological-, historical- and rational economic perspectives. For this thesis it is less relevant and very complicated to look how these three perspectives influence the Bologna process. Multilevel governance looks at relations between different governance levels and the consequences from that. It is necessary to make the distinction between the different levels in the Bologna process as the multilevel governance theory does. Especially the characteristics of the Bologna process level, country level and institution level are important in this thesis. We just mentioned the differences between the Bologna process level and the country level, but at a lower level, the relation between national level and institution level could be distinguished, too, and precisely this relation is important for this study. There is a connection between Multilevel governance and the implementation theory which is how one could look at the overall implementation of the Bologna Declaration starting from the highest level to the eventual implementation at individual higher education institution. For this thesis the Multilevel governance theory would be too large to study, because each level would require separate analysis of the implementation process and use that result for the next level. But the different levels are interesting to use for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. Or whether the implementation at the different levels would lead to the aforementioned problems such as blurring of phases, either at every level or bypassing a level. It would take too much time and one would need to be able to connect the right persons to study the Multilevel governance theory. This connection does sound interesting to study, but the time for a master thesis is limited.

Therefore the purpose of the thesis is “limited” to see why and how the Bologna Declaration is implemented in Russia, therefore the implementation theory seems most appropriate. The scope of the study is the process of implementation.

The practical part can shed light on the implications of the implementation theory, whether there is a particular manner to implement the objectives of Bologna in Russia and Kazan State University. The theory will be used to find out if the steps taken in implementing the Bologna Declaration are rather similar to the implementation theory or not. The implementation theory cannot be fully tested, as on the basis of one case one can only make general statements about the validity of the implementation theory if the theory is deterministic. Determinism refers here to the fact: “everything that happens must happen as determined by the conditions of its occurrence” (Goldenweiser, 1938, p. 634). This is not the

case with the implementation theory where one can say that each stage is subject to constant possible changes during each of the four stages. The outcome of each stage might not even affect what happens in the next stage, for example if there is little to no compliance by the target groups. But we can see whether the case study runs according to what one can expect on the basis of this theory, as mentioned in the methodology in the first chapter.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of using only one case, more cases would increase the generalizing value of the results to test the implementation theory. In this case, the theory will be used as framework for the practical methods which could be used in the case.

The steps that are part of the implementation theory include the policy output of the implementing actors, who design policies that usually aim at solving particular problems. The second stage is compliance by the target groups, the third stage is the actual implementation by those who have to put the policies in practice. The actual impact of policy output may be different from what is emphasized by the policy, which can lead to validity questions and legitimacy of the policy implementation by the involved actors. The fourth stage is the evaluation of the implementation after it is completely implemented.

In the chapters 4 and 5 we will find out to what extent these (analytical) phases of the implementation theory are recognizable in the case study, especially the first three are applicable in the case study. First, in chapter 3 the Bologna Declaration will be introduced and described.

### **3. The Bologna Declaration and its follow-ups**

This chapter will give a rather short overview of the overall Bologna process and its follow-up conferences in Prague, Berlin and Bergen. Preceding the Bologna Declaration, in 1998 the Sorbonne Declaration was signed in which the ministers of education from the four countries, France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom already indicated the ideas about a universal two cycle system and a credit accumulation and transfer system (Guide to the Bologna Process, 2005, p. 6). This declaration was the beginning of what would later become the Bologna Declaration.

#### **3.1 The Bologna Declaration**

The Bologna Declaration itself is a six paged document. But there are many background documents related to the Bologna Declaration. The Bologna Declaration is a joint pledge originally made by 29 countries in Europe to reform the structures of their higher education systems to an European Higher Education Area by 2010. This quote is part of this pledge: *“A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space” (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 1).*

The declaration is a voluntary taken commitment by each country that decided to join. It is not policy from the European Union, in other words, the declaration is not imposed upon the participating governments and higher education institutions. This is an important remark because there is no pressure from an European institution and therefore, the progress in each country can be different. But also the willingness to co-operate of higher education institutions might be difficult. The declaration is not a political program, although obviously politicians are involved in the framework of the Bologna Declaration. The declaration aims at convergence, not at standardization because of differences in culture, autonomy and diversity (Van der Wende & Campbell, 2000, p. 18). This combined with the voluntary commitment leads to a very general goal: the creation of an European higher education area that will enhance the employability and mobility of European citizens and to increase the international position of European higher education (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 3).

### 3.1.1 Objectives and instruments of the Bologna Declaration

The original declaration had five objectives. These are the following:

- To come to comparable degrees, in a two-cycle system consisting of undergraduate and graduate level.
- The creation of a system of credits that can be easily transferred; ECTS.
- The removal of obstacles that prevent mobility of students and teaching staff.
- European co-operation in quality assurance.
- Promoting the necessary other dimensions in European higher education.

Comparable degrees can be described as degrees which are understandable and comparable because of diploma supplements to enhance more transparency of the diplomas. The two-cycle system is the Bachelor/Master structure, where the Bachelor requires at least three years and also gives access to the labour market. This last point requires some understanding by the labour market in most countries, because this is a change compared to the previous situation without Bachelor/Master structure. Even though some countries started with the Bachelor/Master structure before the Bologna Declaration (Van der Wende & Campbell, 2000, p. 20). Completing the first cycle gives access to the second cycle. Depending on the field of study this is possible without much adjustments.

The system of credits is called European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which represents the study activities of students and should enable the transfer and recognition of credits and degrees in order to stimulate mobility.

The objective of setting up a stronger coordination of quality assurance in Europe is to evaluate the existing systems and develop comparable criteria, which are very similar to the objective of comparable degrees.

The other dimensions consist of curriculum adjustments, mobility schemes to enhance mobility, training, inter institutional co-operation programs. All of these dimensions are related to co-operation among higher education institutions from the participating countries (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 3-4).

The following quote resembles the position of the 29 Ministers of Education who adhered to the Bologna Declaration.

*“We hereby undertake to attain these objectives - within the framework of our institutional competences and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy – to consolidate the European area of higher education”* (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 4). The declaration’s objectives implicitly aim at more

competitiveness among European higher education institutions and to make European higher education more attractive to students from all over the world. This means that the higher education institutions are to compete with each other for those students from around the globe, more funding and a better image.

Summarizing, the Bologna Declaration works in two ways, one to make Europe a centre for education, and two, to enhance more competition among higher education institutions, through quality measures, comparable degrees and more diverse and modernized curricula. Russia was not among the 29 countries that signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999.

### **3.2 Follow-up conferences**

The follow-up conferences are necessary in order to keep the Bologna process going and monitoring the results achieved so far. They serve as communication media for the ongoing implementation. The Bologna Declaration is expanded with a follow-up structure to have bi-annual conferences to monitor and discuss the implementation process, including a mandate for preparing the Prague Conference in 2001. The follow up structure consists of representatives of all countries that participate, the European Commission and Association of European Universities (CRE). Also the follow-up after Bologna is on the agenda of the EU education ministers. But the EU does not have any binding authority over the Declaration. The beginning of implementing the Bologna Declaration means that some kind of support and supervision would be desirable. One can think of the Bologna secretariat that currently holds office in the United Kingdom.

After the Bologna Declaration was signed, studies started at the initiative of national representatives, the European Commission, higher education associations and networks. They deal with accreditation, quality assurance and credit systems as preparatory steps for the Bologna process. Many participating countries are considering reforms in legislation in their higher education systems, together with other reforms that have a convergence affect like two cycle degrees and credit systems based on ECTS. The last group that is dealing with the Bologna Declaration are individual universities, networks and associations which are discussing the implications of the declaration in their countries, field of expertise and institution (Bologna explanation, 2000, p. 6). Also the advancements in these areas are monitored by the follow-up conferences.

### **3.2.1 Follow-up Prague in 2001**

In 2001, the first follow-up conference was held in Prague. 32 countries affirmed their efforts to create an European Higher Education Area in 2010. This first follow-up was used to set directions towards that goal. The location, Prague, was a symbolic choice, which represented the effort to involve the whole of Europe, especially Eastern-Europe. In general, the objectives of the Bologna Declaration were widely accepted by the participating countries and other actors like universities. The objective of mobility among students and teaching staff became a major issue on the agenda. Further developments, such as the two-cycle system, to support the Bologna Declaration were recognized and appreciated by the Ministers of Education. For example the support of the European Commission, the European University Association and the student involvement by ESIB. The objectives of the declaration were all emphasized as important by the Ministers of Education (Prague Communiqué, p. 1). The adoption of a system of comparable degrees was encouraged by the ministers by making use of existing legislation and European co-operation in creating a system of comparable degrees. The objective of the two-cycle system had been widely discussed, and some countries were already at the point of implementation. The credit system ECTS would become an essential system to award credits, which would be transferable to the other participating countries. Mobility was regarded of utmost importance, obstacles that hinder free movement are to be removed. For example, the mobility programs of the European Community, like Erasmus Mundus and Socrates were acknowledged (Prague Communiqué, p. 2). The objective of quality assurance was recognized by the ministers of education as a vital role for ensuring the standards for comparability of degrees in Europe. Close co-operation between quality assurance networks, such as the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and universities should lead to a common framework for quality assurance and to enable countries which do not hold membership of the ENQA to establish such quality assurance framework as well (Prague Communiqué, p. 2).

Other aspects which were recognized as important are life long learning and student involvement which are part of the social dimension. All these objectives would lead to the increased attractiveness of European higher education. World wide and within Europe, students will get to know the structure of higher education in Europe, where studying in an attractive and competitive environment should lead to an increase in the quality of education, student mobility and the image of European higher education.

### **3.2.2 Follow-up Berlin in 2003**

By 2003 the number of participating countries increased to 33. The ministers reviewed the progress so far, and set priorities for the coming years, in order to speed up the realization of the European Higher Education Area. One of the new priorities was the social dimension and more social cohesion like reducing gender inequalities and integrating minorities in the European Higher Education Area.

The general point of view of the ministers is that all objectives of the Bologna Declaration are important for realizing the European Higher Education Area. Therefore there is the need to make more efforts at the different levels, like institutional and national level, to increase the attention to all goals. The ministers agree to set priorities for the next two years, including more efforts to establish better quality assurance systems based on the two-cycle system and the system credits and degrees, meaning that quality assurance should be improved compared to the previous situation, given the implementation of the two-cycle system and the credit system. The ministers state that quality assurance is a responsibility of the higher education systems themselves. Together with more accountability, the institutions have more responsibility. Therefore the higher education institutions are accountable to the national education ministry. This calls for establishing agencies for quality assurance, evaluations of degree programs, student participation in quality assurance and external reviews. This should be done by a newly implemented system of accreditation procedures (Berlin Communiqué, 2003, p. 3). The two cycle system of degrees will have started in all participating countries by 2005 according to the ministers. Mobility of students and teaching staff increased since the original declaration in 1999. Partly because of EU programs like Erasmus and Socrates. In addition the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is more and more implemented on national basis. Furthermore ministers agree that there will be scholarship programs for students from third countries together with exchanges of students in higher education. The ministers are content with the commitment shown by the higher education institutions to implement the Bologna Declaration (Berlin Communiqué, 2003, p. 6).

Countries that want to join the Bologna process have to meet certain criteria such as their voluntary dedication to implement the objectives of the Bologna Declaration in their national higher education system. During the Berlin follow-up, seven applications for membership are accepted, including the Russian Federation. The ministers agree to support the new member countries with the changes and reforms that they have to make on shorter notice than the original members. From this point, Russia is a full member.

### **3.2.3 Follow-up Bergen in 2005**

At the Bergen Conference in 2005, five former Soviet Union republics joined the other member countries, totalling 45 countries that work on the implementation of the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. The results of the previous arrangements made during the conference in Berlin state that the two cycle degree system is implemented on a largely basis in the member countries. The problems are about access and transitions between the two cycles. The ministers adopted the EHEA framework with a three-cycle degree system, adding the PhD as being the third cycle. The European Commission has a facilitating and consulting role in this process.

The quality assurance system is being implemented in almost all countries based on the criteria as mentioned in the Berlin follow-up. Although student participation is not full implemented in all countries, the ministers agree that the higher education institutions are giving the quality assurance some real effort and they urge them to continue to do so. The ministers agree and adopt the quality assurance standards which were proposed by European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). With the co-operation of quality assurance agencies in each country there is a good basis for those ENQA standards (Bergen Communiqué, 2005, p. 2).

Furthermore the ministers urge the Bologna participating nine countries that have not yet ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention about the recognition of degrees and study periods, to do this as soon as possible.

The importance attached to mobility and the social dimension as in the Berlin conference was restated again in the Bergen conference. They agree that higher education should be equally accessible to all students and to enable them to finish their studies, regardless of social and economic background. This means that governments should have the means to help students with providing funds or loans. Mobility of students and teaching staff in the participating countries will be kept a priority by providing grants and scholarships, but also by removing obstacles like visa and work permits (Bergen Communiqué, 2005, p. 4). Also simply encouraging students to participate in mobility programs is a priority because it seems not to be very popular among students to study periods abroad.

The important objectives for the next follow-up in 2007 in the United Kingdom consists of previous objectives like quality assurance (ENQA standards, [www.enqa.eu/documents.lasso](http://www.enqa.eu/documents.lasso)), three cycle system of degrees with the recognition of the third cycle, the PhD degree. A new objective is the opportunity for flexible learning routes in higher education. The ministers want to have some substantial data about mobility of students



and teaching staff and about the social and economic position of students as reference point for the future (Bergen Communiqué, 2005, p. 5). This shows the importance of those two objectives.

The follow-up in London in May 2007 is not included in this study because this conference took place at the moment this study was carried out and therefore its impact for Russia could not be measured.

### **3.3 Implementation of the Bologna Declaration in some member states**

In this section we answer the research question about how the Bologna Declaration is implemented in Western-Europe and Central Eastern European (CEE) countries. In answering that question we will give an overview of different studies done by scholars on the practical implementation of the Bologna Declaration. The first part is about the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in the Netherlands and Flanders. The study attempts to give some more detailed information about implementing the declaration.

