

## Foreword

The Series “Comparative Education Studies” / “*Studi Comparativi in Educazione*” aims at offering a space where education-related issues – educational thinking, systems, methodologies, history – can be approached from a comparative point of view, with interventions from scholars from all over the world, addressing an international readership.

The underlying idea is to rely upon comparison as an approach that is able to provide a specific contribution to knowledge in the different fields of competence of the educational sciences, not restricting the analysis to the traditional study of educational systems in different countries, but including a comparative study of all the topics that are the object of educational reflection: from institutional policies to teaching methods, from philosophical-educational thinking to historical-comparative research, as well as the methodological and epistemological issues.

Today, the field of comparative education, at international level, is characterised by lively debates, addressing its contents, methodologies, purposes, and many other relevant features. The Series does not intend to privilege one approach to the detriment of the others but rather wishes to give space to the debate by including studies that bring forward different approaches. Indeed, far from being the mark of an impending crisis, the plurality of ideas witnesses the vitality of this research sector, all the more in a moment when it is often referred to for promoting a better comprehension and a more pro-active function of education in the contemporary world.

One of the core principles of comparative research in education is that education can only be understood if we understand the factors which play a role within society outside the educational systems. But the opposite is also true. In fact, if it is true that educational systems, contents, methods and

theories respond to an idea of the future, and have therefore to confront the question of what should be “brought” in that future – then education may really be a special place to understand how society is shaping, provided that we undertake an in–depth and rigorous research into its multifaceted aspects.

Today, very often reference is made to the so–called “challenges” of education. However, these challenges can only be taken up through an approach aiming at overcoming too narrow boundaries. That is why we decided to publish in Italy a collection which includes volumes in English, without leaving aside, though, Italian papers; and in the same spirit the Series aims at building a “bridge” between scholars of various backgrounds, creating a dynamic and lively place for meeting and exchanging ideas.

In a world marked by a thousand mobilities, the notion itself of boundary is in question, and has to be reconsidered. And yet, it seems to us that what is needed is not to deny the boundaries. Rather, we need to unceasingly overcome them for they unceasingly arise, though perhaps being more elusive, and we need to be able to build up ever new bridges.

*Donatella Palomba*

**Changing Universities  
in Europe and the  
“Bologna Process”  
*A Seven Country Study***

*Edited by*  
Donatella Palomba



Copyright © MMVIII  
ARACNE editrice S.r.l.

[www.aracneeditrice.it](http://www.aracneeditrice.it)  
[info@aracneeditrice.it](mailto:info@aracneeditrice.it)

via Raffaele Garofalo, 133 A/B  
00173 Roma  
(06) 93781065

ISBN 978-88-548-2135-4

*No part of this book may be reproduced in any form,  
by print, photoprint, microfilm, microfiche, or any other means,  
without written permission from the publisher.*

1<sup>st</sup> edition: October 2008

# Contents

Preface .....	9
<i>Donatella Palomba</i>	
Introduction: Changing Universities and the “European Space”	13
<i>Donatella Palomba</i>	
Higher Education, Universities, and the Bologna Process: The Danish Case .....	19
<i>Thyge Winther-Jensen</i>	
Rules, Reform, Regulation: the ‘Bologna Process’ and Higher Education in England .....	47
<i>Robert Cowen</i>	
“Institute University” Meets Bologna Process: The German System of Higher Education in Transition .....	73
<i>Florian Kiuppis, Florian Waldow</i>	
Croatian Higher Education and the Implementation of the Bologna Process .....	101
<i>Zlata Godler, Vlatka Domović</i>	
The Bologna process in France: Origin, Objectives and Implementation .....	125
<i>François Orivel</i>	

Spanish Universities and the Process of Construction of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Challenges and structural difficulties .....	149
<i>Miguel A. Pereyra, Antonio Luzón Trujillo, Diego Sevilla Merino</i>	
The “Bologna Process” in the Reform of the University System in Italy .....	195
<i>Carla Roverselli</i>	
The “Bologna Process” in Italy: the Background .....	219
<i>Donatella Palomba</i>	
“Bologna” – a Neo–European Myth? .....	229
<i>Jürgen Schriewer</i>	
<i>About the Authors</i> .....	259
<i>Abstracts</i> .....	265
<i>Sintesi</i> .....	277

## Preface

*Donatella Palomba*

This volume is the outcome of a research carried out thanks to a contribution granted by MIUR (the Italian Ministry for Education and Research) within the “Programme of incentives for the internationalisation of the university system” amidst the interest and involvement aroused also in Italy by the start of the “Bologna Process”.

In the case of Italy as in other cases, it is paradoxical that, although university reform was presented as a response to “European” needs, nevertheless awareness was not widespread in the academic world of the fact that it was actually part of a wider process that step by step involved many European countries well beyond the confines of the European Union, along agreed policy lines.

