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The Bachelor: Changes in Performance and Quality of Studying?  
Empirical Evidence in International Comparison.

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**Insights from a pilot project encouraging adjustment to  
the European Higher Education Reform in Spain:  
Students experiences**

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**PARTS OF THIS PRESENTATION**

1. The political context of Spanish and Catalan Higher Education reforms.
  2. The academics with regards to the Bologna process, (2004)
  3. The Students who participated in pilot scheme: Questions of Teaching and Learning. (2008)
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### Spanish Higher Education reforms

1. Universities became autonomous from state and religious interest.
2. The responsibility for the universities have been transferred to the regional governments.
3. Social Councils have been created.
4. The switching from a bureaucratic system to collegial one, managed by academics.
5. Changes in the structure and contents of the curricula, adopting trends approaching to the labour market.

## Folie 4

6. Procedures of evaluation and accreditation has been created.
7. Quality Agency of Catalonia gave content to ECTS as a new teaching methodology.
8. Catalan Government advanced the European reforms with a pilot project.
9. Spanish Government fixed in 240 the credits of Bachelor and gave autonomy to Universities to organise the curricula.
- 10 Catalan expenditure in higher education is more or less the same as in global Spain and it is near 1% of GDP (2005)

**II The Academics regarding Bologna reform**  
**Piece of research 2004**

1. The piece of research was about one metropolitan big university of Catalonia because it was the most committed university in the pilot scheme.
2. Intermediate level of analysis: Faculties.
3. A sample of six degrees which take part in the pilot experience and four degrees which preferred not to take part.
4. The sources of information were: Documents, 28 interviews to academics responsible for degrees, and 414 questionnaires to all academics of the chosen degrees.

**Perception of working conditions**

**“Do you believe that university is putting sufficient means and resources to implement the ECTS?” (Participants in pilot experience)**

Not at all	25
Not sufficient	55
Sufficient and a lot	20
Total	100 (201)

**Refreezing  
Situation of initial motivation**

**“Do you feel motivated to change your teaching methods according to ECTS proposals?” (Participants in pilot experience)**

Nothing	8
A little	29
Sufficient	47
A lot	16
Total	100 (211)

The interviews of intermediate leaders show us that the spur o motivators in relation to teaching activities didn't improve. But the data shows that the number of lecturing staff motivated to change their methodologies were a lot, two of every three academics.

**Future expectations of change**

Typology of academics according to their future expectations		
	"Application of Bologna process will improve teaching quality"	"Application of Bologna process will not improve teaching quality"
"In the next five years I will change my teaching methodology"	<b>Commitment</b>  <b>38%</b>	<b>Ritualism</b>  <b>27%</b>
"In the next five years I will not change my teaching methodology"	<b>Inhibition of rules</b>  <b>13%</b>	<b>Rebellion</b>  <b>22%</b>

This typology grasp the expectations of change in teaching, according to new methodologies; In one hand we take in account their evaluation of Bologna process in relation to teaching quality; in another hand the believes they have about their future behaviour.

The third type is a mixture of people who is using new methodologies from some time ago and people who think that is too late in his academic career to make that effort.

### III STUDENTS EXPERIENCES: TEACHING AND LEARNING

Methodology: Data collected

#### ■ Questionnaire.

- 907 students from 14 different grades of the UAB.
- Second and third grade courses.
- Implemented on April 2007.

#### ■ Interviews.

- 24 students from 3 grades of the UAB
- Second grade course.
- Implemented on March-April 2008.

Political  
Sciences  
Computer  
Engineering  
Childhood  
Education



## Context perceptions

### Hygienic factors

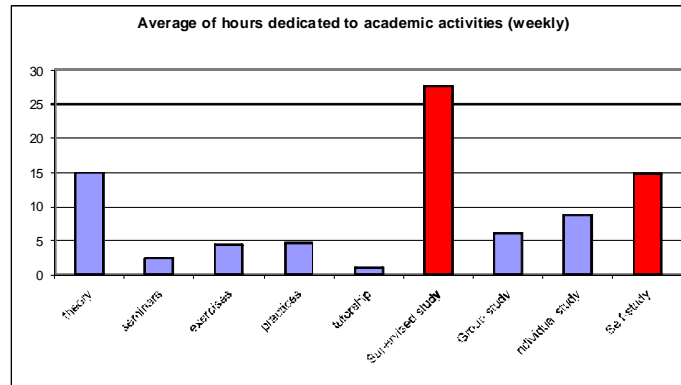
- Psychological needs:
  - Calendar: too much work to do and hand out.
  - Timetables: overlaps (combined with increased workload).
- Security:
  - Assessment strategy: fuzzy and changeable.
  - Information resources: less teacher's guidance and lack of information about the experience pilot.