The reason for choosing these particular countries, is that the practical part will be in a former CEE country, and the Netherlands and Flanders because they are regarded as countries that have fast implementation records, which could provide some lessons for the implementation in Russia, as Russia joined the Bologna process in a later stage and now has to implement on a fast track.

The second part is about the Bologna process in three Central Eastern European countries (The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) before and after the Bologna Declaration. I choose for those specific countries because they have had a similar education system as Russia, back in the Soviet era. It will be interesting to see whether those former Soviet countries have certain obstacles with the Bologna process, which could be also an obstacle in Russia nowadays, as they implement Bologna at present time.

#### **3.3.1 The Netherlands and Flanders**

The conducted study about the Netherlands and Flanders begins with an interesting phrase: *“The Bologna Declaration must be seen as a political response to the appeal ....”* (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 299). It must be seen as a response to what was discussed one year earlier in the Sorbonne Declaration. Although it was a political response indeed, one can wonder why there was suddenly such a wide consensus on a higher education issue, while at

the same time much smaller topics take much more time to be agreed upon. What was even more surprising for some people, was the quickness of reaching agreement on the Bologna Declaration. First, higher education is not known for embracing radical changes, and second, national characteristics of education are likely to become under pressure because of the objectives of the Bologna process. Both Flanders and the Netherlands can be seen as ambitious countries to implement the Bologna Declaration. Both countries are very supportive to the European Higher Education Area. In 2000 both countries decided to co-operate on the Bachelor/Master structure and in accreditation (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 300). This co-operation led to the establishment of the NVAO, the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organization.

As the Netherlands is a very open and competitive country in many aspects, the reason for implementing the Bachelor/Master system was for the same reason, not to fall behind neighbouring countries like Germany. Another reason for welcoming the two-cycle system was that the Dutch degrees were not always recognized abroad because the system was not in line with the British undergraduate and graduate system but also not with other European degree systems. Independent accreditation became more important since the European Council argued for such a system (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 300). The Bachelor degree from an university was adjusted to be a complete degree and give the undergraduate the possibility to enter the labour market. The transition from Bachelor to attending a Master should be the responsibility of each university. Which is similar to the situation in some CEE countries. Another change as a result of the Bologna process was that the accreditation led to an increase in the quality of education and it did not matter which university was attended and where the degree was obtained, because of this increase of education. Obviously, accreditation determined the quality of teaching, and whether the higher education institution would be authorized to award degrees.

Flanders issues the diploma supplement since 1999. Already in July 1999 the Flemish government implemented parts of the Bologna Declaration. Important objectives were mobility and quality assurance to maximise the internationalization of Flemish higher education. In Flanders, the organizations of universities, vocational education and student organizations were included in implementing “Bologna”. Compared to the Netherlands, the decision-making process is more informal (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 303).

Accreditation of Bachelor/Master programs was decreed in 2002, although both “countries” had a system of self-evaluation to improve the quality of higher education, prior to the Bologna Declaration (Witte, 2004, p. 407). Self-evaluation was recognized abroad, but

independent accreditation became important because self-evaluation had the image of self-assessment, without total independence of the visitation commissions, that would be a weakness of the higher education system. Another reason for independent accreditation is the internationalization of higher education in Europe. Both Flanders and the Netherlands consider internalization as important, they benefit more from independent accreditation with the thought of recognition of their degrees. The last reason for implementing independent accreditation is the disadvantage of the visitation system, where the subjects to the visitation had too much inside information how to “pass” these visitations (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 307).

The mobility objective in both countries is expected to increase as a result of the two-cycle system, and probably even more so when the PhD phase resulted in a the three-cycle system. The ECTS system and the diploma supplement are expected to contribute to increasing mobility and flexibility of students. The diploma supplement was established by law in the Netherlands in 2005, considerably later then the Flemish legislation.

The Netherlands was faced with a discussion about the use of titles, Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. The law limits the use of these titles, which puts vocational education in an unfavourable position compared to universities abroad, at least that is the point of view shared by the vocational institutions, and less by universities (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 314). The Flemish were not in this stadium in 2004.

In general, Flanders and the Netherlands are among the countries that are very ambitious about the Bologna Declaration and implementing it, for several reasons like internationalization of higher education, the recognition of higher education in other countries and increase the mobility of students. The Netherlands faced some problems regarding the position of the Bachelors on the labour market. Employers still struggle with the idea how to employ university bachelors and what tasks can and cannot be given to them. Maybe in some time they realize that Bachelors may be a bit cheaper in the first years of employment than Masters and they may be able to function almost at the same work level. Other problems are the length of the BA/MA and the correct use of titles, 4 years is considered too short, especially abroad. Regarding the correct use of titles, there is disagreement whether some study programs should be awarded with BSc or BA.

### **3.3.2 The Bologna process in The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland**

The three countries investigated in this research are the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. I think it is interesting to study those countries because they have had roughly the same education system as Russia and they adhered to the Bologna process before Russia did. These countries have an interesting history because of the Soviet Union period. There was heavy state control on education, even the political opinion of a person could influence the amount of funds received to study. Only after the collapse of the Soviet Union the higher education institutions became more autonomous in relation to the state (Rozsnyai, 2003, p. 272). Accreditation appeared as a first type of quality assurance around the end of Communism. The higher education institutions had the authority to develop their own curricula. But the governments were still able to enforce national regulations on curricula, like minimum requirements.

Most former Central Eastern European countries are not very familiar with mobility and transferability. Therefore the Bologna process has a renewing effect on higher education in The Czech Republic, where the two-cycle system was already implemented in 1990, while not yet widely used and recognized. But also in Hungary where the system is not very flexible, transferability is difficult. Institutions have to agree on the possibilities for students who would like to transfer between higher education institutions. For example, if a student earns a Bachelor's degree in university A and he/she would like to take a Master's degree at university B, this is not an easy transition. But also at the level of transferring credits between different programs and institutions, rigid program structures may prevent easy recognition of prior learning. This problem limits the mobility within the Hungarian higher education system. In Poland, the education system seems flexible, though also there the mobility concept is rather new (Rozsnyai, 2003, p. 273).

Quality assurance started with accreditation, as aforementioned, in the period when the Soviet system collapsed. One of the reasons to begin with accreditation stems from the democratization of the Central Eastern European countries. Accreditation served as a mean of making higher education more comparable to Western higher education systems. But the evaluation of the study programs also served other purposes like getting rid of the Socialist content, and to modernize the curricula, to make the study programs more flexible. This led to a huge increase of private higher education institutions in Poland, but Hungary on the contrary did develop a strong private sector. This growth of private institutions in Poland came at the same time as a growing number of students entered higher education after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Bologna Declaration called for European co-operation on quality assurance. In Western-European countries, accreditation served the main purpose of being accountable to the governments to show how the public funds were spent. Quality assurance in the Bologna process means that countries should share information to achieve comparable systems to ensure quality. Although the exact means are not mentioned in the Bologna Declaration, there is a document with a list of general objectives and instruments for quality assurance (European Quality Assurance Standards). The comparable quality of education is a goal of the EU directives about recognition of degrees, as well as the Lisbon Declaration on the recognition of degrees (Lisbon, 1997).

Most Central Eastern European countries have had different accreditation and recognition institutions like ENIC/NARIC, which were involved in quality assurance prior to 1999. The Czech Republic and Hungary have accreditation institutions since the beginning of the '90s. This is an example of the objectives of the Bologna process that has been implemented already since a couple of years. This is the system of ECTS. The diploma supplement is not yet as common as institutional arrangements for accreditation, it is new for the former CEE countries (Rozsnyai, 2003, p. 275).

Furthermore, the Bologna Declaration in the three CEE republics, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, is concentrated on the Bachelor/Master structure, to be implemented in the national higher education systems. The European Higher Education Area is a topic of discussion in those countries as they want to come to a comparable structure as in Western Europe.

The Czech Republic has dealt with the implementation of a two-cycle system since 1990. Surprisingly, transferability between higher education institutions is difficult, even within the same institution and the transition from Bachelor to Master is difficult. Back in that time, there was no common credit system, which hindered transferability between higher education institutions. In Hungary the two-cycle system is rather difficult to implement, which is why most degree programs are restructured to make the degrees and credits flexible and transferable. In Poland, the higher education institutions have a very flexible degree structure since the '90s. This enabled them to have the two-cycle system since this period of time. The only disadvantage was that the transferability of degrees depends on agreements between institutions. It is clear, that there is no nation wide system like in the Czech Republic and Hungary. The Polish have been testing the implementation of the diploma supplement and it was implemented in 2005 (Rozsnyai, 2003, p. 278).

It is clear that these countries are actively involved in the Bologna process. Although these countries already have had some kind of quality assurance in their higher education systems, they show great effort to try to comply to the more unified quality assurance specifics as is foreseen by the Bologna Declaration. The Bologna Declaration indeed influences higher education in the three countries on quality assurance, the two-cycle system, credits and the diploma supplement. However, the three-cycle system is not mentioned so far and there seem to be some major obstacles in making study programs more flexible in order to allow student mobility, credit transfer and mutual degree recognition. This already is a problem at national level which means that internationalization and international mobility are still in their start up phases (Rozsnyai, 2003, p. 276).

### **3.4 Summary**

The Bologna Declaration is a joint pledge nowadays made by 45 countries in Europe to reform the structures of their higher education systems to an European Higher Education Area by 2010. Originally 29 countries joined in 1999. This number increased over the years during the follow-up conferences in 2001, 2003 and 2005. The core objectives of the Bologna Declaration to come to transparency through a 2 cycle system, ECTS, mobility and co-operation in quality assurance. During each of those follow-up conferences the progress of the implementation is monitored and the Bologna Declaration was extended with new subjects, like adding the PhD phase to the two-cycle system, making it a three-cycling system and the social dimension.

Then we looked at the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in the Netherlands and Flanders, where the main lessons were that these countries have a fast implementation record, they are among the countries that are very ambitious about the Bologna Declaration and implementing it, for reasons like internationalization of higher education, the recognition of higher education in other countries and increase the mobility of students.

We also looked at the implementation at three former Soviet countries, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. Those countries have had similar higher education systems as Russia. Therefore it is interesting to see if they have problems with the implementation of the Bologna Declaration, which could also be a problem for Russia. Those three countries share some common problems like mobility and transferability issues and the diploma supplement is new for them as well. These countries already have had some kind of quality assurance in their higher education systems, they show great effort to try to comply to the more unified

quality assurance specifics as is foreseen by the Bologna Declaration. The Bologna Declaration indeed influenced higher education in the three countries on quality assurance, the two-cycle system, credit system and the diploma supplement. It is clear that those countries are actively implementing the Bologna Declaration, but not as fast as the Netherlands and Flanders

From this point it will be interesting to see what the Russian Federation has been doing on the implementation of Bologna since they joined in 2003. Is it possible that they will face the same obstacles as those former CEE countries? For example the mobility problem, the objective of the three cycle system in Russia, or the speed of the implementation could be similar in Russia as in the former CEE countries because of similar backgrounds in higher education systems which could lead to the same obstacles, where the mobility between different higher education institutions might lead to similar problems as in the former Central Eastern European countries. Perhaps some of the problems that arose in the Netherlands will arise in Russia too. The Bachelor's degree is new in the Netherlands and not yet valued by employees. This could be the same for Russia, but then in the other around, where the employees might assume the Bachelors compared to Specialists lack certain knowledge as the Bachelor track is one year shorter than the Specialist tracks. Or is the implementation very different in Russia, which would make the comparison rather complicated. One could think that joining the Bologna process four years later than 29 other countries would lead to difficulties meeting the 2010 deadline. In the next chapter the Russian education system and the Bologna Declaration in Russia will be properly introduced and it will show how the implementation is being executed at this moment.

## **4. The Russian Federation and the Bologna Declaration**

The purpose of this chapter is to find out why the Russian Federation decided to join the Bologna process, how they managed it at the Federal level and what they (the government and universities) expect to gain from the process. Russia joined the other countries in the Bologna process during the Berlin conference in September 2003. First the elements or objectives of the Bologna Declaration are elaborated in relation to the Russian situation from 2004 till the present with expectations for further implementation. Then these following questions remain to be answered; *What are the developments regarding Bologna in Russia? How is the Bologna process being implemented and viewed upon in Russia?*

A first hint to answer these questions is following a quote: *“We must integrate our education system into the West-European education system, not decreasing high standards of education that we had during the Soviet time and still have now in the leading higher education institutions of Russia”*(V.V. Putin, 2004)

### **4.1 Higher education in Russia**

Before discussing the Bologna process in Russia, the situation of Russian higher education should be explained to have a more precise image of the situation in the Russian Federation. The higher education system consist of three types of institutions: universities, academies and institutes, with the distinction between State and Private. The size of the Russian higher education system is tremendous. There are approximately 1,150 accredited higher education institutions in Russia, consisting of the three types, and in both State and Private. There are 678 State Federal Higher education institutions, 44 Higher education institutions from members of the Russian Federation, 14 municipal higher education institutions and 410 private higher education institutions, totaling 1,150 higher education institutions. The 1,150 higher education institutions consist for 33% of universities, 18% of academies and 49% of institutes (The Bologna Process National Reports 2005-2007 The Russian Federation, p. 3).

There is a difference between state and private higher education institutions, when it comes to accreditation. About 36% of the private institutions are accredited, and 16% of the students are enrolled in such private institution, while 82% are enrolled in public or State higher education institutions. The structure of state higher education is as follows: universities make up 50% of the total number of state higher education institutions, with 25% academies and 25% institutes. The structure of private higher education: 92% are institutions, 5% are



academies and 3% are universities (The Bologna Process National Reports 2005-2007 The Russian Federation, p. 3). The number of students enrolled in universities is 68%, from which 97% in state universities and 3% in private universities. 16% of the students is enrolled in academies, 71% in state academies, 29% in private academies. 16% of the students is enrolled in institutes, 43% in state institutes and 57% in private institutes (The Bologna Process National Reports 2005-2007 The Russian Federation, p. 3).

