



## The Bologna Process: The Democracy - Bureaucracy Dilemma

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## Abstract

The Bologna Process was aimed at making a Europe of Knowledge possible, but the standardization process following the development of the EHEA challenged its democratic values; the autonomy of the bureaucratic part of HEIs has been strengthened while their faculty members have less formal power. This article examines this dilemma using Weber's remarks on the bureaucratization of education as a tool to reveal the ratio between democracy and bureaucracy in the process of establishing EHEA 1999–2010; a dilemma never solved, hence important to be aware of.

*Keywords:* Bologna, Norway, Weber, bureaucracy, Humboldt, democracy, EHEA, HEI.

### 1.0 The Bologna Process: the Democracy - Bureaucracy Dilemma

The Bologna Process gathered 49 European countries for the purpose of cooperating in the establishment of common qualification frameworks for higher education in Europe, resulting in the inauguration of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2010.<sup>1</sup> In the process of establishing the EHEA, the Bologna Declaration of 1999 pointed to some action lines as well as declarations that would subsequently be signed in Prague in 2001 and in Berlin in 2003.<sup>2</sup> The Bologna Process was a democratization process aimed at giving new groups access to the highest-ranked institutions of EHEA with the aim of building a Europe of Knowledge and educating people for active, lifelong democratic citizenship.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, it contained a democratic dilemma that arose because of the need for bureaucratization following its demands for standardization. The process both promoted universal education in Europe and challenged democratic values on the institutional level at the same time. I will avail myself of the German sociologist Max Weber's remarks on democracy and bureaucracy in his work *Economy and Society* from 1922 as a tool to reveal and discuss this dilemma in the Bologna process in general, and the implementation of it in Norway in specific. What does this dilemma reveal and why it is important to discuss? This discussion is needed in order to reveal the ratio between democracy and bureaucracy in the Bologna Process, an insight crucial in order to keep the democratization of higher education (HE) in Europe on a sound track, avoiding both nostalgia and utopia to lead the way.

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<sup>1</sup> For more details see <http://www.ehea.info/>.

<sup>2</sup> The six were addressing common degrees, bachelor- and masterbased programs, joint credit system, mobility, quality assurance and promotion of the European dimension. The six were completed with three more action lines in the Prague Communiqué 2001; lifelong learning, institutions and students, promoting EHEA, and in the Berlin Communiqué with one more action line; the establishment of EHEA and European Research Area ERA as two pillars of the knowledge-based society. The Bologna Declaration of 1999 is available at [http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main\\_doc/990719BOLOGNA\\_DECLARATION.PDF](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/990719BOLOGNA_DECLARATION.PDF), read 20.02.14.

<sup>3</sup> This aim was declared in the conclusion from the presidency of the Lisbon European Council on 24.03.2000. For a further introduction of the term democratic citizenship, see: Fejes, A. (2009) Active democratic citizenship and lifelong learning: A governmentality analysis. In M. Bron Jr, P. Guimarães, R. Vieira de Castro (eds), *The State, Civil Society and the Citizen: Exploring Relationships in the Field of Adult Education in Europe*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 79-95.

Web:

[https://www.academia.edu/8007585/Active\\_democratic\\_citizenship\\_and\\_lifelong\\_learning\\_A\\_governmentality\\_analysis](https://www.academia.edu/8007585/Active_democratic_citizenship_and_lifelong_learning_A_governmentality_analysis) (accessed 15.01.2015)

## 2.0 Weber's Remarks On Education

Weber's reflections on education in *Economy and Society* reveal some of the dilemmas of the Bologna Process in light of democratic values. His discussion about the ratio between bureaucracy and democracy treats these two as ideal types; they are imaginary pictures rather than reality, highlighting essential aspects of the empirical phenomena 'democracy' and 'bureaucracy'. His ideal types are neither regular nor empirical examples; they are instead tools that define the general principles of the phenomenon. He presents his historical sociology as a stand-off between historicism and positivism and defines the ideal type as "an illusion which in itself is unambiguous" (Weber 2003) (Haukland 2014).

Weber discusses democracy in the classical context of "the 'equal rights' of the governed" and makes some remarks about this (Weber 1978, p. 985) (Lijphard 1984). He states that the "demos" itself, which means a shapeless mass, is not "governing" the organization or state in question after a democratization process. Democratization is more about the governing of the people than the "demos" governing (Haukland 2014). The very process is about new ways of providing access to representative government, giving people channels of power through elections to ensure that the leaders represent "public opinion" (Weber 1978, p. 985). The Bologna Process was aimed at giving new groups of European students access to EHEA, one of the most important doorsteps for young people in order to make a living. In this way education opportunities was given to a larger part of the population.

