

# Europeanisation and national geography practices

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# Examples from:



- ◆ The Netherlands
- ◆ Belgium (Flanders)
- ◆ Germany

# The Netherlands

- ◆ Dual system: universities and ‘professional higher education’
- ◆ Universities: physical geography and human geography ‘separated’
- ◆ Geography in professional HE: teacher training colleges and planning schools
- ◆ Now: only human geography in university

# NL: human geography in universities

- ◆ Bologna transition almost complete
- ◆ No entry selection
- ◆ 3 year bachelor (major/minor variations)
- ◆ Mainstream masters: 1 year
- ◆ Research master 2 years (selective!)

# NL human geography: quality assessment standards

## GRADUATES:

Skills in analysis / problem solving / synthesis & academic attitude

Understanding of diversity and complexity of social structures and processes (and their interaction with environmental structures and processes)

# NL human geography: QA standards - continued

## GRADUATES – continued

Ability to evaluate (geographical) effects of policies

Practical skills (writing reports, oral presentation, computer skills, teamwork)

Ability to design and carry out research in human geography / planning / demography

# NL human geography: QA standards continued

GRADUATES – continued

Work in interdisciplinary teams

Follow developments in discipline

Critical reflection on personal academic and professional performance

Contribute to social debate (from point of view of discipline)

# NL human geography: QA standards continued

## PROGRAM

(international) developments in, history of, state-of-the-art in human geography

Theoretical and methodological basis

Defining, analysing and solving problems

Participate in research / teamwork

Research techniques

# NL human geography: QA standards continued

PROGRAM – continued

Knowledge transfer

(Basic) notion of neighbouring disciplines

Orientation to and reflection upon practice  
(placement, projects, case studies)

# NL human geography: QA standards continued

## FORMAL CRITERIA PROGRAMS:

Curriculum structure / Input-output / Learning environment / Quality of graduates / Quality of staff / Effectiveness of the organisation / Quality assurance system / Facilities / Internationalisation & external contacts



# NL: conclusions



- ◆ Divided geography
- ◆ Academic skills essential (doing research, etc.)
- ◆ Application seen as very important
- ◆ Many formal criteria ('quality' of the program)



# Flanders



Nearby (from NL), but very different!

Human & physical geography combined

Strongly based in science (physics, mathematics, but also: philosophy, social science)

Human geography, physical geography, technical geography, integrative geography

# Flanders

- ◆ Traditions reflected in Bologna transition
- ◆ E.g. Leuven: bachelor 180 ECTS, with geography (77), supporting disciplines (62), general sciences (6), ‘broadening’ profiles (35)
- ◆ But: joint accreditation body with the Netherlands!

# Germany

- ◆ Education supervised by Länder
- ◆ National geography working group for Bologna transition
- ◆ B-M = 3+2
- ◆ Modularisation / slow implementation

# Germany

- ◆ National agreement on bachelor:
- ◆ Physical geography (30), Human geography (30), methods (30), 'minor' (30), regional & applied geography (30), thesis & optional course (30)

# Conclusions

- ◆ Wide differences in scope of the discipline, institutional and academic embedding, degree of competence orientation, tradition, duration of programs, quality assurance systems, etc.
- ◆ What can ‘Europeanisation’ be about?

# Europeanisation

- ◆ Mutual learning and mutual support?
- ◆ A competitive European ‘masters’ space?
- ◆ Exchange?
- ◆ Harmonisation / common dimensions?
- ◆ Joint programs?
- ◆ ...