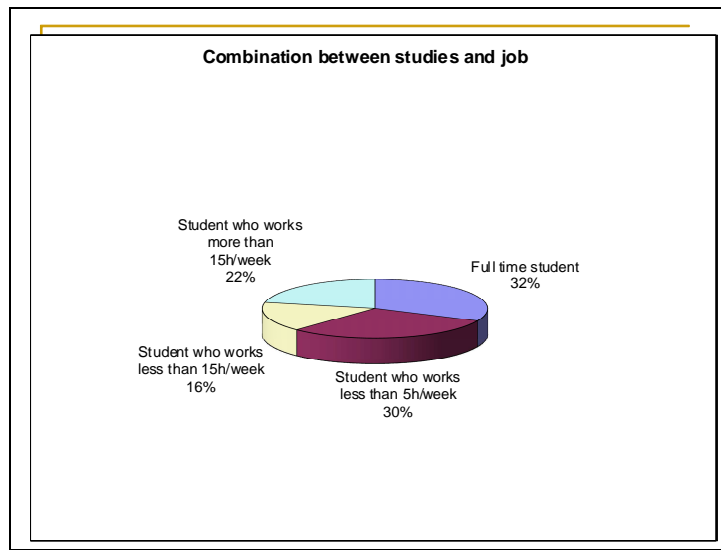
### Student's development

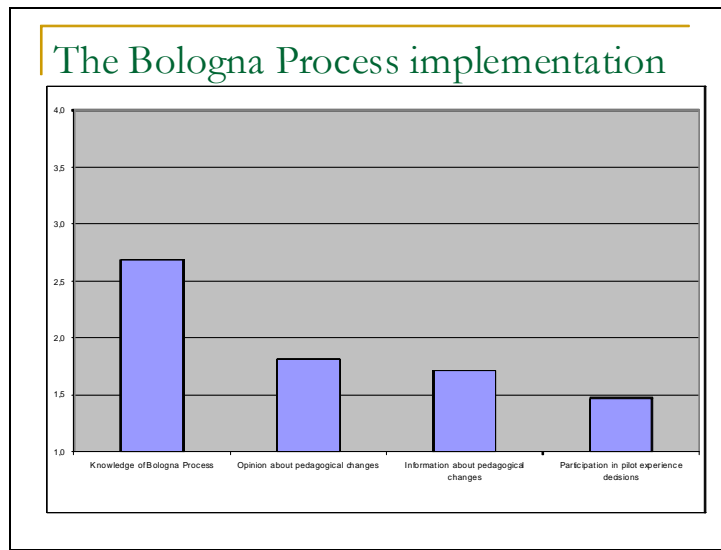
Reduction of attendance to classes.  
Prioritization of assessments to be submitted.  
Nonattendance to examinations is increased.  
Strategic learning.  
Students anger.