Table 1: Percentage students enrolled in different types of higher education and dissected to state and private

	Types of institutions	Institutions by funding source	
		Public	Private
University	68%	97%	3%
Academy	16%	71%	29%
Institute	16%	43%	57%

Those statistics are matched to a number of more than 7,5 million students enrolled in Russian higher education. This is a big number, which means that the higher education system in Russia is a big apparatus that needs central supervision. This is provided by the Ministry of Education and the Federal Agency for Education. The main tasks of the Ministry are basically financing state higher education institutions, licensing of new institutions, attestation and accreditation of new higher education institutions (Tomusk, 2000, p. 179). The state prescribes work load, program content and requirements (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002, p. 110). The Federal Agency is subordinate to the Ministry of Education, and has tasks in competitive based money distribution, exercises the Federal Law on Education and organises training of teaching staff of State higher education institutions. At the regional level, the education management structure consists of authorities like Committees of Education which provides financial means like the Ministry, and Associations like the Union of Rectors.

The autonomy of a higher education institution in Russia depends on the financial status, political linkage, leadership and management and institutional culture. Since 1992, Republics and Provinces as well as the local authorities, were delegated the responsibility for curricula, teaching methods, budgets and equipment. In other words, the Ministry of Education has a facilitating role, where the local authorities and the higher education institutions have the executive role, but have to comply to the standards of Higher Education.

Back in 1996 already, the structure of higher education was specified in a Federal Law “On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education” into three tracks; the specialist’s degree which takes five years of study, the Bachelor’s degree is four years and the Master’s degree is two years after first completing a Bachelor’s degree. From the academic year 2003/2004, the enrollment consisted for approximately 95% of specialist’s degree. It looks that the Bachelor/Master structure is not yet enjoying a great popularity in Russia at this point. The labor market is not interested in Bachelor graduates, although the system of Bachelor/Master was decreed years ago (Pursiainen & Medvedev, 2005, p. 48). Law proposals aim at changing this in the future. As regarding the post-graduate structure in Russia, the two-tiered Candidate and Doctor degrees are very specific in Russia. Later in this chapter more on that.

## **4.2 Russia and Bologna in 2004**

In 2002 a working group was established to study the Bologna Declaration objectives. More than a year later, in September 2003 the Russian Federation joined the Bologna process. One of the first developments since joining the Bologna process was to create a law which enabled the minister to compose a work group (see chapter 2, p. 15) which would become responsible for co-ordinating the Bologna process in Russia. In the beginning the national education programs were evaluated because the education system differed from the envisaged system, the two tiered Bachelor/Master system. There were suggestions in 2004 to create laws to implement the Bachelor/Master structure, where the specialist title still would be possible to receive.

There were already experiments with a European style diploma supplement at a few universities (Russian National Report 2004-2005, pp. 1-5) (The Bachelor/Master/Specialist degrees are decreed in 1996 by Federal law, The Bologna Process National Reports 2005-2007 The Russian Federation, p. 5).

As in other countries that participate in the Bologna process, the Federal Agency for Education and Research Supervision is the responsible agency for the recognition of international degrees instead of the higher education institutions themselves. Probably because of the different higher education institutions in Russia, and the differences in diplomas or degrees from other countries.

The quality assurance that was to be implemented according to the Bologna process, became a responsibility of the Federal Agency for Education and Research Supervision as well. They deal with accreditation processes in Russia, licensing higher education institutions

etc. Back in 2004, the ISO 9000:2000 standards for quality assurance based programs were introduced. In 2004 the National Accreditation Centre applied to membership of ENQA (Russian National Report 2004-2005, p. 5).

The mobility objective is rather limited in Russia. There are about 80,000 foreign students studying somewhere in Russia, mostly on the basis of education cost compensation, where the Russian Ministry of Education can award very small scholarships (about 35 euro per month). The total number of students enrolled in Russian higher education is over 7,5 million. Furthermore about only 6,000 Russian students study abroad. This number is so small because of problems with visa, inability to finance study abroad and lack of networks for Russian higher education institutions to participate in (Russian National Report 2004-2005, p. 7). There are some limited programs which award scholarships to excellent students, to be able to study anywhere they want. The social dimension of the Bologna process is ensured in Russia by the Constitution of the Russian Federation. This law ensures the equal rights for everyone who leaves high school to enter higher education. Of course, the high school graduates still have to pass entrance exams at the institutions before being admitted to higher education. In 2004 87% of the high school graduates entered some form of higher education, State or private. It shows that the Russian Federation is really making an effort to implement the Bologna objectives at a high speed.

### **4.3 Russia and Bologna at present**

Until now there are two reports published. After the first national report on the 2004-2005 year, with the first ideas about implementing the Declaration, there was another national report published. This report is about the 2005-2007 period, the most current report available at the moment. This report shows much more into details than the previous one, therefore giving more inside information regarding the Russian ideas on implementing the Bologna Declaration. In short, the accomplishments include legislation for higher education institutions that are going to implement the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. Then the wider spread of the credit system and the quality assurance is enhanced by using new accreditation methods which will raise the standards for higher professional education, and which could result in the transformation from one status to another. For example from institute to academy (National Reports 2005-2007 Russia, 2006, p. 1).

There was a competitive project launched among higher education institutions to develop Bachelor and Master programs, increase mobility of students and researchers and set

up joint programs with foreign higher education institutions. One could say that exactly those objectives of the Bologna process were less in the picture of the actors involved in the Bologna study group. This was a group of representatives from Russian universities to study the consequences of the Bologna process in other countries at the time of signing the Bologna Declaration. The project was divided into two stages, where seventeen higher education institutions were awarded a little under €150 million in total by the state. In the second stage, another €150 million will be allocated to the winning institutions.

Another indication that one of the objectives (developing Bachelor/Master programs) in the aforementioned project are given more attention is observable by the fact that in July 2006 the National Group of Bologna Promoters was established, on initiative of the EUA. Their goals are promoting the three cycle system in higher education, the ECTS system and the quality assurance. Another interesting development is the participation of public actors like Employer's organizations. They are involved in standards and recognition of degrees, determination of criteria for degrees, analyzing the labour market etc. Because the Bachelor degree is new, it is unclear yet what qualifications are standard for Bachelor graduates when they will enter the labour market. These public actors are united in the Russian Trilateral Commission (National Reports 2005-2007 Russia, p. 3). It is comparable to other countries that are implementing the Bologna Declaration, where public actors are involved as well.

The postgraduate study continues to be a two parts study, which is in contrast with most other countries that only have a PhD structure. The first part, candidate of science, is quite similar to a PhD study, the length in years is comparable at a minimum of three years, where a PhD takes four years. The candidate of science also has a education part where the candidate has to pass several exams each year of the three year track. The second part, doctor of science will be concluded with candidate exams and a dissertation defence. For this doctor of science there is no time schedule, it can take 10 years or even more before obtaining the doctor of science title. In Russia, the Bachelor graduation gives access to Master, but also to postgraduate education, the third cycle. The postgraduate education is comparable to the PhD, but the not the same as in other European countries. The post graduate system of Candidate and Doctor degrees is peculiar for Russia and is not likely to change as a result of the Bologna Process. Changing the structure leads to severe objections of the current Doctor degree holders, since they argue that changing the post graduate system would vanish their efforts made in the past (Pursiainen & Medvedev, 2005, p. 57). This is one of the most difficult objectives currently. Most likely, the postgraduate structure is not going to change rigorously,

given the circumstances of tradition in Russian higher education (Pursiainen & Medvedev, 2005, p. 57).

The objective of quality assurance of the Bologna Declaration (ESG) was translated into Russian and spread among the higher education institutions to get familiar with it. There were also conferences to acquaint the rectors and experts in quality assurance with the substance of quality assurance. The following measures are part of the quality assurance; annual reports on quality of education of students for example by centres for quality management and development of a shared belief in quality of education. The National Accreditation Agency (NAA) is involved in this quality assurance, the NAA participated in a research project called “Mapping external quality assurance in Central and Eastern Europe” within the framework of CEENET and the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education to ensure compliance with the ESG quality assurance (National Reports 2005-2007 Russia, pp. 8-9). The quality assurance system that is currently used consists of accreditation in three steps: 1. licensing, 2. attestation and 3. state accreditation. This accreditation is performed every five years. External quality assurance consists of standard norm of licensing, criteria and benchmarks for state accreditation and self evaluation procedures with external reviews. The system is formed at Federal level and applies to all higher education institutions, public or private academies, institutions and universities (National Reports 2005-2007 Russia, p. 10). By Federal law, student participation in quality assurance is required in discussion, self evaluation etc. International actors are involved in the external quality assurance procedures. The NAA is member of several international quality assurance institutions like CEENET and ENQA.

The recognition of diplomas is further developed by a law that obliges the higher education institutions to provide diploma supplements for all students from 2008 onwards. Certainly the Russians are actively using the substances of the Bologna Declaration. One can argue that mobility as an objective is not likely enable many students to go abroad, because a lack of financial means to do so. The social dimension of the declaration is expanded. The Unified State Exam will be expanded in more isolated parts of the country, enabling high school pupils to enter higher education, furthermore there will be larger social scholarships for poor students and the academic scholarship will be introduced for good academics (National Reports 2005-2007 Russia, p. 18). The aforementioned 100 available scholarships (there are 7,5 million students in Russia) for excellent students will continue to exist. The Russian authorities identify possible problems regarding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. These include the aforementioned problems concerning the Bachelor’s degree

and the access to the labour market with that degree, problems with restructuring the curricula to the labour market, to train abilities to graduates to be ready for entering the labour market (National Reports 2005-2007 Russia, p. 21).

The objectives of the Bologna Declaration are incorporated to a large extent in both country reports which cover from the beginning that Russia joined the Bologna process. The degree structures will be restructured from Specialist to Bachelor/Master, although the differences in Postgraduate tracks will remain intact. The curricula will be adjusted to give the students a better preparation before entering the labour market. The Bachelor's degree is something new, the period of studying is shorter than the usual Specialist's degree, which will have some obscurities for employers. The ECTS system is going to be implemented by 2008. Compared to the Netherlands, in the Russian education system one ECTS represents 36 academic hours, one academic hour in Russia is 45 minutes. This is similar to the Dutch academic hours which is 60 minutes, and where one ECTS is 28 academic hours. The mobility and social objective are on the agenda for the Russians to implement, but it is not comparable to the Netherlands, where there are more grants and scholarships both for stimulating mobility and for the social dimension. Russian scholarships are very small, the value amounts to only a couple of meals during the week.

#### **4.4 The Bologna process according to the Federal Agency of Higher Education**

This paragraph tries to give an impression of the motives to join the Bologna process, how the Bologna process is viewed upon and how the implementation is going. Unfortunately only one interview was possible with a representative from the federal level. That interview was with Prof. Yevgeni Kniazev. Like all others this was one of the most interesting interviews during the research. He works for the Federal Agency of Higher Education, so he is close to the federal level, where the decision was made to join the Bologna process. He is the Deputy Head of the Department of Federal Agency for Education in Moscow and is responsible for high and post graduate education in Russia, innovation competition and federal programs for education.

##### **4.4.1 Reasons, ambitions and consequences**

Prof. Kniazev indicates that for Russia it was a political decision to join the Bologna process, to develop for co-operation with the rest of the world. The higher education institutions understand that they should provide education on a competitive basis with Western European

countries. Kniazev first knew about it on a conference for vice-rectors some years ago. During his time as the Head of International Office at KSU.

#### **4.4.2 The objectives and financing of the Bologna process**

Prof. Kniazev says that the ECTS is implemented in some progressive universities in Moscow. There are many debates about the three-cycle system. Tradition is very important in universities, but new principles and ideas are very important for implementing new policy. The Bologna Declaration is therefore very helpful. Universities should become more attractive for students and staff. Curriculum restructuring is similar to Europe, like new generation of standards (competence based) consider requirements of private sector (industry etc.) 57 universities receive governmental support for innovative education programs. In research, all money is distributed on competitive basis. Universities have to provide relevant reasons for receiving government support. This makes universities interested in becoming more flexible in their education plans, because they have to follow the trends in the labor market in order to be eligible for government support. The central point is developing a clear vision and understanding in the processes of quality assurance in universities. The Federal Agency of Higher Education has to provide the reasons that all processes are implemented in the right way at universities. Often it is done very formally, like in KSU where some specific people are responsible for the implementation.

Prof. Kniazev indicates that financially, KSU could receive the double amount of their federal budget. For example if they develop innovative education programs. TEMPUS/TACIS was the most important source of funding during the past decade for projects in universities and management of universities. Successful projects were at universities in Archangelsk, Nizhniy Novgorod, Saint-Petersburg. It was not yet for Bologna of course, but for development of management competences etc.

#### **4.4.3 The future for the Bologna process in Russian higher education**

Prof. Kniazev indicates that in the future the implementation of the Bologna Declaration will be successful for some universities. But not for all. The universities that take the Bologna Declaration seriously will succeed. For those universities where the approach is very formal, where tradition is important and changes come slow because of bureaucratization, they will probably not succeed because time is limited for the implementation, if one adds the process of joining the WTO in 2008, these things will provide a very competitive environment in higher education in some years.

Furthermore Prof. Kniazev says that many universities will have difficulties with the transition. They will have problems in the future, not just with the government. At KSU, they think they have a good management system. They have lost much time with this thought. Kniazev understood that it is really important and serious to reconstruct the management system at the university. It should be more professional and responsible. The previous system was from the Soviet system. Now, it is different. "If we have to be able to respond to the labor market, we have to have tools to be flexible and dynamic. We lost a decade in discussion and debate about the management system. Traditions, history etc. is not relevant now, we do not live in the past."

It will depend on the university's traditions, conservatism and ignorance if the Bologna Declaration is implemented. Progressive universities will succeed, others might fail, which easily could be the case at Kazan State University. Therefore Kazan State University is really interesting to study, because they might fail implementing the Bologna Declaration.

