Study courses, output and problems with regard to the Bologna Process in Switzerland

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Our main objective

- To assess the Bologna reform and system from the students point of view

➢ Assess what ?

➢ With which indicators ?

➢ With which methods ?

In which extent is it possible to assess the Bologna process

Assess what ?

Bologna Declaration :

Creation of the European area of higher education

- Promotion of citizens' **mobility**
- Promotion of citizens' **employability**
- Continent's overall development

Compatibility and comparability of the systems higher education

Competitiveness of the European system of higher education

Co-ordinating european policies to reach the following objectives:

- Adoption of a system of easily **readable and comparable degrees** in order to promote European citizens employabiliy and the international competitiveness of the European higher education system
- Adoption of a system essentially based on **two main cycles**, undergraduate (lasting a min of 3 years) and graduate; the first cycle having to be relevant to the European **labour market** as an appropriate level of qualification; the second cycle should lead to doctorate
- Establishment of **a system of credits** (as ECTS) as a proper means of promoting the most widespread **student mobility**; credits could be acquired in non-higher education contexts
- Promotion of **mobility** by overcoming obstacles to the free movement
- Promotion of European co-operation in **quality assurance** to develop comparable criteria and methodologies
- Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education (curricular development, interinstitutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research)

Assess what ? Bologna Declaration

Objectives :

- Creation of an integrated european area of higher studies characterized by

 employability of the students

competitiveness of the study system

Means :

- Compatibility and comparability of the degrees by

Mobility (horizontal and vertical) system

Two-cycle system

ECTS

⟶ **Harmonization**

Assess what ? Bologna Process

Swiss specificities
- Two cycles = basic studies
- Swiss universities system harmonization
- Focused on democratisation

- The CRUS (Conference of the Swiss Universities Rectors) is in charge of the harmonized implementation of the Bologna reform in all Swiss Universities

Assess what ?

- Bologna Declaration (1999, agreement between states)

  ⟶ harmonisation

- Magna Charta Universitatum (1988, agreement between universities)

  ⟶ autonomy, liberty for universities

➔ Freedom within Harmonization

Which assessing methods ?

- Are the Bologna objectives realized ?

Impossible to give a response

- Are the Bologna means realized ?

Possible to try to give a response
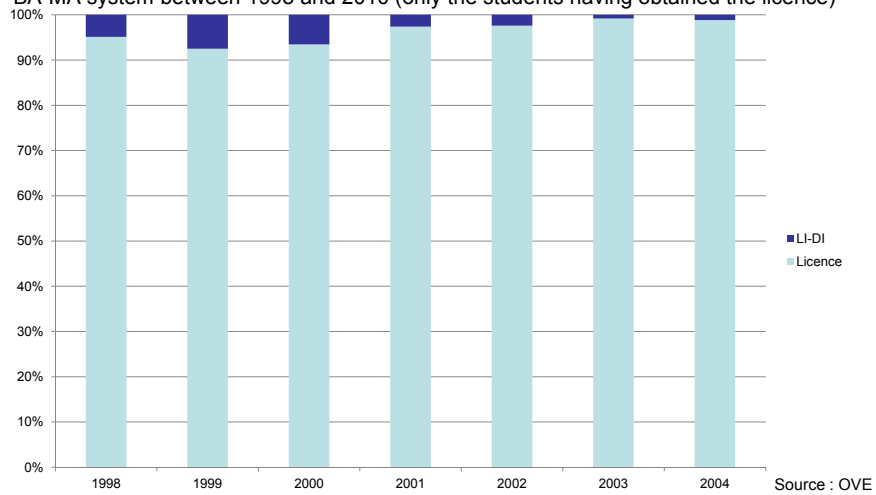
→ Evaluation by outputs and results is impossible

