Middle East and North Africa
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Introduction

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA)\(^1\) is the result of the political will of 48 countries, which step by step during the last eighteen years built an area using common tools. These 48 countries implement reforms on higher education on the basis of common key values – such as freedom of expression, autonomy for institutions, independent students unions, academic freedom, free movement of students and staff. Through this process, countries, institutions and stakeholders of the European area continuously adapt their higher education systems making them more compatible and strengthening their quality assurance mechanisms. For all these countries, the main goal is to increase staff and students’ mobility and to facilitate employability.

In the last two decades, various instruments have been developed, adopted and implemented at the European, national, regional and institutional level aiming at facilitating fair recognition of foreign qualifications and/or study periods abroad. Those instruments are amongst others, the ENIC and NARIC networks, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the Diploma Supplement (DS), the overarching and national qualifications frameworks (QFs), the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ESG), etc.

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1  http://www.ehea.info/
The Tuning as a Bologna tool and as a Project\(^2\) has been developed within the broader context of continuous reforms of European higher education systems, when the society at large was undergoing rapid changes. The name «Tuning» was chosen for the project to reflect the idea that universities do not look for uniformity in their degree programmes or any sort of unified, prescriptive or definitive European curricula but simply for points of reference, convergence and common understanding. The protection of the rich diversity of European education has been paramount in the Tuning Project from the very start and the project in no way seeks to restrict the independence of academic and subject specialists, or undermine local and national academic authority.

\(^2\) http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/
What is Tuning?

Over time, Tuning has developed into a Process, an approach to (re-) designing, develop, implement, evaluate and enhance quality first, second and third cycle degree programmes\(^3\). Tuning Project and methodology are fully in line with the Bologna Process and constitute one of the academic tools for creating EHEA. The need for compatible, comparable and competitive higher education in Europe reflects the students’ needs. As students’ mobility increases so does the demand for reliable and objective information on educational degrees offered by different HEIs. Apart from this, employers within and outside Europe require reliable information on qualifications awarded and on what these qualifications means in practice and in the labour market context. Therefore, the process of creating national qualification frameworks is inseparable from EHEA development process.

\(^3\) http://tuningacademy.org/what-is-tuning/
Tuning aims to meet the needs of educational institutions and structures and to offer a concrete approach to implement the Bologna Process at the level of higher education institutions and subject areas. Furthermore, Tuning serves as a platform for developing reference points at subject area level. These are relevant for making programmes of studies comparable, compatible and transparent. The agreed-upon reference points for subject areas and degree programmes are expressed in terms of competences and learning outcomes.

Tuning in general has emerged from the understanding that the Bologna Process is about universities, their students, academic and non-academic staff. It is them, with all their knowledge and experience, who should be deciding upon higher education innovation strategies. Tuning is a university-driven project and movement, which came as a reaction of HEIs to new challenges and new opportunities that emerged within the process of European integration and EHEA creation.

Tuning projects are organised by the Tuning Academy⁴, an International Higher Education and Research Centre for the development and enhancement of the quality of learning, teaching and assessment in higher education, focusing on the competences for intellectual development, employability and citizenship in a global context.

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⁴ http://tuningacademy.org/tuning-academy/
The Tuning methodology as a universal tool for modernizing curricula in the context of achieving professional competences has gone beyond the borders of the EU and has acquired international significance. Universities in different countries and continents in expanding cooperation have increasingly resorted to using it to build joint programmes involving academic mobility, integrated education, introduction of a credit system, the exchange of educational modules and the mutual recognition of qualifications.

Middle East and North Africa Universities are also mastering the principles of the Tuning methodology through incorporating generic and subject specific competence descriptions into educational planning at the level of full degrees and individual degree components.