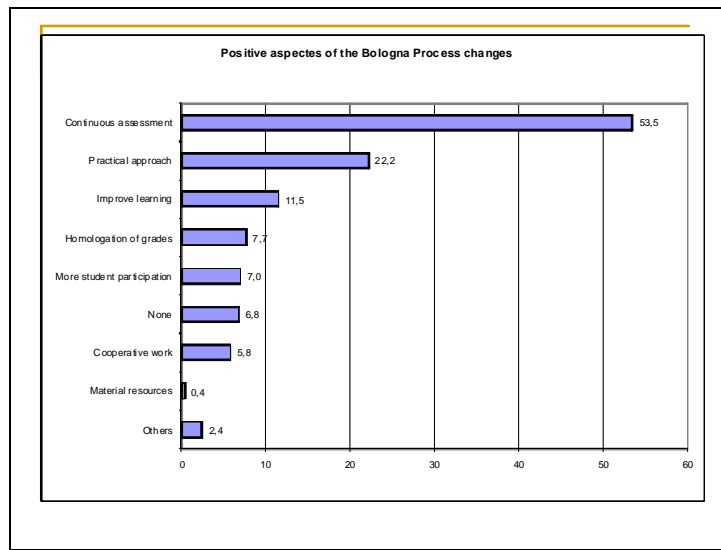


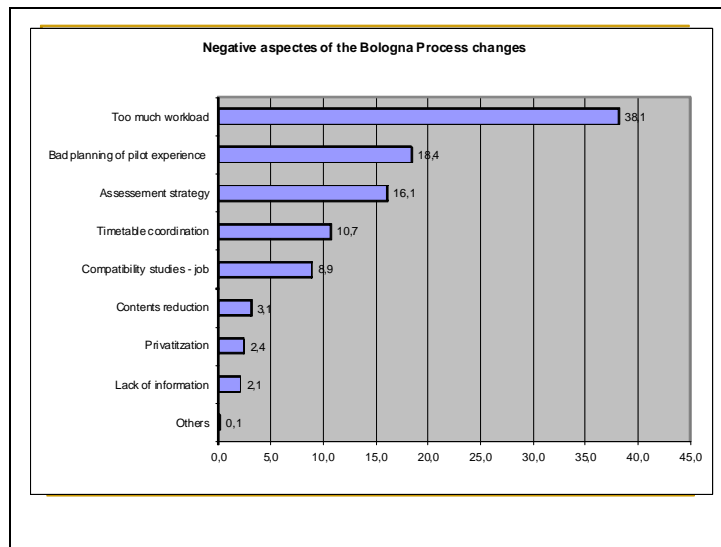
## Students profile











In this slide we can observe the negative aspects of the Bologna Process and the related changes considered by students. We can see that the main negative aspect is that they think they have to much work to do.

There are also four aspects which are related to the changes in the teaching learning process: to much workload, a bad planning of the pilot experience, the new assessment strategy and the timetable coordination.

We can observe some paradoxes between the positive and negative aspects due to the fact that we can observe some similar answers in both slides. But the information collected through the interviews carried out in our research, we can say that we can explain these seemed contradictions.

## INTERVIEWS

### Continuous assessment

**Positive consequences** (forced to study everyday)

Learning is increased and improved.

- Facilitation of a successful approval of subjects.
- Improving of marks.

**Negative consequences** (Too many assessments and excessive workload).

- Quality of learning has decreased.
- Lack of time to go in depth with topics.
- Degradation of contents and the level exigency of the subjects.
- Little recognition of the continued work and the correspondence between effort and marks.
- Contents fragmentation and loss of coherence amongst contents (lack of coordination).
- Increase of drop outs and no attendance to examinations.
- Practices lack clear integration with theoretical contents.
- Stress, physical and psychological exhaustion.

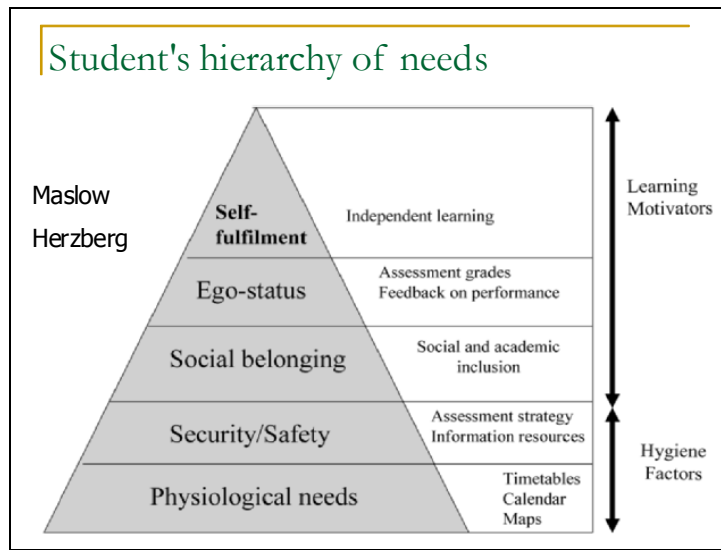
## Reduction of lessons.

- Positive consequences:
  - Increased autonomy.
- Negative consequences:
  - Without reduction of the contents.
  - Continuous assessment increases.
  - Obligatory attendance of classes.
  - Anomie: lack of norms.
- Difficulties in balancing contents explained by the teacher and the level of student's autonomy.



## Team work

- Team work increases contacts amongst students.
- Student seeks stable team work with efficient components.
  - Social capital: confidence.
  - Help for other aspects
- Increased social and academic integration to institution.



## Conclusions

- Negative opinion about Bologna Process implementation.
- Changes in teaching methodology might produce positive effects in student's learning process (social belonging, increase of the self-esteem and self fulfilment).
- But as the hygienic factors do not reach to a proper level of quality, positive effects are not visualized.
- Important volume of strategic students.

### Future research

- Enlarging the sample.
- Combination of quantitative (descriptive) and qualitative techniques (seeking social mechanisms of explanation).
- Panel of students, interviews at the second and last year of degree.
- Focus on sociological issues: students integration and identity formation.
- Research about creation of motivations related with student's choice (determine student's profile).