This awareness, however, was certainly present at ministerial level as well as among the scholars dealing with European higher education, particularly since our country was one of the first promoters of European action regarding universities; in this framework, together with action at all levels for the dissemination of information regarding the “Bologna Process”, scientific research on the topic was given support.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the illustrious colleagues from several European countries who agreed to be part of the research team, participating in an intense and fruitful exchange which led to the elaboration of shared lines of thought. Such reflections then enabled us to carry out studies to achieve a more in-depth understanding of the “wind” which was sweeping across the higher education systems in Europe, endeavouring to identify the trigger that had initially stimulated

various countries to promote or join the process itself as well as the many ways in which each country responded to the stimuli set in motion by the Bologna agreements, and lastly whether and how all this may in fact be the first potential step towards the constitution of a European Higher Education Area.

This work is not, therefore, a “stocktaking report” on the state of implementation of the Bologna Process in various countries – even though in many ways it also gives valuable indications for the better comprehension of how this implementation is structured and applied in varying contexts. Rather, both general considerations and the country-specific studies are centred on the interaction of the “Bologna model” defined at trans-national level, with structures, models, regulations and representations pre-existing at the national level in each of the countries included. For the purpose of this analysis the relevant historical, systemic, legal and institutional aspects have been taken into consideration. This is therefore an attempt to offer a deeper understanding of the dynamics effectively passing through “European space” and the effects on its previous historical, political and cultural fabric.

However, reflection inevitably goes further, particularly since researchers in this case are also the actors in the “Process” being studied: not a rare occurrence, especially in the social sciences. In different ways and directions, varying according to the different approaches, all the contributions reflect upon the topic which is today more controversial than ever: the very nature of higher education and the specificity of the University within it: this University which has such ancient roots and yet has already changed its aspect more than once in the course of its history.

What can we leave behind, what must we keep, what could or should we transform? We consider it essential to underline that the University, as we are so frequently reminded, cannot and must not shrug off the responsibility it has towards society, yet it would be a serious underestimation to interpret this responsibility exclusively as the duty to respond to specific requests for education or research advanced in turn by the world



of economy or that of politics. This would be to fail in what is the basic responsibility of the university institution: the free pursuit of knowledge and its diffusion. It is on these crucial issues that the research team intends to carry forward its work.



# **Introduction**

## **Changing Universities and the “European Space”**

*Donatella Palomba*

On November 12 2004 the four Ministers who had signed the Sorbonne Declaration in 1998 – Claude Allègre, Luigi Berlinguer, Tessa Blackstone and Jürgen Rütgers – each held a *Lectio* on “Education and Training in the Europe of Knowledge”, on the occasion of the Honorary Degree awarded them by the University of RomaTre on that date.

A careful reading of the *Lectiones* given by the Ministers is very informative; beyond the ceremonial note natural on such occasions, a clear idea emerges not only of the different approaches to educational issues depending on different cultural traditions, but also – and even more so – the differing political reasons at the roots of each Minister's decision to support that Declaration.

In recalling the Sorbonne agreement with its precursory signs of the so-called “Bologna Process”, therefore, the interplay emerges between national contexts and the more or less artificially constructed “European model” which is one of the aspects investigated and analysed in its numerous effects and implications in the essays collected in this volume. These essays illustrate how the “European” discourse is variously structured and diversely utilised according to the different starting-points, interests and relational power of different countries.

As well as this complex intra-European movement, however, attention should also be paid to the setting of the “Bologna Process” in the context outside Europe. “Bologna” starts, develops and is still moving from and towards the wider

world context, with the accent on the importance of the “international recognition” and the “power of attraction” of the European Area of Higher Education, already amply present at the Sorbonne and shifting more and more in the direction of confirming the need to enhance the “international competitiveness” of the Area itself.

More recently, this has eventuated in the idea of the EHEA as a “partner of the higher education systems” of other parts of the world, “stimulating balanced student and staff exchange and cooperation between institutions of higher education”<sup>1</sup>.

On this basis, at the Bergen meeting of 2005 the Ministers commissioned the Bologna Follow-Up Group to elaborate a strategy for the “External Dimension of the Bologna Process”, later adopted in the London meeting of 2007. The relative Report proposed “Key elements for a strategy”, a strategy taking into account “both competitiveness and cooperation”.

This is an interesting policy document deserving further analysis. What we would like to point out here is that the document moves still further in the direction of a unitary consideration of the European area, while as usual perfunctorily re-affirming respect for internal diversities and recognising the possible privileged relations of any single European country with its non-European partners.

The European Area also seems to acquire further concreteness if we consider that acknowledgements coming from other regions of the world reveal that such areas deem it necessary to take the European Area into a certain degree of account when formulating their own policies of higher education. To the forefront is the United States, thought of as the main competitor in the initial steps of the “Bologna Process”<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> See *The European Higher Education Area – Achieving the Goals*, Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19–20 May 2005.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g., among others, *Learning Accountability from Bologna: a Higher Education Policy Primer* (July 2008), written by Clifford Adelman for the Institute for Higher Education Policy, Washington D.C.; *Canadian*