#### **4.5 Theoretical Analysis**

When we look to the theoretical point of view of the implementation theory at the Bologna process, there are six conditions that predict the successfulness of implementation. In the second chapter those conditions were introduced (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983, p. 41). Now when we look at them, we see that at the highest level, i.e. the level of all participating countries together in the process, one can say that the Bologna Declaration itself is no legislation, it is not legally binding. The national level has a difficult task, because on the one hand they committed to the Bologna process and on the other hand they deal with one another and European Union institutions and they have to persuade and push the higher education institutions to participate in the Bologna process and make it all happen. Therefore the national level seems to be the level where the legislation can be established and imposed because the Bologna Declaration does not meet any of the first three conditions, although the participating countries agreed to take the Bologna Declaration as binding for themselves. Moreover, in each follow-up conference the participating countries further detailed the results and goals as the implementation was ongoing. The follow-up communiqués can also be seen as binding to themselves and this all can be interpreted as equivalent to what Mazmanian and Sabatier meant by legislation.

If we look one level lower, The Bologna process has the first three conditions in most of the participating countries because some objectives and instruments of the Bologna



Declaration are operationalised in national laws. So to the extent this has taken place, the countries have the legal frameworks. The legislative changes in the participating countries comprise the first three.

The last three conditions are more difficult to classify. First focusing on the international level again. The fourth and fifth point of the list, are about the leaders of the Bologna process. The set of leaders would include the collective Ministers of Education of the participating countries, their representatives in the Bologna Follow-Up Group, the Bologna Secretariat (always in the country that will host the next follow-up meeting) and several workgroups whom altogether indeed seem to be serious about the implementation, judging by the progress during the follow-ups and the country and trend reports prepared for the follow-ups. For example the Bologna workgroup in Russia was formed by the Ministry of Education and Science and has the task to co-ordinate the Bologna process in Russia. This workgroup is attached to the Ministry of Education and Science and has a permanent role during the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia. The members of this workgroup (Group for Implementation of Bologna Principles in Russia) are rectors from the large universities from all over the country. The workgroup advises higher education institutions how to implement the Bologna Declaration, they evaluate current education programs in Russia before the implementation and they draft the National Reports for the follow-up conferences. (The Bologna Process National Reports 2004-2005, p. 1-3)

The sixth point is not a major issue because the Bologna process is not an enormously expensive policy (compared with some of the programmes meant by Mazmanian & Sabatier). Moreover, there has been economic growth over the past years in most countries, so that there were no crises preventing countries from implementing the Bologna process.

When we look one level lower, at the country level, we can see that those last three conditions depend on the characteristics in each country where the Bologna Declaration is currently implemented, in this case Russia. For example the fifth point may be interesting for Russia because it joined the Bologna process in a later stage and the support by key actors is important for successful implementing the Bologna Declaration. One might conjecture that if those last three points are not met in Russia, the implementation might encounter obstacles and not reach the goal of full implementation by 2010. We will see later in the study if we can say that those six points are met or partially met in the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

The fourth chapter tried to describe the implementation process of the Bologna Declaration in the Russian Federation. The main conclusion here is that Russia seems to be willing to participate in a serious manner in the Bologna Declaration. The research questions addressed in this chapter were:

*What are the developments regarding the Bologna process in Russia?*

*How is the Bologna process being implemented and viewed upon in Russia?*

Those questions are difficult to answer right now. On paper, the implementation seems to be taken seriously, but in practice this might be different. The interview with Prof. Kniazev reveals reasons for joining the Bologna process, he predicts how the Bologna process will go in the future, depending on the characteristics of some universities. It becomes obvious that higher education institutions that take the Bologna process seriously, can be successful in the implementation. The interview reveals only one side of the story, it is therefore too difficult to answer those questions at this point.

The implementation theory suggests differences in processes, speed and success, which is exactly what Prof. Kniazev indicates, besides issues such as resource restraints. For example the speed of implementation is according to Kniazev different at each university. KSU could even be one of the slower universities, if they succeed at all. The implementation theory also suggests that the six conditions by Mazmanian & Sabatier are visible in Russia which would suggest that the implementation might be successful, which is also indicated by Prof. Kniazev. Obviously it is up to the individual higher education institutions after that. Here one can see the top-down approach in the whole implementation, from the international level, to the Russian national level to individual higher education institutions and its faculties. The case study in one university might give more information on those two specific research questions.

In this phase of the thesis the quote by the president of the Russian Federation comes close to answering the question of why the Bologna Declaration is important for Russia. This quote by V.V. Putin from 2004 says:

*“We must integrate our education system into the West-European education system, not decreasing high standards of education that we had during the Soviet time and still have now in the leading HEIs of Russia”* In other words it seems that Russia has a preventive or preservative motive to join the other countries in Europe to implement the Bologna Declaration.

The practical part of the thesis will shed more light on this. The main research question is going to be answered in the next chapters.

*Why is the Bologna Process important in Russian Higher Education and individual institutions and how is it implemented?*

## **5. The Bologna Process at Kazan State University**

This chapter comprises the second part of the empirical part of this thesis: the analysis of the implementation of the Bologna process at institutional level. As mentioned before, interviews with key actors from the administration, deans, teaching staff, and students will shed more light on the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia, and more specifically at Kazan State University (KSU).

The following question is researched in this chapter: How is the Bologna process being implemented and viewed upon in Kazan State University? We focus here on the institutional level, the interviews might provide more clues for answering the question at the Federal level.

The university is situated in Kazan, the capital of Tatarstan and has 1,2 million inhabitants. Kazan is one of the oldest cities in Russia, in 2005 it celebrated its 1,000 year anniversary. Kazan State University is one of the oldest universities in Russia. It was founded in 1804 and is also one of the best higher education institutions, with a steady top-10 rank over the past years. The university is a classical university and recently it added humanitarian and cultural studies to its repertoire. KSU comprises 17 faculties, over 14,000 full-time students and over 50 degree programs, with over 250 professors and 900 associate professors. Over the years, KSU had some famous and successful students such as Leo Tolstoy, Lenin, who was expelled from KSU ([www.ksu.ru](http://www.ksu.ru)).

This chapter deals with the interviews with various stakeholders. After the interview from the federal level, in this section the following levels of stakeholders are interviewed; Administration level, Deans level, Teaching staff level and students. The interviews are divided in the aforementioned levels, then divided by group of questions related to reasons & ambitions, Bologna objectives & financing and the future of the Bologna process.

### **5.1 The central institutional administration level**

This level consists of administrators of Kazan State University. They include a Pro-Rector, the head of international office and the Quality Department of KSU. The first interviewed person is the Pro-Rector for teaching, Vladimir S. Bukhmin. He, together with the Head of the International Office, is one of the formally highest-ranked persons within the management of the university that were interviewed for this thesis. Only the Rector would be a higher-ranked person, but he was not available for an interview.

The second person from this level is Dr. Sergey A. Yerofeyev. He is the head of International Office at KSU and also the Director of the Centre for the Sociology of Culture at the same university. Since he is the head of the International Office, he is responsible for all foreign students that arrive and attend at KSU. The interview with Dr. Yerofeyev itself revealed very surprising and interesting information regarding the Bologna Declaration and its implementation in Russia and at KSU. The last respondents in this group are from the quality assurance department. Two persons from this office were interviewed. This department was established two years ago and is not independent, but is apart of the education affairs, and is accountable to the Pro-Rector for Teaching (Dr. Bukhmin).

In the following subsections, I summarise/quote the most relevant comments these respondents made during the interviews, organised into the main topics of my interview protocol.

### **Reasons and ambitions regarding the Bologna process**

The Pro-Rector for Education, the Head of International Office and the Quality Assurance department share the same opinion about the Bologna process. They are proponents of the Declaration, because new disciplines like sociology are very adaptable to the Bologna Declaration, and there is no danger of “collapsing” of the programs of much older disciplines like math and chemistry.

The respondents indicate that the old education system would benefit from changes, for political, economical and social reasons. But also that because their system of education will be recognized internationally when we will change it. Diplomas were not recognized in other countries.

Since 1996 the Bachelor degree has been introduced. The respondents say that it is better for Russia to join the other (Western) countries in unifying higher education. Obviously it was a political decision to join the Bologna Declaration. Universities, and especially Kazan State University, are very conservative and that causes slow transitions such as the Bologna process.

The decision for signing the declaration was made solely by the Minister of Education back in 2004. There was no public discussion whether Russia should join the Bologna Declaration; it was just a governmental decision, which was later passed on to the universities.

The respondents have the impression that many students are in favour of the Bologna Declaration, the older people like rectors, professors just don't know about it. Because of no

public discussion, consulting higher education institutions, nobody knows enough about Bologna. Respondents agreed that that is the way things are going in this country, there is no civil society of any kind. Russia joined the Bologna process because it wants to be part of a European common area, ever since the era of Yeltsin Russia has had this desire. The respondents agree about how the decision was made, but not everybody agrees with joining the Bologna process, which became clear during the interviews. In KSU there is latent resistance towards the implementation, partly because of being told to implement the Bologna Declaration. The education system is generally very inflexible so, if the declaration is not implemented it is not so much a problem. Furthermore, it is possible to do much on paper, but not in reality. For example universities were so far not able to issue European Diploma Supplements, and nothing happened, there were no sanctions for not reaching the goal of issuing Diploma Supplements.

### **The Objectives and financing of Bologna**

ECTS is implemented as an experiment in Economic and Philosophy faculties.

Bachelor/Master is so far implemented in four faculties, Physics and Mathematics started with this. KSU applied for Erasmus Mundus for a study programme this year. Bachelor degrees were not very known in the private sector. The Bachelor/Master degrees are implemented in some faculties, like Economics & Management. But there are no clear procedures or instruments for the further implementation of Bologna. Graduate employment and mobility are included. For example Dr. Bukhmin indicates that physics students can go to Spain for research, where Spanish universities want to have a few Russian graduates each year. For the implementation there is no clear cut strategic plan, with time schedule. There is also no financial support from the federal government for the implementation. Funding can be received from TEMPUS or the Ministry of Education. This is odd and clearly because they simply contradict each other. Dr. Yerofeyev claims that there is no financial support, while the respondents from the QA office say there is, but in small amounts.

There is no clear cut strategic plan that includes a clear path for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration.

Basically, people do not have enough information. The students from this year, understand changes better, they didn't study in the old system, they are better informed. By making seminars, providing information, the Quality Assurance department hopes to persuade the faculties etc. Everything they do is new, they organise activities regarding quality assurance in education for the Bologna process. Questionnaires for education, organising

education, innovation and control as far as possible. For implementation of Bologna, the department of QA must be completely independent, but this department is not yet independent.

The university is democratic, the decisions are being made by the rector, but in a democratic way with the university management consisting of other Pro-Rectors. KSU is going to change the grading system. From 1 to 5 as in old system, to 1 to 100 points, comparable to Dutch grading. We also will check and grade the students throughout the semester instead of only during the exam. At the end of next year we expect that implementing ECTS will be obligatory for all faculties.

### **The future of the Bologna process**

Representatives at the administration level agree that it would be good to mix the new system (new is regarded as the education system after the Bologna Declaration will be implemented) with the old system, because the old system is a fundamental system which they regard as very good. There is a difficulty with students. They became lazy in the old system, in the new system they are expected to attend lectures etc because they are monitored during the whole semester, not just at the end, as in the past. Also it is important to talk with each faculty, their opinion, problems, etc because this is a good way to convince the faculties of the need for the transition to the new system. Evolution instead of revolution to the new system. We have to make the changes, but to keep the good things we have. Faculties have some freedom for meeting the objectives of the Bologna Declaration.

Many people fear that the real reason for Bologna is trying to economize on higher education. Master studies will not be for free, only for tuition fee-paying students. Everybody in the university management is prepared for that. In TEMPUS programs, financing the participation in Bologna becomes more important for receiving grants from the EU (see appendix B). Nobody from university administration or management is involved in the implementation in a democratic way; everything is done as ordered from Moscow, from the Rector to the Deans etc. There has not been any discussion of policy to be implemented. New methods of quality assurance are being considered. We expect KSU has to comply anyway, although it will go slower than the deadline of 2010. There is for example the fear for hiring BA holders, instead of the usual specialist's diplomas. There are problems with the recognition of Bachelor degrees, not just in Russia, but in other European countries too. There is a lack of information about the Bologna Declaration and the field of higher education is

very inflexible. Non-teaching staff is reluctant to be trained and to innovate. The university goes as far as the government tells them to go to implement Bologna.

“In Europe, we think it will work anyway, in Russia, we are not so sure. It is unusual for us, not only for the universities but also for private sector and students etc. When people understand it, we think it will work out in the future.”

### **Summary and conclusions**

The old education system would benefit from certain changes, for political, economical and social reasons. The respondents say that it is better for Russia to join the other (Western) countries in unifying higher education. It was a political decision to join the Bologna Declaration. Universities, and especially Kazan State University, are very conservative and that causes slow transitions such as the Bologna process.

A lack of public discussion or consulting higher education institutions leads to the results that nobody knows enough about Bologna. In KSU there is much latent resistance among several levels such as general management and teaching staff within the university towards the implementation, partly because of being told to implement the Bologna Declaration, rather than consulted.

Regarding financial means for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration, there is something odd because the respondents made contradictory statements about that. Which means they do not know all information about financial means. The head of International Office claims that there is no financial support, while the QA says there is a small amount. They claim that there is no clear cut strategic plan that includes a clear path for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration, besides the plan of implementing certain Bologna objectives on experimental basis in some faculties.

Representatives at the administration level agree that it would be good to mix the new system with the old system, because the old system is very good. Evolution instead of revolution to the new system. The respondents expect that KSU has to comply anyway, although it will go slower than the deadline of 2010.

### **5.2 The deans level**

The next interviews were held with six Deans.

1. They include the Dean of Philosophy, Prof. Shelkulov. He is not opposed too or really in favour the Bologna Declaration.