→ Process evaluation is possible

Assessing the 2 cycle system

- In every swiss university and HES (HES=Vocational higher studies), the 2 cycle system is implemented.
- It works.
- Is the duration of the studies under control?
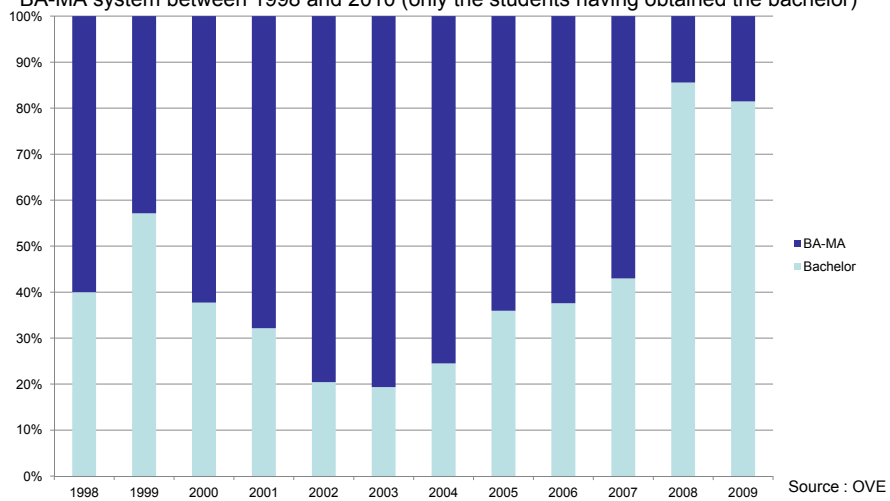- Main principle : The Bachelor-Master system is replacing the Licence-Diplôme system…

Two-cycle system

Graduate and undergraduate registrations of the new students at the University of Geneva in the BA-MA system between 1998 and 2010 (only the students having obtained the licence)

Source : OVE

Two-cycle system

Graduate and undergraduate registrations of the new students at the University of Geneva in the BA-MA system between 1998 and 2010 (only the students having obtained the bachelor)

Source : OVE

Two-cycle system

- Thus,

The average basic studies duration has increased after Bologna (from more than 3 years to more than 5 years)

- Nevertheless, according to the qualitative analysis we made (OVE-UNIGE, « Etudiants 2006 »)

The students think that « Bologna demands much… but provide no more (sometimes less) than the older system ».

⟹ Formal harmonization is not sufficient itself. We must give content the these changes.
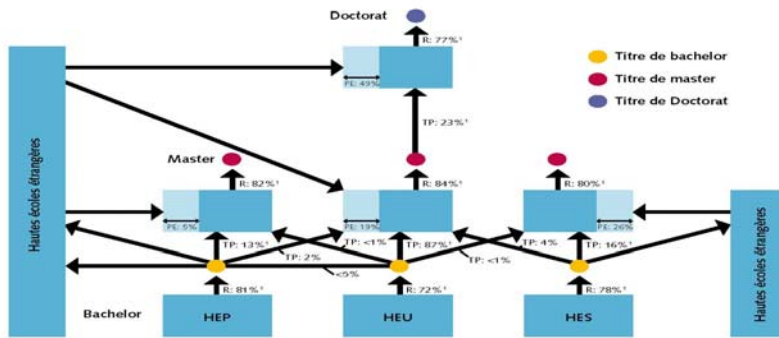

Assessing the mobility

- Vertical mobility (between bachelor and master; change discipline, university and/or country)
- Horizontal mobility (mobility travel and stay, exchange programs, intra- and inter-country)

Vertical mobility in Swiss higher studies (2010)

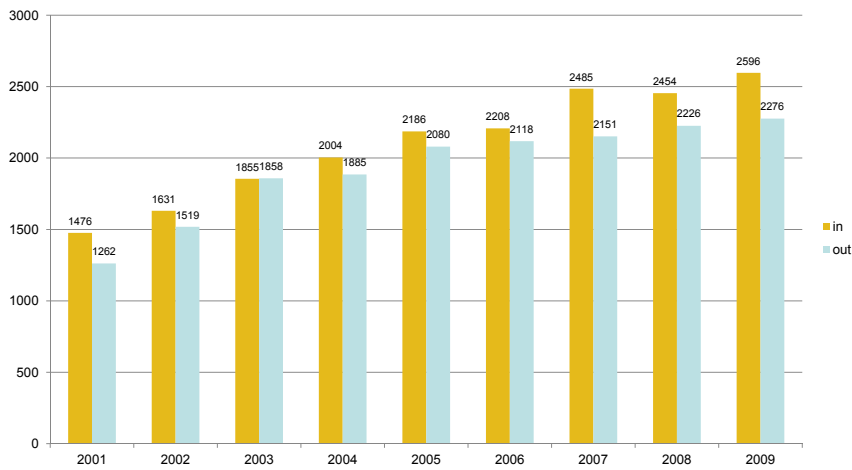Synthèse des flux principaux dans les hautes écoles suisses   Schéma 1

Horizontal mobility in Switzerland
Evolution 2001-2009

Source : CRUS

Assessing ECTS

- In the Swiss Bologna barometer, no mention of ECTS
- Why ?
- ➢ Because the needed indicators are not available
- ➢ We are no longer in a formal assessment
- ➢ But we have to assess contents

