

Initial Teacher Education and the Bologna Process in Italy – A Brief Outline

Začetno izobraževanje učiteljev in bolonjski proces v Italiji – kratek oris

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Situation till 1998-99

- For *primary school teachers*: only a secondary degree (*Maturità magistrale*)
- For *lower and upper secondary school teachers*: the ordinary university long-cycle degree (*Laurea*) in a discipline, without any study or training in Education

Situation since 1998-99

- For *primary school teachers*: a 4-year *Laurea in Scienze della formazione primaria*
- For *lower and upper secondary school teachers*: a 2-year graduate school (*Scuola di specializzazione all'insegnamento secondario*), following the ordinary university long-cycle degree (*Laurea*) in a discipline

Changes presently discussed

The 3 + 2 (+3) model has been adopted by the whole Italian university system since 2001; however, it is still not applied for initial teacher education (ITE). As the new system for ITE had just started, almost everybody thought that one should simply convert it into the Bologna scheme; this would have been very easy, defining a 1st-level and a 2nd-level degree for *primary school teachers* and transforming the *Scuola di specializzazione all'insegnamento secondario* into a Master program for *lower and upper secondary school teachers*. Both programs started in 1998-99 were already structured with ECTS credits, and this made things even easier.

However, the Government majority had changed in 2001. The new Minister wanted to change many things in the school system, and did not follow the route

of a simple conversion; furthermore, the most traditional part of University academia was exerting some pressure, claiming that a 3-year (instead of 4-year) *Laurea* was not sufficient to give the necessary bases in disciplinary contents.

Thus, in 2003 a law stated that - *both for primary school teachers and for lower and upper secondary school teachers* - ITE should have a structure 3 + 2 (Bachelor/Master), that for *lower and upper secondary school teachers* the Master program should have a relevant part concerning the disciplines, and that all details should be defined through decrees of the Minister.

In October 2005 a first decree has been adopted; however, to implement the new system further decisions have to be taken, and further decrees have to be adopted. Two main themes are still under discussion.

First, no clear provisions have been taken yet concerning recruitment of teachers, whereas there is a general feeling that such a long program, which starts with a *numerus clausus* and includes practical training, should be *strictly connected with recruitment*.

Second, for *lower and upper secondary school teachers* there are strong controversies concerning the curriculum. Somebody proposes to have programs which are minor changes of the ordinary disciplinary Master program; others insist on the need for *ad hoc* programs, characterized -as was the *Scuola di specializzazione all'insegnamento secondario*- by adequate space for Education sciences and for practice in schools.

Thus, the whole new system has not been implemented, as it has not been even completely defined.

In April 2006 the Government majority changed again, going back to the one which had been in place during the 1996-2001 period. As the theme is politically controversial, it is impossible to forecast the decisions which are going to be adopted.

Meanwhile, the 1998-99 system will stay in place even in the 2006-2007 academic year.