2. The Deputy-Dean of Education and associate professor at the Law faculty is the person next to be interviewed. Natalya Tyurina was the first person that did not appreciate to be recorded during the interview.
3. The next person is the Dean of Mathematics and Mechanics, S.M. Nasirov. He is a professor in mathematical analysis.
4. After that, the Dean of the faculty Economics & Management, S.V. Mokichev.
5. An adviser for the Bologna Process from this faculty, associate professor in Economics, E.Y. Balashova were interviewed. This faculty is working on the implementation the most of the faculties at KSU, numerous affirmed by previously interviewed persons.
6. This next interview was held with the Dean of the Institute of Languages at Kazan State University. This department provides the foreign languages at KSU. Each student, no matter what faculty is obliged to study at least one foreign language, either English, German or French. The Dean is R.L. Ratner.

As in the previous paragraph, their statements are ordered in three headings, which are reasons and ambitions regarding the Bologna process, the objectives and financing of the Bologna process and the future of the Bologna process.

Unfortunately the dean of International Relations and Political Science, Prof. Y.Y. Grishin, refused instantly to be interviewed. Although he is an opponent of the Bologna Declaration, it has not been possible to interview him, so he is left out of the study. The six deans have the following to say about the implementation of the Bologna Declaration.

### **Reasons and ambitions regarding the Bologna process**

They agree that the Bologna Declaration was a governmental decision, without consulting the higher education institutions. The deans generally agree on the fact that it is not the easiest way to adapt to European higher education, because of differences in education systems. “The Russian system is more fundamental, European education is more specialized. The faculties have to comply to the governmental decision to join the Bologna process. The universities became reluctant towards the Bologna Declaration as a result of not being asked to share their opinion about whether Russia should join this voluntary process. Some say it is good, some say it is bad. The process of unification is interesting, Western standards are interesting for us, but it must go slowly.”

They acknowledge the moral or the educational function of Russian higher education. European education is more individualized, and this loses the moral function of Russian

education. In Russia, the number of contact hours will decrease, more long distance education. Likely Bologna will lead to a lose of contact between lecturer and student.

The Bologna process is very complicated, the deans have positive and negative attitudes. They agree that the two-cycle system is biggest problem. Bachelor degrees are relatively unknown to the labour market. Some of the deans are positive because now it seems the education system is going somewhere, compared to the period of Communism that did not lead them anywhere. They say that now they have a chance to develop with the rest of the world. But, at the same moment they do not want to lose the advantages of their own peculiar education system. For example, the fundamental education, a good, deep basis of knowledge. Where theoretical work is combined with research, this fundamental basis pays off. All elements are considered at the moment. The deans try to go there slowly, this resulted in the pilot at the Economics & Management faculty, where the Bologna Declaration is implemented as an experiment.

### **The Objectives and financing of the Bologna process**

The deans think that the three-cycle system is difficult, because of problems with recognition of the Bachelor's degree. The Bachelor graduates are not ready to go working, therefore the differences between Specialist and Bachelor are large. The next academic year will lead to implementation of Bachelor/Master in the Philosophy faculty. There is a good relation with the University of Leuven and KSU, where teaching staff was exchanged and will continue to be exchanged. Curriculum restructuring is mainly an increase of self study, not necessarily the courses. As mentioned, and here confirmed is evaluation of students not only during the exam, but throughout the semester. Funds are available in all faculties, but are not always accessible for the faculty itself. Although the funds are usually small. The ECTS was implemented in the beginning of this academic year. Besides the ECTS, much other things regarding the Bologna Declaration are not clear yet. And that is difficult for a conservative system like higher education. Nor the university, nor the Law faculty has a solid strategic plan for implementing the Bologna Declaration.

In the Law faculty, as in other faculties, ECTS is not yet implemented. The three-cycle system is difficult to implement because it is between the Candidate of Science and Doctor of Science titles, therefore no solution is present at the moment. The curriculum is currently being restructured, the Master curricula are already available. The Law faculty has an agreement with foreign institutions for exchange of students and teaching staff. Tyurina states that co-operation with other universities and institutions would be an indicator of the quality of education. The

Law faculty has an English master program on International Law, and they have a Centre of International Law, that was established in co-operation with other universities and funds from a TEMPUS program.

Concerning the faculty of Mathematics and Mechanics, since 10 years they have the Bachelor/Master structure, alongside the traditional Specialist structure. A reason for having the Bachelor/Master structure for 10 years already stems from the ideas of Perestroika when the idea of a two-cycle system was popular. Switching between the systems is possible, after 4 years Bachelor's degree, to continue in the Specialist track for one year. The subjects are comparable. It may change, because after 2 years students are dividend in different chairs, which they prefer. But the dean says that students in the Bachelor structure must not choose a narrow specification but instead study common courses. We do not use ECTS yet, in the future we will use it, because we are forced. We do not think it is bad, it will be interesting to try ECTS, for students easier to choose optional courses etc. The process of implementing the objectives is in the beginning, so far not much is known about it.

In the Economic & Management faculty the dean and the adviser noticed that students started to study more, instead of settling for an occasional good grade to more consistent working. There is also a weighted system of grading. So far, the Bachelor students are in the second year, of four. The older students are still in the Specialist track. In the Economic & Management faculty, student mobility is limited to partner universities where exchange is possible. Staff is being trained outside Russia, in the USA. There is a special Bachelor curriculum, with general subjects. They say that their faculty is the fastest with the implementation, besides the Geography & Ecology Faculty which is implementing the Bologna objectives too, but the other faculties are not so far. And they say that the credits system is being implemented in other faculties.

The dean and the advisor of the Economic & Management Faculty indicate that they were chosen by the Board of the university to be the experiment regarding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration at KSU. Extra financial means come from the tuition fees paid by the students that they can use for the implementation in the faculty. This was also a decision from the Board.

The deans agree on the problems. Students object to the credit system. Because there are problems with credits assigned to courses. Some students were not able to get enough credits and that terminated their studies. The Institute of Languages has published a book that deals with students understanding the credit system, as well as the teachers, in order for both of them to know what is expected at the end of the year.

In general there are no strategic plans, the deans indicate that they wait for strategic decisions in the Ministry and the university. There are possibilities for financial support, if they submit their plans, they could decide on the relevance of it and award financial resources. But in general, the Ministry does not provide financial means.

### **The future of the Bologna process**

Interviewees so far, share the opinion that the Bologna Declaration would be a treat for the Russian system of higher education. For example older teaching staff have difficulties with the transition, the contact between teacher and student decreases because of the process. And finally, for many people, the Bologna Declaration brings new, unknown things. They do not know how it works, and lack information.

The deans do not know if the Bologna Declaration will bring good things for the Russian education system, they do not want to throw out their current education system because they think their education system is very good. But the Bologna system enables them with new possibilities for co-operation with Western countries. The systems in parallel would be the best future, somehow. The deans try to go to the projected outcome of Bologna, but financial means are not in their reach, so they can not have an independent policy for implementing.

In the Economic & Management faculty the dean expect that the implementation will be complete by 2010. Not for the other faculties, they would not have enough time probably, according to him. They did not really know how to implement to the ECTS. How to convert it to their education system. The deans requested students to bring the didactic filling in order to match the curriculum. They do not really know what to expect for the future. They will know in some years when Bachelor students graduate. The deans do not expect difficulties with the recognition with the Bachelor degree. It has been issued for about a decade, so in the field of economics, it should not be a problem. The main question will be how the Specialist degree will be valued in some years. We do not know, if the Specialist degree should be comparable to Bachelor or Master degree.

For the future, in the Institute of Languages the dean expects to implement every objective of the Bologna Declaration. There are problems with older generation of teachers. They are afraid to lose the Russian education system aforementioned.

## **Summary and conclusions**

Preliminary findings are a lack of knowledge surrounding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration, people do not know what to expect from it, they do not know what to do with it. The decision to join Bologna has been made by the Federal Government and is passed on the universities, whether they agree or not. There has been no public discussion of the motivations for joining the Bologna Process. There are no strategic plans where the objectives are written down, it is just a practical way of implementation.

In fact, it started from the decision to join the Bologna Declaration, to the implementation and most likely also the evaluation, which is going to be in 2010. By then, the objectives should be implemented. If that would not be the case at KSU, no real sanctions would be imposed. There is no room for objection against the Bologna Declaration; it just has to be implemented, because the Declaration has been decreed.

### **5.3 The teaching staff level**

After the administration and dean level, the teaching staff is the next. Three professors were interviewed. The first is Professor Sadukov, from the Philosophy faculty. He is one of the older professors at KSU. During the interview it did not really occur that this professor is one of the so called conservative part of higher education. Second is Professor D. Tayursky is working in the Physics faculty of the university, he is responsible for nanotechnology projects. He lectures on physics. And third is associate professor P. Galitskaya from the Geography & Ecology faculty. Her main activities involve teaching and she is responsible for the implementation of the ECTS within 4 groups out of 25 in the faculty.

### **Reasons and ambitions regarding the Bologna process**

The teaching staff agrees on the intention of the government, to join the Bologna process. The Bologna Declaration is not a law, it is not obligatory. Which is actually true on national level, within the Russian Federation, there are laws decreed that supports the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. Therefore joining Bologna was no choice. KSU is one of the first to implement, which is not good, because we make many mistakes. There is not enough understanding of what the Bologna Declaration really means. The teaching staff agrees that they did not really prepare it.

Other problems relate to the quality of our education system. They claim that the current system is very good and they do not know what the system will be like when the

Bologna Declaration is being implemented. “Fundamental education in physics is very important and we do not want to waste that. In Moscow I repeat this, if we accept all objectives of Bologna, we will lose the quality in our physics education. I do not know how it will turn out for other disciplines.”

### **The Objectives and financing of Bologna**

The Philosophy professor confirms the statements made by the Dean of Philosophy regarding the questions about the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. He gives the grades according to ECTS credits. He is quite positive to Bologna, although he is not sure yet if the ECTS will fit for the Russian education system.

The number of contact hours will decrease, but this has so far led to an increase active attitude of students in the Philosophy faculty. Throughout the semester, the students are graded not only during the exam, but throughout the semester. More enthusiasm, more involved, which was actually a positive outcome of Bologna so far. Also the implementation of more control moments is a positive consequence for the education. One statement about the self-study is interesting. Although more self-study seems better for the student, this did not lead to better results on home tasks.

The teaching staff recognizes the advantages of the Bologna Declaration. ECTS is new, it can not be implemented in the same way as in law or history, because of specializations that decrease contact with the teacher, which is very important in physics, to have direct contact with the teacher. The Bachelor/Master introduction is difficult in Russia. The qualifications of the Bachelor/Master are not yet accepted in Russia like the Specialist degree is. Especially the Bachelor degree has this problem. Especially one of the three professors is very negative about this. “It will take years before the government and the private sector accept Bachelor degrees. You talk about real people, that will be victimized. Exchange of students is no problem, because our students are popular, because of the high level of traditional scientific education here.”

Mobility for students is very important. ECTS is implemented right now in some faculties, the three cycle system will be implemented in some years in the Geology & Ecology faculty. The teaching agrees that the curricula need to be restructured.

One of the professors has regular meetings with students and professors to inform them about the ECTS in the Geology & Ecology faculty. This faculty does not have ECTS right now, the plan is to implement this in some groups. Courses differ in ECTS from 1 to 5. 1

ECTS is 36 academic hours (45 minutes). ECTS at KSU also means the grade system that changes. No just the study load for courses in academic hours.

### **The future of the Bologna process**

Every system will face difficulties, Bologna is indeed forced from the top, but it is good, the goals is to limit the mistakes, it is important to implement it step by step, inform people etc. For the future physics professors are afraid that physics will lose popularity, no pupils are interested in physics and mathematics education. This will be a problem, with nanotechnology coming up. In secondary schools, pupils do not know about physics, like in Europe, because secondary schools tend to Westernize. This process is irreversible. The teaching staff also agrees that they should not make revolution in Russian education. One should be a bit conservative with the Bologna Declaration and its implementation.

For the future of Bologna, the transition will not be completely implemented in time, by 2010. But later it will be implemented. Professors say that the system is not so important, it is about the knowledge of the students, the level of education. They do not connect the level of education with the Bologna Declaration. The level of education should change to compete with other universities for students. Many people say we are not ready for joining Bologna fully, it will take more time.

After having interviewed the aforementioned people, I was able to meet with a director of Elemte, which is an education centre, where mainly students with Economics specialty are doing their practical internships. The director, D.M. Shakirova, used to work at the Tatar-American Regional Institute. While she works now in the education centre, she also is involved in some research for Kazan State University. Therefore it seemed interesting to have a meeting with her and ask her about her ideas and insights on the Bologna Declaration. The next statements are made by her and put in logical order.

“15 years ago the implementation of American characteristics in the Tatar-American Regional Institute began. Back then it was not good, the right time was not then, now the time is right. The business education centre has agreements with universities like KSU, for students to learn practical things. On university level, people do not really understand.”

“On federal level, there are several reasons, like joining the WTO, being equal in higher education system with other European countries. People in the Europe do not understand the Specialist degree, therefore a change is required. Another aim is to make the education track of certain humanitarian studies, shorter because the Specialist track is too

long. Many administrators, like rectors and deans, are not willing and able to really implement the Bologna Declaration.”

“The education in traditional disciplines is not so good as it used to be, compared to Western countries, where there has been a development to many innovative projects, whereas in Russia, there has been increasingly a decline in education and research expenditure. So we need to change something, so why not change in the same way as the European countries are doing? Therefore it is not bad that Russia follows the European countries, instead of going the other direction.”

“We have some good traditions in fundamental education, but we do not have experience in mobility of students and staff, we have a very strict system, 5 years and that is all. We are not strong to the real situation, each professor works in more universities to earn enough money. They are too busy, and therefore there is the aforementioned decline in education. Now I make research in three faculties in KSU, Biology, History and Philology, and we test fundamental knowledge, but it seems that this knowledge is significantly lower than in Soviet times. Slowly the transition to Bologna shall be made, in evolutionary way, instead of revolution. We have some examples of innovative and progressive universities that go fast. In Kazan, we are going very slow, because old tradition is very strong, they think that tradition will lead the way to the future. Mentality and tradition will not change fast, in one or two decades, it might have changed. But we do not know what will happen in smaller cities, the distance from St. Petersburg and Moscow to small cities is too large. Especially in those remote, small cities, tradition is very strong. Universities that are able to offer the Bachelor/Master degrees and make the other transitions are going to be more attractive for Russian and foreign students, why is likely going to help these universities.”