The Tuning Middle East and North Africa (T-MEDA) project\(^5\) has been designed as an independent university-driven project with contributions of university staff members from different countries. The T-MEDA project reflects the idea that universities do not look for the harmonisation of their degree programmes or any sort of unified, prescriptive or definitive curricula; but, simply for points of convergence and common understanding. The protection of the rich diversity of education has been paramount in the Tuning project from the very start and the Tuning Middle East and North Africa project

\(^5\) http://tuningmeda.org/
in no way seeks to restrict the independence of academic and subject specialists, or damage local and national academic authorities. The objectives are completely different. Tuning looks for common reference points. The Reference points are non-prescriptive indicators that aim to support the articulation of degree programmes.

The project tries to implement the Tuning methodology in the practice of higher education institutions in Middle East and North Africa through building of a framework of comparable, compatible and transparent programmes of studies. Its aim is to apply the Tuning methodology in universities and develop reference points in four subject areas - Architecture, Law, Nursing and Tourism. The development, implementation, monitor and improvement of degree programmes for the first cycle in mentioned areas are among the main results of the project. The project is specially designed to promote regional and international cooperation between Middle East, North Africa and EU universities.
T-MEDA
Project
Profile

**Project Title**
Tuning Middle East and North Africa

**Coordinating Institution**
University of Deusto

**Dates**
1 December 2013 – 30 November 2016

**Participant countries**
Spain, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Greece, France, Italy, Malta, Cyprus, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Libya

**Subject areas**
Law, Nursing, Architecture, Tourism

**Web**
http://tuningmeda.org/
Tuning Middle East and North Africa (T-MEDA) project is aimed at the implementation of the Bologna tools in Southern Neighbouring Area universities through building of a framework of comparable, compatible and transparent programmes of studies.

In order to achieve this, four specific objectives have been identified: to apply the Tuning methodology in universities of SNA in four subject areas – Architecture, Law, Nursing, Tourism; to develop Tuning Reference Points in four subject areas; to develop, implement, monitor and improve degree programmes for the first cycle programmes; and to promote regional and international cooperation between SNA and EU universities.

The project is designed to facilitate the modernisation of higher education in SNA by the applying the Tuning methodology for the development of the degree programmes in partners’ universities and development of the following lines: curricula design and delivery, employability of graduates, recognition of the degree programs, quality of higher education, and staff training.
Objectives

Wider objective:

- To implement Bologna tools in Southern Neighbouring Area universities through building of a framework of comparable, compatible and transparent programmes of studies.

Specific objectives:

- To apply the Tuning methodology in universities of Southern Neighbouring Area in four subject areas: Architecture, Law, Nursing and Tourism;
- To develop Tuning Reference Points in four subject areas;
- To develop, implement, monitor and improve degree programmes for the first cycle;

To promote regional and international cooperation between SNA and EU universities.
Subject Areas

The main work of the project will be given to the groups of academics from the following subject areas: Architecture, Law, Nursing and Tourism.
Outcomes

- Generic Competences
- Subject Specific Competences
- Consultation with Stakeholders: Survey Results
- Degree Programme Profiles
- Reference Points
- Design of Degree Programmes
- Degree Programme Curricula including Student Learning Guide and Syllabus for the 1st Year
- Implementation of ECTS-based Degree Programmes
Activities

- Definition of competences for subject areas.
- Consultation with stakeholders. Analysis of survey results.
- Formulating Reference Points. Formulating Programme Profiles and Learning Outcomes.
- Designing Degree Programmes. Development of Degree Programmes. Students’ enrolment.
- Implementation of Programmes. Teaching 1st Year.
- Peer review of Reference Points, Programme Profiles and Degree Programmes.
- Students and employers feedback. Monitoring of ECTS/Workload.
- Internal Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Multilingual Interactive Website.
# Partners

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Meetings

The project foresees set of activities, which have been distributed around 5 General Meetings – project milestones. General meetings, besides academic activities on the development the project content, include activities on project management, quality assurance and dissemination.