Assessing ECTS

- In fact, formal harmonization is realized
- And contents harmonization is stil to be realized
- ➢ Not easy to be evaluated (indicators missing)
- ➢ Contents are more concerned by universities freedom, « academic freedom »
- ➢ Above all, contents harmonization is much more difficult to realize
- ➲ ECTS is a perfect example of the contents harmonization : ambitious and « maybe impossible »

What's the ECTS

- Firstly (but not only), a system to provide credits
- it works since 1989 (with Erasmus program),
- it is implemented in all swiss universities
- it is difficult to be routinely reported
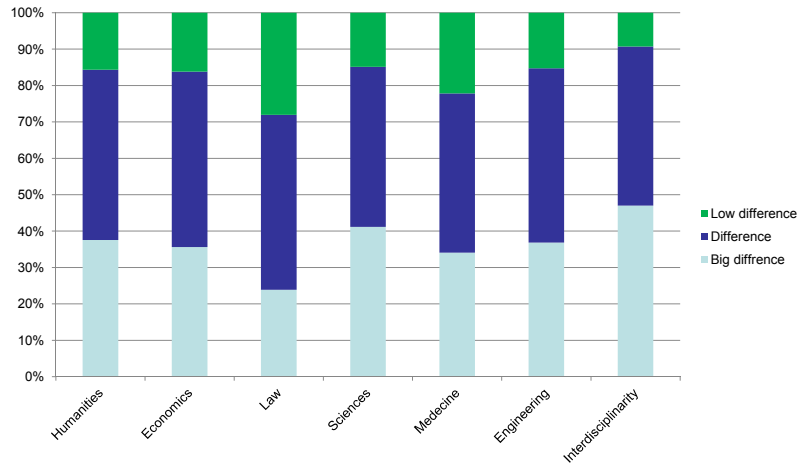
Basic principle

➢ 1 year = 60 credits

What's the ECTS

- Secondly, it includes the **workload** rules
- ➢ a way to give substance to the ECTS
- ➢ but this criterion remains formal

Basic principle

➢ 1 credit ~= 25-30 hours (course attendance, exam preparation, work outside the course…)

ECTS – workload

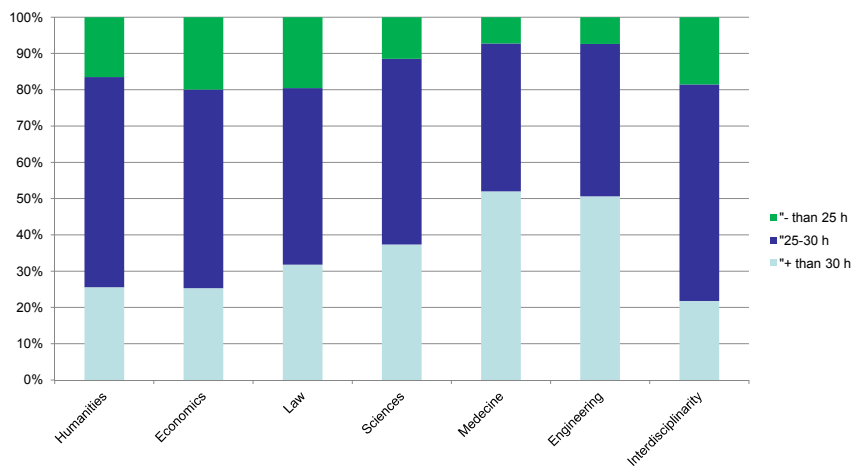**Differences between the workloads of the diffrent courses for a same student according to study area**

Low difference
Difference
Big diffrence

Source : CRUS-UNES-OVE

ECTS – workload

Conformity to the 25-30 hour norm according to study area
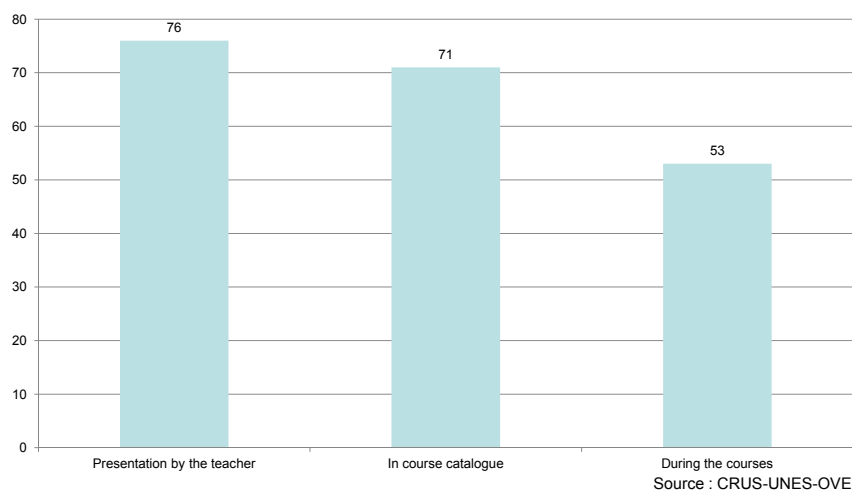

