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EUROPE AND CREDITS
EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER (AND ACCUMULATION
SYSTEM (ECTS):
“Students’ Workload, ECTS and the
Tuning Approach”

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Background

Introduction EU ERASMUS mobility scheme in 1987

Every EU country having its **own** educational system:

3 types:

- Countries with a workload based credit system
- Countries with a system based on contact hours
- Countries without any system

Major concern:

How to organise and guarantee recognition of studies?



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Assumption

Development of an **overarching credit transfer system** conditional for successful student mobility

Proposal: ***European (Community Course) Credit Transfer System (ECTS)***

EC initiative: five pilot groups (1989-1995), followed-up by support system of grants and counsellors (1996 - 2005)

Main features:

- **60 credits** representing one year of full time studies
- **Credits allocation** on the basis of relative value
(what is a typical student be able to do in one year?)
- **Workload based**, not contact hours based



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Why 60 credits a year?

➤ ***Proposed by an experts group after studying the different models in the world; accepted by academic world without much debate***

➤ ***Basic assumptions:***

Number of credits per year

-should be ***unique*** to any individual country

-should ***support*** semester and trimester ***programmes*** as well as ***block*** programmes (4/5/6 blocks) without applying decimals

-Should allow for '***communication***' with other existing systems in the world (e.g. Carnegie system USA)



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Why workload based?

- To ***bridge*** different educational ***models***
- To overcome ***recognition issues*** at country system level
- ***Support recognition*** of periods of studies in stead of course to course unit recognition by universities
- ***Facilitate different types*** of structured activities: lectures, seminars, laboratory work, independent work, exercise courses, thesis writing, internships/placements, etc.
- ***Be fair to*** the time investment of ***students*** in these activities including preparation and independent work



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As a response to the Bologna Declaration: ***Tuning Educational Structures in Europe*** initiative

One of its objectives: convert ECTS from a transfer system into a ***transfer and accumulation system***

Actions:

- Base **credit allocation** on fixed programmes (***absolute value*** in stead of relative value)
- Decide number of working hours per credit
- ***Change the paradigm***: introduce student centred learning
- Base credit system on a combination of ***workload and intended / achieved learning outcomes***
- Use ECTS for ***curriculum*** design, delivery, evaluation and enhancement



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Calculating credits

Survey among ECTS experts to decide workload

Outcome: student workload in Europe ranges from (1200) 1500 – 1800 hours.

Decision: 1 ECTS credit reflects 25-30 hours of workload

Today ECTS system also applied for calculating workload of staff in many countries (in stead of teaching hours)



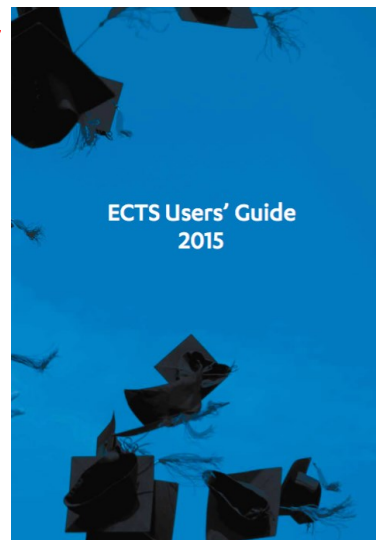
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Outcome of the experience

Anno 2018: ECTS is the official credit system of nearly all 48 Bologna signature countries

- System **widely accepted** by the academic world
- Tool for both credit **accumulation and transfer**
- Very successful as a key **instrument for recognition** of studies (before and after mobility)
- Basis for documenting periods of studies and degrees: **Transcripts of Records and Diploma Supplement**

ECTS Users' Guide





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감사합니다 Natick
Danke Ευχαριστίες Dalu
Grazie Thank You Köszönöm
Tack
Спасибо Dank Gracias
谢谢 Merci Seé
ありがとう

Obbrigado