### **Summary and conclusions**

The teaching staff indicates that they fear that the education system will change. That is why the process should be implemented step by step. It goes very slow at the university, it will not be implemented by 2010. There are proponents and opponents of the Bologna Declaration, depending on their discipline. For example physics are strong opponents. They think that Bologna will destroy the education system because of a decrease in contact hours for example. While the opponents see the opposite like more involved students, a better system, they also recognize the peculiarities of the education system.



#### **5.4 The students**

After the administrators and teaching staff, interviewing students would be important for the thesis as well, since they are also subjected to the Bologna Declaration. The interviews were held with students from different faculties. It was not very easy to arrange a meeting with the students, I guess students are similar all over the world, and sometimes difficult to reach. The first student whom was interviewed is a mathematical student from Vietnam. He currently is a 5<sup>th</sup> year student in the Specialist degree.

The second session of interviews with students was with students from the faculty International Relations & Political Science. Unfortunately, there were only two students available at this time, because of exams and the nearing end of the academic year etc. These two students were in fact quite-well informed about the Bologna process, in general and more specifically in the faculty. The reason for this is that the Bologna Declaration is being implemented and discussed in the faculty, although it was not possible to speak with the Dean of this faculty, who as aforementioned, refused to be interviewed whatsoever.

The last group of students being interviewed were students from the faculty Economics & Management. By now, the well known faculty were the Bologna process is being implemented as an experiment before other faculties begin implementing Bologna as well.

#### **Information regarding the Bologna process**

The main statements comprises of the mathematics students, that he does not know much about the Bologna Declaration, he wonders about the relevance for him since he is almost graduated.

Students from International Relations & Political Science indicate that during the second year of their study, teachers began speaking about Bologna. They will become Specialists after 5 years of studying. Only the younger generation will become Bachelors and Masters. Some departments are advanced in the implementation. But there are difficulties for, like in technological studies, for humanitarian studies the transition is easier and faster because of less traditions, history.

Students from Economics & Management indicate that in their first year they became a little bit familiar with the Bologna process. When they entered the university, the experiment started.

## **The changes because of Bologna**

The mathematics student says that it would be excellent if his degree would be recognizable outside Russia, which would be the case if he was a Master student. But he will probably stay in Russia after graduation, so he does not really need his degree recognized abroad now.

The ECTS is implemented in the language courses, because these courses are optional. But even teachers are not fully aware of how to use the ECTS correctly. The students from the two other faculties say that things changed. Nowadays students have to work throughout the semesters, instead of one exam as it used to be. Teachers are old, they have problems adapting to a new system of credits.

The students say that there are some opportunities to go abroad, but compared to Europe, in Russia there is no financing for sending many students abroad. Next year there will be a bit more. There are some unknown factors what to do with the students that do spend time abroad. Recognition of that period into their curriculum, would be a difficulty. Although one might wonder if a student could go abroad without the assurance that his or her period and obtained credits would be valid. KSU has some partner universities, which makes this problem less of an issue.

The students from the 2 faculties cannot say that quality is getting much better because the quality is already good. The basic education is good. It is not only the professor giving the lectures, but it also depends on the student and his perception of the knowledge.

In Economics & Management there are problems with organizational things, like the credit system, which gives problems for students, they do not know what to expect from teachers because teachers do not inform the students enough. That is why students gather together to demonstrate against this system. The majority of students support the Bologna Declaration, but the organizational problems are big.

The students agree that they have more lectures per week, they have to work more. "The university is famous for only going to the exam and pass it, without going to lectures." This changes now and that is not popular among students. Some people like the new system of working throughout the semester, but not all. The grading throughout the semester is not good what the students like.

They study for 5 years in the Specialist track, the next generation will have Bachelor/Master system. The university has some things like a website, to go working abroad. There is co-operation with a university in Japan, in Germany too. They do not know much about that, but there is this opportunity. The students know about the quality

assurance department in the university, but they do not exist long, maybe in the future they have more influence. The quality of education is getting slightly better, both teachers and students are responsible for this. The students have more work to do, but the students are not adapted to that.

### **The future after graduation**

Eventually the Bologna Declaration would give students more changes for a job abroad or here because of obtained degrees outside Russia, would lead to be more attractive for companies to hire such person with international experience. But Russian students should also focus on their own country, to stay attractive for the Russian labor market as well. The student think that after graduation the benefit is bigger for students that will have the Bachelor/Master degrees. They do not know yet, because they will be a generation of Specialists, one of the last.

### **Summary and conclusions**

Those interviews with students may be a bit positively biased since the students that I was able to interview, where from faculties that either already implemented the Bologna Declaration, or have certain Bologna objectives already implemented. One would expect a slightly different outcome from interviews with other students. But students from other faculties might not know anything at all about the Bologna process.

First of all, students have the same information problems as teaching staff. During the interviews, some objectives were completely unknown to the students, although most of them have had several meetings and discussion about the Bologna Declaration and its implementation in the Russian education system.

Second, the students tend to complain about the changes in the manner of education due to the Bologna Declaration. As it turns out, the credit system (ECTS) is not only changing the standard amount of academic hours for a course, it also changes the grading system and the way the students are graded throughout the semester, instead of the one and only exam at the end of the semester.

Third, there are also organizational problems since the implementation started. Students and teachers are not aware enough of the new procedure mentioned just above. Therefore students can miss certain tests and therefore not complete a course, which could have serious consequences.

Fourth, students seem quite positive about the Bologna Declaration, they understand the necessity of the implementation, but it seems that a real desire to go abroad is not really there. Which is most of all due to the fact that the students are not yet certain they will study a Master, after their Specialist graduation.

Overall the interviews were useful to find out how students think about the Bologna Declaration, as a comparison to teachers and administration. But one has to realize that only a minor number of students were available due to exam period, holiday period.

## **5.5 Overall conclusions from the interviews and theory implication**

Before we start with the overall conclusions from the interviews, it is important to know what the implementation theory suggests about the Bologna process at the individual higher education institution. As in chapter 4, the list of six conditions regarding successful policy implementation by Mazmanian & Sabatier is used for analyzing (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983, p. 41).

When we look at those six conditions at the individual institutional level (KSU) then we can observe the following; legislation is made by the Ministry of Education, which is imposed on the higher education institutions and the university complies with it because it is legislation from Moscow. The fourth and fifth condition are also of great importance for the successful implementation. During the interviews in chapter 5 we found out that there is some leadership in the form of a top-down approach. The skills and commitment required for the implementation seem to be less present. The interviews gave an indication of the support by key actors within the university as well. Again the theory assumes that if those last three points are not met, the implementation might sustain delay or even partially failure on the individual institutional level. If this happens the consequences for the individual higher education institution can be serious. It could result in losing students and the accredited status from the Ministry of Education and Science.

Based on all interviews in KSU, the following conclusions can be drawn. Joining the Bologna process has been purely a governmental decision. There is a strong centralization of power in the decision, and there is some financial distribution. The higher education institutions have not been consulted. One of the main reasons to join the Bologna process is to become equal to Western countries (Pursiainen & Medvedev, 2005, p. 20).

The higher education system is very conservative and has many traditional values. The respondents say that the old education system is good and it is unclear what the Bologna process will bring. People are either opponent or proponent based on minimal information and without true understanding. The new disciplines are more progressive to change than the fundamental, old disciplines, since they exist not for such a long time compared to math or science. People lack information, many do not know what to expect from Bologna.

The Bologna process has led to an increasing number of students who work actively during the whole semester. In some cases there was already a Bachelor/Master structure. Surprisingly in a traditional field, mathematics they have had the Bachelor/Master structure for almost 10 years.

The implementation theory is so far not really applicable in this case. The clear steps of the theory are not identifiable in the implementation of Bologna. There was no real problem, there was a desire to join in a European process, for multiple reasons like economic motives, public sphere motives, and more far fetched motives like the development of a civil society with a more independent higher education field (Pursiainen, & Medvedev, 2005, p. 21-22). Besides the changes in higher education, of course. There is so far not really a best alternative selection, because there was only one alternative. Arguing that there are two alternatives is not really true because doing nothing would not meet the desire to join the Bologna Process.

During the interviews the majority of the respondents say that not completely implementing the Bologna Declaration would be the most desirable option. The people are afraid that this could harm their own education system, which they regard as one of the best in the world, at least in the traditional disciplines. In other words, not immediately giving up the old system but opt for a synergy consisting of both Bologna and the traditional system. Giving the voluntary characteristic of the Bologna Declaration, this sounds a viable solution. This is a good example of the second and third stage of the implementation theory, where the compliance to the Bologna Declaration and actual impact are different from what is emphasized. It also indicates that the fourth and fifth condition for successful implementation by Mazmanian and Sabatier are partially met or not met at the moment yet, which would mean that the implementation is not going to be successful. At this moment it is too early to say if this prediction is going to be true because KSU has more than two years left.

The implementation consists at the moment of some experiments in the Economics & Management faculty, other faculties like Mathematics & Mechanics already has some implemented Bologna objectives. Other faculties are working on the ECTS implementation.

Although some of the interviewed people are opponents of the whole process, they realize they cannot stop the implementation.

## **6. Conclusion & recommendations**

This final chapter of the thesis summarizes the overall findings and results, which were obtained through document study and conducting interviews with teachers, administrators and students. The research questions determined the structure of this chapter. Each research question, including the central research question, has a paragraph in the chapter. The Bologna Declaration still remains a voluntary process of transition in higher education. Once the Russian Federation has decided to join, it changed the voluntary status of the declaration to its higher education institutions. This led to some resistance and ignorance towards the Bologna process, as aforementioned.

### **6.1 Understanding the implementation of the Bologna Declaration theoretically**

Initially three theoretical perspectives were introduced. Those three theories are new institutionalism, multilevel governance and the implementation theory. The main subject is the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in one country, therefore the implementation theory and the general ideas surrounding it, are most suitable for the thesis. The theories on new institutionalism and multilevel governance are not used, because they do not explain as directly how the implementation of the Bologna Declaration can be analyzed. The new institutionalism focuses on how the outcome of a process can be analyzed given different circumstances such as sociological-, historical- and rational economic perspective. For this thesis it is very complicated to look how these three perspectives influence the Bologna process. This would require an international comparative analysis. The multilevel governance theory does not fit here because it focuses on how the different levels from international level to individual institution level cope with the Bologna Declaration and not particularly to the implementation process. It would become too complicated for this thesis to take the multilevel governance into account as well.

Compared to the other two theories, the implementation theory is the one that focuses exclusively at the process of implementation itself. Because the purpose of this thesis is to see why and how the Bologna Declaration is implemented in Russia, therefore the implementation theory seems most appropriate. Doing so, I am aware that we have to deal with implementation issues at different authority levels, which would make a combination of the implementation theory and multilevel governance theory interesting. This however would be very complicated and therefore goes beyond the scope of this study.

The implementation theory consists of different stages. The first is the policy output of the deciding actors, who design policies that usually aim at solving particular problems. This is where the actual policy is designed before being implemented. The second stage is compliance by the target groups, and how to keep them complying. The third stage is the actual implementation. The fourth stage is the evaluation of the implementation. During this stage, it is evaluated whether the implementation has led to the desired policy results (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983, p. 35-39).

## **6.2 Implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Western-Europe and CEE countries**

The Bologna Declaration is a voluntary commitment of 45 countries to implement the objectives of the Bologna Declaration to create a comparable higher education area where mobility, supported by comparable degrees with a three cycle system and co-operation in quality assurance is the main objective. The initial convention in 1999 has been followed by follow-up conferences in 2001, 2003 and 2005 and in 2007. The last convention was left out in this thesis because it was held at the time the research was performed, and therefore it was not possible to use the outcome of that particular convention. At each of these conventions the progress of the Bologna process was discussed, other countries were accepted to join and certain issues like PhD and the social dimension were added to the Bologna process.

In general, Flanders and the Netherlands are among the countries that are very ambitious about the Bologna Declaration and implementing it, because of several reasons like internationalization of higher education and the recognition of higher education in other countries. The implementation in these two countries goes quick, they have a fast implementation record.

The Netherlands was faced with a discussion about the use of titles, Bachelor of Arts, or of Science. The law limits the use of these titles, which puts vocational education in an unfavourable position compared to universities abroad, at least that is the point of view shared by the vocational institutions, and less by universities (Dittrich, Frederiks & Luwel, 2004, p. 314). The Flemish were not in this stadium in 2004. The Netherlands faces problems of the Bachelor degree recognition at the labour market. Employers do not realize yet, that Bachelors are cheaper in the first years of their careers than Masters, while they can do almost the same duties.



The former Central Eastern European countries, The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, are actively involved in the Bologna process. Those countries already have had quality assurance in their higher education systems and they show great effort to try to comply with the more unified quality assurance specifics as is foreseen by the Bologna Declaration. The Bologna Declaration influences higher education in the three countries on quality assurance, the two-cycle system (the three-cycle system is not mentioned so far), the ECTS and the diploma supplement. But there are elements which are not yet foreseen by the higher education sector. Those include internationalization and mobility in Hungary (Rozsnyai, 2003, p. 276). For example transferability issues. Hungary is a good example where the higher education system is not very flexible. Agreements between institutions determine the possibilities of transferring between higher education institutions. For example earning a Bachelor's degree in university A and transferring to university B to earn a Master's degree, depends on University B's autonomous decision. This problem limits the mobility within the Hungarian higher education system.

Based on the experiences in the countries with a previously similar higher education regime, one might expect that the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Russia is going have problems with speed, quality, transferability of credits, internationalisation and degrees. Especially the post graduate program is already very different from what is emphasized as the third cycle.