"- than 25 h
"25-30 h
"+ than 30 h

Source : CRUS-UNES-OVE

What's the ECTS

- Thirdly, it includes the learning outcomes rules
- ➢ Really a paradigm change : to express what the students should learn (knowledge, understanding and skills), not only subjects and course contents !
- ➢ Accompanied by assessing criteria
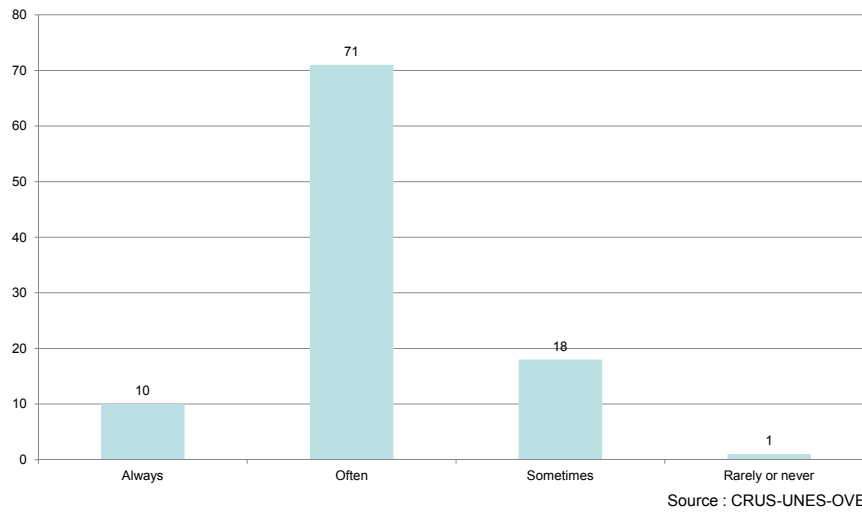- ➢ To be communicated to the students (course catalogue)

ECTS – learning outcomes
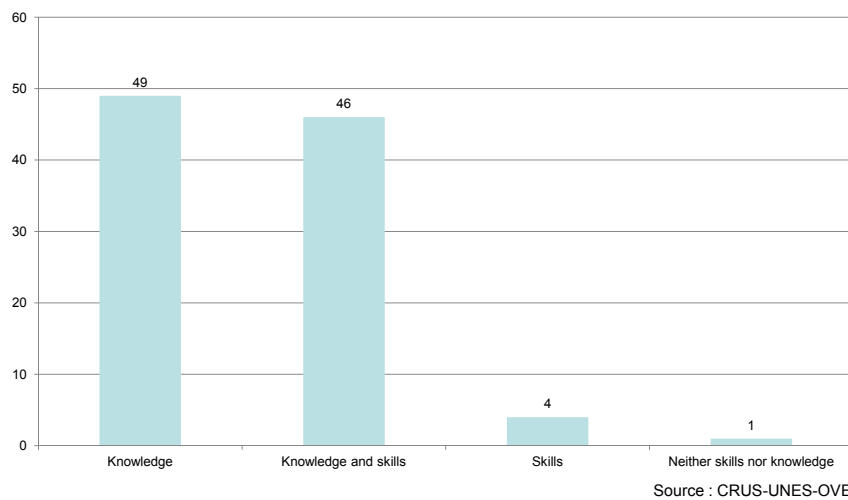## Course objectives are communicated

	Presentation by the teacher	In course catalogue	During the courses
Value	76	71	53

Source : CRUS-UNES-OVE

ECTS – learning outcomes
Courses objectives are rather realized

Source : CRUS-UNES-OVE

ECTS – learning outcomes
But courses objectives are more expressed as knowledge than as skills

Source : CRUS-UNES-OVE

Conclusion

- On the basis of these results, CRUS decided to focus its main efforts for Bologna process on learning outcomes.
- According to its Bologna Monitoring 2008-2011 (first intermediate report), these efforts are not (yet) successful (enough).
- But, if we want to make meaningful the Bologna, we have absolutely to continue these efforts.
- To change a paradigm requires a long process. To change contents (not only formal modifications) is a very difficult and long path…
- Bologna process is officially on the road. It formally works. Let's give a meaning to this new system.