The role of English-medium teaching in European higher education

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January 2012
Exponential growth of English-taught programmes

- 2002: > 560 Master programmes in 19 EU countries excl. UK and Ireland
- 2012: > 6779 Master programmes in 11 EU countries excl. UK and Ireland
- N.B: Figures include courses exclusively taught in English & a mix of English and domestic language(s)
Volume per country

English-taught Master Programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1734</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
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<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Finland</td>
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<td>Poland</td>
<td>202</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>173</td>
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</tbody>
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Number of English-taught Master Programmes per country.
Significance for EHEA

- English as medium of instruction

- No mass feature
  Germany: 1,734 English Master‘s programs – 13,500 university programs in total

- North-South watershed
  Reflects growing market-orientation
  (National brand-awareness and tuition fees)
Characteristics overall

- Degree levels: Second cycle/Master level
- Most important admission requirement: students’ English proficiency especially in DE, FR, NL, BE
- Diploma supplement: Standard practice
Characteristics - Masters Programmes

Disciplines

Business & Economics 28%
Engineering & Technology 21%
Life sciences, medicine 6%
Social Sciences 13%
Natural Sciences 9%
Humanities & Art 8%
Others 15%
Institutional motivation

5 main drivers in order of importance:

1) To attract international students
2) To make domestic students 'fit' for global labour markets
3) To sharpen the institutional profile vis-à-vis others in the country
4) To secure the research base by attracting future PhD students
5) To provide high-level education for students from developing countries

Contradictions?

- To make domestic students 'fit' for the global market
  - Domestic students tend to constitute minority of students in English-taught programmes

- No economic motivation?
  - Majority of all English-taught programmes charge tuition fees (70% in 2008)
Quality assurance in EHEA

• Standard: Course accreditation at national level
  – Similar for courses in domestic language
  – English proficiency of students: great relevance
  – English proficiency of staff: little relevance

• Absence of a Europe-wide Quality Assurance Scheme for English as medium of instruction
Quality assurance - recent developments

• Introduction of standardized English tests for teaching staff aligned with CEFR
• Optional / at institutional level, e.g. Université Libre de Bruxelles
• Mandatory / at national level in Flanders, Belgium (level C1)
Quality assurance for English

Why?

- Relationship between didactic skills and speaking skills
- Students‘ expectations re quality of teaching
- Academics‘ expectations re their own teaching
- Institutional performance ambitions
The role of the British Council

- English-taught programmes: both challenge & opportunity for institutions in their internationalisation ambitions

- British Council offers tools to support Higher Education Institutions worldwide:
  - IELTS for students
  - Testing and training courses for staff with a view to HE teaching methodology
Bibliography


- www.mastersportal.eu/