### **6.3 The developments regarding the Bologna process in Russia**

The document study showed that the higher education system in the Russian Federation is extremely big, not only in the number of students which exceeds 7,5 million, but also the number of higher education institutions and their geographical locations. The Ministry of Education has a facilitating role in this big system, and the local authorities and the higher education institutions have the executive roles, depending on their financial status, political linkage, leadership and management and institutional culture.

In September 2003 the Russian Federation joined the Bologna process. In short, the accomplishments included legislation for higher education institutions that were going to implement the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. There were suggestions in 2004 to create laws to implement the new Bachelor/Master structure, but the old Specialist title still would remain available. Then the wider spread of the credit system and the quality assurance has been enhanced by using new accreditation methods which would raise the standards for

higher education, and which could result in the transformation from one status to another, i.e. from academy to institute.

The mobility objective is rather limited in Russia because of transferability problems and the lack of financial means of universities and students. The total number of students enrolled in Russian higher education is over 7,5 million. About 6,000 Russian students study abroad. This number is so small because of problems with visa, inability to finance study abroad and lack of networks for Russian higher education institutions to participate in (Russian National Report 2004-2005, p. 7).

The quality assurance in the Bologna process became a responsibility of the Federal Agency for Education and Research Supervision. They deal with accreditation processes in Russia, licensing higher education institutions etc. Back in 2004, the ISO 9000:2000 standards for quality assurance based programs were introduced. In 2004 the National Accreditation Centre applied to membership of ENQA (Russian National Report 2004-2005, p. 5).

Russia is actively working on the implementation from a national point of view. Laws have been decreed, a work group has been established and there are national reports outline the time frame for the implementation. In other words, Russia has been working hard on facilitating the conditions for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration.

#### **6.4 The implementation of the Bologna process and attitude towards it in Russia**

In general joining the Bologna process for Russia is important not to isolate itself from the European and rest of the world. However, it seems that the universities are hesitant towards the implementation. The interview with Prof. Kniazev reveals reasons for joining the Bologna process, he predicts how implementation of the Bologna process will go on in the future, depending on the characteristics of all universities. It becomes obvious that higher education institutions that take the Bologna process seriously, can be more successful in the implementation, according to Prof. Kniazev.

The elements of the Bologna Declaration are incorporated to a large extent in both country reports which cover the period from the beginning that Russia joined the Bologna process. The degree structures will be restructured from Specialist to Bachelor/Master, although the differences in Postgraduate tracks will remain intact. In some cases the Specialist degree remains available beside the Bachelor/Master degrees. The curricula will be adjusted to give the students a better preparation before entering the labour market. The Bachelor's

degree is something new, the period of studying is shorter than the usual Specialist's degree, which will have some obscurities for employers. This problem is similar to what the Netherlands experience with the Bachelors that enter the labour market. The ECTS system will be implemented by 2008. The mobility objective is on the agenda for the Russians to implement, but it is not comparable to the Netherlands, where there are more grants and scholarships both for stimulating mobility and for the social dimension. Russian scholarships are very small and not comparable to Dutch scholarships. Quality assurance is omitted here because it is not directly connected to the implementation but to the legislation of the implementation.

In other words the effort to join the Bologna process is very obvious. The Russian government imposed the Bologna Declaration, there are rules and legislation to support the implementation, there is a time schedule and there are governmental institutions like the Federal Agency of Higher Education, which is involved in restructuring the higher education system to make the transition to the Bologna process easier. It shows that the Russian Federation is taking the Bologna process seriously. The Russian way of implementing the Bologna Declaration is an obvious top-down approach. Everything that the Ministry of Education and Science has done regarding the implementation is directly imposed on the higher education institutions. The next move has to be made by the individual higher education institutions, which is the actual implementation. This stage is currently happening, right now we cannot say whether this top-down approach will work; most of the ideas are on paper, not yet implemented in reality.

## **6.5 The implementation of the Bologna process and the attitude towards it at Kazan State University**

When it comes to the implementation at Kazan State University, the voluntary aspect has vanished. The reason for this is that the Russian federal government has decided to decree the Bologna Declaration by law, forcing the higher education institutions to implement the Bologna Declaration, whether they would like it or not. Basically this is similar in every country, that the higher education institutions are forced to implement the Bologna Declaration. Compared to those countries, the Russian higher education system is very different when we compare for example the post graduate structure, which would make their transition more drastic. The latent resistance, which was not expressed in public as I noticed during the interviews, by the higher education institutions is not good for the general

implementation of the Bologna Declaration, the theory indicated that compliance of the target groups is important for the overall implementation and the success of the process.

Some universities including KSU tend to be conservative, traditional and therefore adapt slowly. During the interviews it appeared too that there is resistance against the implementation of a new education system, the one that is aimed by the Bologna Declaration.

In Kazan State University it appears that many of the interviewed administrators, deans and teaching staff point to the decision to join Bologna without consulting the higher education field. As a consequence, most people are skeptical, they are lacking information to truly understand the consequences of implementing the Bologna Declaration. Add to that the fact that most people from the traditional sciences believe their education system will be dismantled by the Bologna objectives and one would understand more why the overall attitude towards the Bologna Declaration is rather negative at Kazan State University. The teaching staff consists of many old and traditional professors who are not ready for a fast implementation. This point was mentioned during the interviews by numerous actors, which should not be ignored in the final conclusion of this thesis. The old generation is more likely to hinder the transition to the Bologna system than to co-operate smoothly, because this generation is part of the old Russian system of education.

The opponents are the traditional disciplines and they might slow down the implementation even more, although it goes very slow already due to aforementioned reasons like traditions, information hiatus and the conservative education system in general. The interviews give an indication of the support by key actors within the university as well, where the opponents and proponents are divided by their discipline, where the social sciences tend to be proponent and the traditional sciences tend to be the opponent. The proponents and opponents are approximately equally divided.

At KSU, the Bologna process is in the pilot stage. In some faculties they started to implement objectives of the Bologna Declaration. This means that the faculties implement the Bologna Declaration at different speeds. The university seems to implement different phases of the implementation in one faculty at the same time. For example in the Economics & Management faculty where they began to implement the Bachelor/Master degrees, while the Specialist degree remains available too, at least for some years. This could result in blurring of phases, where the phases are not sequentially executed, but instead during the whole implementation process it is not possible to say which phase is currently executed at KSU because the university can go back in the process by adding new faculties which implement the Bologna Declaration, or add new things later on, which makes the

implementation process more blurred, especially if all faculties would implement the Bologna Declaration the same way it goes at the moment. It goes slow according to the respondents because at KSU tradition seems to slow down transitions like the Bologna process causes. There is resistance against the decision to join the Bologna process, to give up the old system, but there are also proponents within KSU.

When it comes to students, they think that the Bologna Declaration brings good things for their education. Compensating for the fact that they complain about working more than in the old system, they see the improvements of the quality education, the mobility aspect when more funds would be available and the idea of degree recognition outside Russia.

In general, all interviewed actors except students, agree on the fact that the implementation should be done slowly, which they seem to do at this moment. This leads me to conclude that the deadline of 2010 seems to be out of reach for KSU to fully implement the Bologna Declaration.

## **6.6 Lessons to be learned from the Bologna process in Russian higher education and KSU**

Notwithstanding the mixed attitude towards the Bologna process, everyone understands that the Bologna process will be implemented and completed in Russia and the university. Almost all of the interviewed people agree on the same thing; do not rush into the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. (One person even mentioned not to make the same mistake which was made after the collapse of Communism, where rushed privatization turned out badly for the Russian society). People would like to see an evolution from the Russian education system to the new Bologna system. The Russian education system is characterized as an education system where students are taught a thorough fundamental basis of knowledge, and people fear this would be lost when 'Bologna' would be completely implemented.

### **6.6.1 Stages of the implementation theory and the Bologna process**

When we link the stages from the implementation theory to the Bologna process, we can observe the following beginning with the first stage, design of policy. On the international level, the first stage was completed in 1999 with the writing of the Bologna Declaration. At the national level, Russia started in 2003 with decreeing laws to provide a legal framework for the Bologna Declaration. At the same time a workgroup for the Bologna process was

established. At the individual institution level, KSU has initiated a pilot implementation. This is the first stage where the decision has been made how to begin with the implementation.

The second stage is compliance of target groups. On the international level it was completed by the voluntary acceptance and commitment of many European countries of the Bologna Declaration. On the national level, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Federal Agency of Higher Education created the workgroup for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration and together they are involved in creating compliance among the individual level. The approach is extremely top-down. This has led to latent objection and frustration by the higher education sector. One can wonder if therefore this stage is truly met according to the theory. The second stage at the individual institution level is compliance by the target groups or the administration, faculties and teaching staff. It is a top-down approach again, where there is some resistance and reluctance towards the implementation. Again, one might wonder if therefore this stage is truly met according to the theory.

On all levels, the third stage is the implementation which is an ongoing event at this moment, Russian higher education lags behind on most of Western Europe because Russia joined the Bologna process in September 2003, later than many other countries. We can see that the phases or steps are not crystal clear defined, the phases are blurred in the implementation. Therefore it is not possible to say much about the last and fourth stage. Perhaps in 2010 when the Bologna Process should be completed, one could evaluate the countries that started in 1999. Since Russia decided to follow the fast track, it is doubtful if in 2010 the implementation of the Bologna Declaration is going to be ready. One might wonder if the objections from higher education institutions did or do not jeopardize the schedule to implement the Bologna Declaration. Also at the individual institution the implementation is ongoing and they just started with what they call the pilot stage, before starting the implementation in all faculties.

The fourth stage at all three levels, the evaluation, will be relevant after the implementation is completed, and according to the respondents, this is going to take longer than three years from now.

## **6.6.2 Six conditions for successful implementing the Bologna Declaration**

When we look at the six conditions by Mazmanian and Sabatier, which predicts if the implementation of the Bologna Declaration will be successful, we look at the different levels of the implementation of the Bologna process. These are the first three conditions:

1. Transparency in legislation on goals
2. Legislation identifies critical factors
3. Legislation structures the implementation process

When we look at the Bologna process at the highest level, the international level, we can say that the Bologna Declaration itself is no legislation, so in fact the Bologna Declaration does not meet any of the first three conditions, but the participating countries agreed to the Bologna Declaration as it is binding for themselves. In each follow-up conference the participating countries establish the results and goals as the implementation is ongoing. They see these follow-ups as binding to themselves and this comes close to legislation. Looking one level lower, at the national level, the Bologna process has the first three conditions in the participating countries because the objectives are decreed by law. Russia also has a legal framework. The legislative issues around the Bologna process were introduced in chapter 4 of this thesis. When we look at those six conditions at the individual institutional level, KSU then we can observe the following; legislation is made by the Ministry of Education, which is imposed on the higher education institutions and the university complies with it because it is legislation from Moscow.

These are the last three conditions:

4. Implementation leaders are skilled and committed
5. Key actors/groups support the process
6. Favourable socioeconomic conditions

At the international level we can say that there is also sufficient leadership and commitment to the implementation, which comprises the fourth and fifth points. The sixth condition is met as well, there is no sign of economical or sociological obstacles that could threaten the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. The last three conditions on the national level are more difficult to breakdown. The fourth and fifth point of the list, the leaders of the Bologna process, the Ministers of Education of the participating countries, the Bologna Secretary and several workgroups seem to be serious about the implementation, especially if we look at the progress during the follow-ups and the country reports during the follow-ups. More specifically, the fifth point may be interesting for Russia because the country joined the Bologna process in a later stage and the support by key actors is important for successful implementing the Bologna Declaration. One might wonder that if those three points are met in Russia, why the implementation might sustain obstacles or not reach the goal of full implementation by 2010. So far, we cannot answer that question because there is

still time left, by 2010 we can truly answer this question. The sixth point is not an issue because the economic growth has increased over the past years in most countries and the implementation is taken seriously by most countries, including Russia. At the individual institution level, the fourth and fifth conditions are also of great importance for the successful implementation. During the interviews in chapter 5 we found out that there is some leadership in the form of a top-down approach. The skill and commitment required for the implementation seem to be less present. The interviews gave this indication of the support by key actors within the university as well. The support seems to be divided between proponents and opponents. The opponents do not have the commitment to fully support the Bologna process. This means that KSU still might fail because of a lack of commitment and skill towards the implementation of the Bologna Declaration. There is some additional funding available at the pilot stage of the implementation and conflicting policies are not present. At the moment the socioeconomic conditions are not likely to change to worse, given the economic growth from the past years in Russia. Kazan State University will work towards the implementation, that seems sure, but to what extent the implementation will be completed in all faculties by 2010 is very unclear for now.

### **6.6.3 The implementation of the Bologna Declaration at 4 other Russian universities**

The seminar that introduced me to the topic of this thesis had the last project here in Enschede. This was an excellent opportunity to present the conclusions from this thesis to the administrators and staff from other Russian universities and to discuss their problems. Appendix D shows the table with briefly stated results and problems since they started with the implementation of the Bologna Declaration.

During an one hour discussion after the presentation, the results were compared to the results and findings from the case in this thesis. It lead to interesting and somehow predictable results, when we recollect the interview with prof. Kniazev. All four universities share the same attitude towards the way Russia joined the Bologna process. They feel forced to implement the Bologna Declaration and it lead to the same commitment issues among the opponents as in KSU. They experience similar things like a lack of funds provided by the Ministry of Education, awareness problems, issues with the new credit system and Bachelor's degree obstacles such as transferability from the Specialist's degree to a system with Bachelor and Master degrees as at KSU. Basically it means that the results are still not valid for all



higher education institutions in Russia, but it gives more strength to the results from the KSU case.

#### **6.6.4 Recommendations**

What could be a recommendation to the present situation? Taking away the lack of knowledge about 'Bologna' in the university seems to be the first recommendation. Currently there is a quality assurance department that is part of the Pro-Rector for Education. This department could have a key role in filling the information gap that exists under teachers, administrators and students. Currently this department has already started this, but it seems that not the right persons were addressed so far. In other words, communication is important to reach all academics and administrators at KSU. Giving the academics and administrators the opportunity to express their opinions and expertise might be appreciated by them, which could decrease the number of opponents.