Besides, 5 special workshops for the academic staff have been organised at universities implementing the pilot programmes which followed by the final workshop on students’ workload and ECTS.
General Meetings
First General Meeting

Association of Arab Universities,
Amman (Jordan), 02 - 06 May 2014

The First GM took place at the premises of project Co-Coordinator - Association of Arab Universities, in Amman (Jordan), with aim to set up the project, establish Subject Area Groups, Committees, and initialise work on discussion on generic and subject specific competences. It included training on Tuning approaches and methodology, competence based learning, and survey technology and procedure of consultation process with stakeholders.
Second General Meeting

University of Deusto, Bilbao (Spain), 28 September - 02 October 2014

The Second GM has been hold by University of Deusto - project Coordinator, in Bilbao (Spain), with aim to present survey results and validate the lists of competences. It included the training for formulating Degree Programme Profiles, as well as experience of UD in the implementation of competence-based learning.
Final Note:

The average gap for the specific competences is much lower than the average gap for the generic competences.

EXPLANATION:
- Specific competences are easier to be understood and measured.
- Specific competences are related to knowledge and information.
- While generic ones refer to attitudes.
- Tourism professions can be offered by different faculties.

Steps for:
1. Combine competences
2. Combine - modify - eliminate competences
3. Merge competences from both generic and specific sides
4. Evaluate competences based on results of analysis of questionnaire results
5. Reach a final structure of grouping that include all agreed upon competences.
Third General Meeting

University of Cyprus, Nicosia (Cyprus), 15 - 19 February 2015

The Third GM has been organised at University of Cyprus, in Nicosia (Cyprus). The first draft of Reference Points and Degree Programme Profiles have been presented at Third GM that also included the training on designing Programme Curricula, based on experience of UCY.
Tuning Middle East and North Africa
The Forth GM was organized at University of Malta, Valletta (Malta). The last draft of Reference Points and Degree Programme Profiles have been presented at Fourth GM that also included the training on Implementation of ECTS-based programmes, with experience of UoM.
Fifth General Meeting

University of Deusto, Bilbao (Spain),
22 - 27 May 2016

The Fifth GM (Final Conference) has been hold by University of Deusto - project Coordinator, in Bilbao (Spain). Besides the discussion the project results and finalizing the edition version of Reference Points, partners have also participated in International Forum «Policy, Research and Practice in Higher Education», which brought together policy-makers, high-level ministerial officials and higher education managers, as well as researcher and practitioners in higher education, to discuss the project result and to make suggestions for implementation of Bologna process in Middle East and North Africa.
Tuning Middle East and North Africa
Workshops
Workshops

For reason to help implementing universities to develop the programmes and ensure start of the implementation process, special workshop with participation of EU experts for the academic staff at implementation universities have been elaborated and conducted as following:

Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa: Development of Degree Programme in Architecture, Hashemite University, Zarqa (Jordan), 18 - 20 May 2015

Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa: Development of Degree Programme in Tourism, Yarmouk University, Irbid (Jordan), 19 - 21 May 2015

Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa: Development of Degree Programme in Law, Cairo University, Cairo (Egypt), 21 - 26 May 2015

Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa: Development of Degree Programme in Law, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Kaslik (Lebanon), 24 - 25 February 2016

Students' workload and ECTS, University of Groningen, Groningen (Netherlands), 13 - 16 November 2016
Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa

Development of Degree Programme in Architecture, Hashemite University, Zarqa (Jordan), 18 - 20 May 2015
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Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa

Development of Degree Programme in Tourism, Yarmouk University, Irbid (Jordan), 19 - 21 May 2015
Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa

Development of Degree Programme in Nursing, Cairo University, Cairo (Egypt), 20 - 25 May 2015
Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa

Development of Degree Programme in Law, Cairo University, Cairo (Egypt), 21 - 26 May 2015
Implementing Tuning in the Middle East and North Africa

Development of Degree Programme in Law, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Kaslik (Lebanon), 24 - 25 February 2016
With aim to provide academic staff of implementing universities with training on Students’ workload and ECTS, the special training has been organised at premises of Tuning Academy headquarter at University of Groningen. The final version of pilot programmes and ECTS comparison tables have been presented and discussed.
Main Results

The main results of the project include:

- Generic Competences
- Subject Specific Competences
- Consultation with Stakeholders
- Degree Programme Profiles
- Reference Points
- Design of Degree Programmes
- Degree Programme Curricula
Tuning Middle East and North Africa
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