

"It's the end of the 'University' as we know it"

**The realisation of the Bologna Process:
cases from England and Greece**

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Abstract

The present thesis focuses on the utility of discourse at different research levels, for which the Bologna Process (BP) is being used as an observed example. It explores the possibilities and limitations of discourse as a methodological, theoretical and as an analytical tool applied to the collected secondary and primary data. In doing so, it offers an interpretive and reflexive account of the BP initiatives and the processes of their realisation in four different Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The empirical focus of this research is the BP, which is an ongoing attempt at the formation of a 'European Higher Education Area' (EHEA). The research centres on the different levels of the EHEA discourse and its recontextualisation from a European regional level to a state level and from there to an institutional one.

The BP is a peculiar case in that it is not a legislative policy, but it has been widely adopted by both European Union (EU) and non-EU member states as an initiative within the European geographical space. The degree of change that the BP promotes for European HE within a specified period of time raises important questions about forms of governmentality. While there have been struggles within the different levels and dimensions of the BP its realisation has been rather 'efficient' and this is evident in HEIs governance. In most participating countries educational change towards the Bologna goals has been introduced at an education policy level, even though the extent of the implementation of the recommendations has varied from country to country. Indeed, most European HEIs had already actively attempted to introduce some of the regional initiatives even before the policy began to take effect.

The data which provided the basis for this study are in the form of official documents and interviews. These data were generated in two countries; England and Greece.