Another recommendation concerns faculties. Since none of the "interviewed" faculties have some kind of specific strategic plan with the objectives of the Bologna Declaration or time schedules etc. It will be more difficult to implement the Bologna Declaration without such document, which could give the faculties more grip on the situation. The lack of a strategic plan could also explain why there are organizational problems with the education in some faculties that are working on the implementation.

The pilot stage at KSU did give the involved faculties some more financial means than usual for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration.

Another point of interest is the attitude of the academic world towards the decision made the Ministry of Education and Science. The scholars and administrators feel ignored for not being consulted about Bologna and the Russian education system. This results in their reluctance to implement Bologna, by expressing concerns about the future of the education system. But they ought to realize that the world is moving on, and that there is no time for isolating yourself, considering the fact that Russia wants to be an important country again. One can consider therefore the negative attitude towards the Bologna Declaration a consequence of being ignored in the talks leading up to the decision to join the Bologna process. The Ministry of Education and Science could have prevented this by consulting the higher education institutions and its stakeholders, instead of ignoring them and just imposing the Bologna Declaration in the top-down approach as they are used to do. Perhaps the Federal Agency of Higher Education could sustain or solve this problem by discussing the

current the implementation on national level with the higher education institutions instead of ignoring them as the Ministry did when they decided to join the Bologna process.

Whether the findings from the KSU case are valid for other Russian higher education institutions remains to be seen. Universities can be comparable to KSU, for example if they have similar characteristics such as being a traditional university with many faculties or having a long traditional background. This leaves the main research question to be answered in the next section.

### **6.6.5 Summary**

The implementation theory emphasizes four stages which together form the implementation process. Those four stages can be used to analyze an implementation process. The Bologna process distinguishes those four stages. At this moment, the first stage (legal framework) is completed. The second (compliance of target groups) and third (actual implementation) stage are, in all three levels, currently going on. When starting the fourth stage, the evaluation, we can see if the second and third stage has been successful in the implementation of the Bologna process. At this moment we can say that at the national and individual institution level, the second and third stages are not going as smooth as one might expect, which might cause delay in the implementation at both levels.

Besides the four stages, the theory assumes that if the six conditions from Mazmanian and Sabatier are not met within seven to ten years (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983, p. 42), the implementation might sustain delay or even partially failure on the individual institutional level. If this happens, the consequences for the individual higher education institution can be serious. One should about losing students, losing the accreditation and therefore not being able to issue valid diplomas. At KSU there are problems with skill and commitment, which are the fourth and fifth conditions. From a theoretical perspective this means that the implementation at KSU might fail or at least sustain delay. At the national level this would result in failure too, because not all subordinate higher education institutions were able to implement the Bologna Declaration. The situation in 2010 will show if the theory was right or wrong. The recommendations are made on observations at Kazan State University, but could easily help the other universities that were introduced in 6.6.4.

## **6.7 The importance of the Bologna Process and its implementation in Russian Higher Education and individual institutions**

The Bologna process is important for Russia to catch up with the recent developments in European higher education. It modernises higher education in Russia, curricula are being restructured or updated to comply to Bachelor/Master standards, although in some cases the Specialist degree still remains available. For individual higher education institutions it is important because it is a governmental decision which cannot be ignored. Partly, the higher education institutions feel forced to implement the Bologna Declaration which leads to resistance and stagnation, and therefore the implementation is not going according to the time schedule. During the interviews at KSU, it became obvious that many actors opt for a partial implementation of the Bologna Declaration because they do not want to lose the good characteristics of Russian higher education and because of uncertainty what the future will bring for Russian higher education and the Bologna Declaration. In general the implementation will go slow, as desired by most interviewed actors.

*“We must integrate our education system into the West-European education system, not decreasing high standards of education that we had during the Soviet time and still have now in the leading higher education institutions of Russia” (V.V. Putin, 2004)*

The quote by Putin seems interesting because he says the leading higher education institutions are still good, basically the others lag behind. Therefore joining the Bologna process could be aimed at increasing the general level of higher education institutions to a standard comparable to other European countries. But there seems to be a problem because smaller higher education institutions often do not have the means to make the transition. Therefore I would predict that only the best higher education institutions will actually benefit from the Bologna process and the extra financial means for the implementation, instead of the often more remote located higher education institutions that could benefit more from the extra available funds for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration than the prestigious higher education institutions. Rich getting richer, poor getting poorer.

## **6.8 Reflections**

To end this thesis, this is the final reflection on what I have done as Master thesis. What I wanted to find is how the Bologna Declaration is implemented in Russia and more specifically in one higher education institution. These are the main conclusions, the Bologna

Declaration and its implementation can be analyzed with the implementation theory which partly predicts the successfulness of policy implementation using the six conditions of Mazmanian and Sabatier. When we look at other countries that implement the Bologna Declaration, it became obvious that some of them have problems with the Bachelor's degree on the labour market, mobility and the three-cycle system. It became clear that Russia faces similar problems with the Bachelor's degree on the labour market and the third cycle. On paper the Russian government shows a serious effort to implement the Bologna Declaration by 2010, in fact what the Russian government did comprises the first three conditions for successful implementation of policy according to Mazmanian and Sabatier. At the individual higher education institution, KSU, this is perceived differently. There is resistance by academics and administrators for several reasons, which include the top-down approach of the implementation, being ignored in the discussion and decision to implement Bologna. Therefore KSU seems particular difficult to hesitant towards the implementation, because of traditions, lack of information and true understanding what the Bologna Declaration is really about. The implementation started with a pilot at the Economics & Management faculty. In other faculties they implement some of the objectives, but not all like in the Economics & Management faculty. Using the six conditions of the implementation theory by Mazmanian and Sabatier, we can conclude that there is a chance that the implementation at KSU will not succeed because there is a lack of skills (communication) and commitment (resistance). Despite this resistance, the university realizes that they have to implement the Bologna Declaration not to become isolated. For a future project, it will be interesting to see how the situation is going to be at KSU in 2010, just to see if the prediction according to the theory will be true or false.

The whole project of my thesis was a challenge for me. It started by finding a good host and topic to be studied in Russia. This took quite some time and effort. It was interesting to analyze the Bologna Declaration before going to Russia. Once I was there, it was interesting to do the interviews which were well organized. Even the usual start-up time when one gets to a new place in a foreign country did not cause me major problems. After I returned, I still had to work hard to properly report on the theory and to relate this to my results. Close to the end of the period of writing this thesis, there was the opportunity to have a discussion with people from other Russian universities. This discussion has led me to conclude that the results from the KSU case are experienced in other higher education institutions in Russia too, which gives the results more explanatory power.

This work also gave me an insight into what all is required to write a good report and thesis perhaps. If the structure of the report is good, the rest is much easier to do, because of the logical structure in the text. Overall, it has been a great subject in which to invest my time and skills. It was one of the most interesting things to do and a great way to end a period at a university.

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## Appendix A The interviewed actors

S.A. Yerofeyev	Head of International Office, Director of the Centre for the Sociology of Culture
L. Gabdrakhmanova	Quality Assurance Office at KSU
E. Sokolova	Quality Assurance Office at KSU
M.D. Shelkulov	Dean of Philosophy Faculty (Professor)
M.B. Sadukov	Professor of Philosophy
N.Y. Tyurina	Deputy Dean of Education, Associate Professor Constitutional & International Law
D. Tayursky	Professor of Physics
V.S. Bukhmin	Pro-Rector for Teaching
E.A. Kniazev	Deputy Head of the Department of Education Institutions and Implementation of the Priority National Project “Education” for Federal Agency on Education
S.M. Nasirov	Dean of Mathematics & Mechanics Faculty, Head of Department of Mathematical Analysis
S.V. Mokichev	Dean of Economics & Management Faculty (Professor)
E.Y. Balashova	Associate Professor Economics, Senior Academic Adviser Bologna Process
P. Galitskaya	Associate Professor Geography & Ecology
F.L. Ratner	Dean of Institute of Languages
D.T. Hao	Mathematician student
B.F. Khaydarov	International Relations & Political Science student
L. Bikbaeva	International Relations & Political Science student
K. Krasnova	Economics & Management student
D. Faizoullina	Economics & Management student

Y.Y. Grishin	Dean of International Relations & Political Science Faculty, Professor
D.M. Shakirova	Former Professor at Tatar-American Regional Institute, Director Educational Centre Elemt.

## **Appendix B TEMPUS/TACIS projects in Russia and Kazan State University**

Prior to the Bologna Declaration, there was already a EU program called TEMPUS. This stands for Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies. TEMPUS finances projects between the Higher Education Institutions from the EU and the partner countries. Those partner countries are situated in Eastern Europe, Asia, The Middle East and Northern Africa. The objectives of the TEMPUS program concentrate on co-operation in curriculum development, innovation, teaching staff training, university management and more structural reforms in the higher education sector of the partner countries. Another important objective is the emphasis on mobility of academic and administrative staff from the Higher Education Institutions of the partner countries and the European countries. The European Commission finances the TEMPUS program and continues to do so until 2013. The Commission regards higher education in general as a top priority for co-operation activities with the countries close to the European Union. (TEMPUS url [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/tempus/index_en.html)) Together with the enlargement of the European Union, the TEMPUS program also widened its scope. In the beginning, in the 1990's the scope was on Central and Eastern Europe. Later on the other, aforementioned regions became partner countries of TEMPUS. TEMPUS is currently being financed through three channels. The Commission funds all of these channels; the distinction was being made for geographical purposes. Since the Bologna Declaration was presented in 1999, it was something besides the TEMPUS program. Both programs have similar objectives. Although the European Commission does not have formal decision-making power in the Bologna process, the Commission is indeed in both projects involved to a large extent. At present one might say that the Bologna Declaration can be implemented in many of the participating countries, because of TEMPUS projects, which provides the often needed funds. Both the Bologna Declaration and TEMPUS have given high priority to mobility. Although the Bologna Declaration is mainly about smoothening the differences in higher education in those 44 countries, the TEMPUS program provides funds for individual projects, which can be very well Bologna related projects such as curriculum restructuring. By combining those two, the Commission has indeed a large influence in both. The Russian Federation has been involved in the TEMPUS program since 1994. Many of the TEMPUS projects prior to the Russian accession of the Bologna Declaration are already concerning objectives of the process. (TEMPUS projects Russia, p. 180,185)

## **Appendix C Interview questions for the different levels**

### **Federal level**

1. Can you give a short job description?
2. Why did Russia decided to implement the Bologna Declaration, what is the aim?
3. What are the ambitions regarding the Bologna Declaration?
4. How do you consider those ambitions? How to achieve them?
5. What could be the possible impact of Bologna Declaration for the higher education institutions?
6. The main objectives of the Bologna Declaration are:
  - ECTS
  - Bachelor/Master
  - Mobility of students/staff
  - Curriculum restructuring
  - Graduate employment for the international labour market
  - European co-operation in quality assurance

What do you do with the elements in terms of policy development? Are all of them considered or some not? Why?

7. Are you noticing changes in policy at higher education institutions due to the implement of the Bologna Declaration?
8. Are you somehow involved in developing policy regarding the implementation? How exactly?
9. What are your expectations for the future of higher education in Russia and the Bologna Declaration?
10. Are there problems regarding the implementation? Like budget problems or organizational problems?
11. How do you intend to solve problems regarding the implementation?
12. Do the possible changes work out correctly?

### **Vice Rector/Faculty/Teacher**

1. Can you give a short job description?
2. Why did Russia (and KSU) decided to implement the Bologna Declaration?
3. What did you think about the decision by the Federal government to be a member of the Bologna implementing countries, how did the decision get to your attention?
4. The main objectives of the Bologna Declaration are:
  - ECTS
  - Bachelor/Master
  - Mobility of students/staff
  - Curriculum restructuring
  - Graduate employment for the international labour market
  - European co-operation in quality assurance
5. What do you do with these elements in terms of policy development? Are all of them considered or not? Why?
6. Are there possibilities for financing the Bologna objectives? Does the Ministry provide extra financial means for the implementation of the Bologna Declaration?
7. Are you somehow involved in developing policy regarding the implementation? How exactly?
8. Can you give examples of new policy due to the Bologna Declaration specifically, at KSU?
9. What are your expectations for the future of higher education in Russia and the Bologna Declaration?
10. Do you notice difficulties towards the implementation at KSU? Such as recognition of credits or study periods abroad.
11. How do you intend to solve those difficulties?
12. Do the changes work out correctly?
13. At what costs the implementation will be executed at KSU?

## **Students**

1. Have you heard about the Bologna Declaration?
2. Have you heard about the changes in higher education in Russia and Europe?
3. Do you feel that those changes affect the education at KSU somehow?
4. Do you notice changes in your curriculum?
5. What could be the cause of changes, if you feel that there are any changes at all?
6. What do you think are the strong and weak points of the Bologna objectives?
7. In what way do you think the quality of education changed?
8. In what way does the Bologna Declaration lead to more opportunities for you during and after studying?

**Appendix D Results from the discussion at Strategic Management and Quality Management Seminar 4, 02-10-2007**

	Yaroslav the Wise University, Nizhniy Novgorod	Pomorski University, Archangelsk	Petrozavodski University, Petrozavodsk	Ukhta State Technical University, Ukhta
Implementing the Bologna Declaration	Yes	Yes	Yes, since 1989 the first BA	Yes
Bachelor programs	Many	20 programs	3 programs (experimental)	3 programs
Master programs	Many	10 programs	3 programs (experimental)	8 programs
Credit system	Yes	In 3 faculties	No	No
Double diploma	Some	In 3 programs	Yes	No
Diploma Supplement	No	No	No	No
Mobility	Yes, EU access	20 foreign students incoming every semester	No	No
Quality assurance	Yes, ENQA guidelines	Yes, ENQA	No	No
Skill & Commitment	Awareness issues with teaching staff	Need more consciousness among teaching staff	Need more skilled & committed administrators	Academics have no desire to change anything No extra funds
Problems	No extra funds, difficult to transfer to ECTS	Strict state law regarding BA structure	More problems than achievements	Student are afraid to become BA holders, so they want to become Specialists