Weber points at the universities in Germany, with an elected president and deans representing the university, as an example of a case where *direct democracy* is practiced (Weber 1978, p. 948, 955). He also explains that the direct democracy is challenged basically by size (Haukland 2014); "As soon as mass administration is involved, the meaning of (direct, my remark) democracy changes so radically that it no longer makes sense for the sociologist to ascribe to the term the same meaning ..." (Weber 1978, p. 951)<sup>4</sup> Hence, in the transition from elite and mass education to universal education, democracy turns from direct democracy – or people (here: professors) governing – to governing the people (in this context, the professors) (Trow 1974, p. 3). In other words, it was needed to replace formal power from the professors to the administration in order to open up the universities for the increasing

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<sup>4</sup> In other words, according to Weber, the challenges faced by mass education in the 70s and 80s in Norway had to change the way democracy was lived out in the universities. The establishing of regional university colleges can be seen as a way of handling this challenge without having to change the universities according to the increasing number of students. See Weber, Max. *Makt og byråkrati. Essays om politikk og klasse, samfunnsforskning og verdier*, Gyldendal, Oslo, 2000, p. 153.

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3 numbers of students from the late 60s, and crack the traditional elitist hegemony of higher  
4 education. In this development, bureaucracy was given a crucial role. Weber defines  
5 bureaucratization in general as “a certain development of administrative tasks, both quantitative and  
6 qualitative” (Weber 1978, p. 969). According to this definition, bureaucracy is seen as the actual  
7 *result* of this development. Weber states that democratic mass parties make mass democracy  
8 possible. Without them and their organization driven by bureaucratic rules rather than inherited  
9 rights, there would be no mass democracy.

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11 The mass parties, as well as the mass universities, are “inevitably” accompanied by  
12 bureaucratization, which poses a challenge to the very nature of democracy (Weber 1978, p. 985);  
13 Democratization promotes a bureaucratization process which establishes a bureaucracy with its own  
14 interests as well as the “demos” interests by and for which it was created. In the Bologna Process,  
15 the standardization of the architecture of EHEA, as earlier mentioned, resulted in a stronger higher  
16 education (HE) bureaucracy. The very nature of democracy, defined by Weber, is at stake when its  
17 bureaucracy starts to serve its own interests. This development contrasts the political concept of  
18 democracy, which is, on one hand, to prevent status groups to block “universal accessibility of  
19 office”, on the other to enlarge “the sphere of influence of ‘public opinion’ as far as practicable” (in  
20 other words, to diminish bureaucratic authority) (Weber 1978, p. 985).

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22 This is because bureaucracy tends to establish status groups of officials and insists on its own  
23 authority of officialdom. Nevertheless, because of decision-making by rules rather than by  
24 discretion, thus treating people equally, bureaucratization brings *passive* democratization along with  
25 it. Weber saw a parallel between bureaucratization and democratization, although he also warned  
26 against overstatements about it, “however typical it might be,” because these democratization  
27 processes often are connected with status groups (Weber 1978, p. 990).<sup>5</sup> In other words; according  
28 to Weber, bureaucratization is a two-edged sword that both provides for and undermines  
29 democratization (Haukland 2014). This is what I call “The democracy-bureaucracy dilemma”.

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Weber’s analysis sheds light on crucial challenges in the bureaucratization of HE in Europe  
during the last two decades. The democratization process of Bologna demanded bureaucratization  
in order to gain mass education and internationalization in HE. Weber’s remarks enlighten the

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<sup>5</sup> Weber states that “There is also the possibility – and often it has become a fact...- that  
bureaucratization of the administration is deliberately connected with the formation of status  
groups, or is entangled with it by the force of the existing groupings of social power.” Weber 1978,  
p. 985.

dilemma of the process; with EHEA follows a demand of a uniform administration. His focus on education serving bureaucracy more than democracy through favouring the qualified, who tend to constitute a privileged “caste” and gain social prestige and rights, will be the main tool in this analysis. I will use Weber’s comments on education to take a closer look at the dilemma between democracy and bureaucracy in the Bologna process.

### 2.1 Preferring the Qualified: The Demand for Theorization

The Bologna process transformed the framework for academics; An unwanted and often disregarded consequence of favouring production results in HE is the tendency to favour production over quality and originality; the organizational and institutional frameworks can be seen as restraints hampering academic creativity (Heinze, Shapira and Senker 2009, p. 619). Heinze et al. found that scientific creativity was released when funding is based on trust rather than results. In this, we see two of the Weberian rationalities set up against each other: value-rational against instrumental, with a clash between Humboldtian values and goals of outcomes (Ritzer 2009, p. 33). On the other hand, the establishment of a European market of higher education also made room for more possibilities among scholars and opened doors for an academic career and network building outside national borders.

Michael Gibbons et al. state that in parallel with the classical knowledge production, which they call *Mode 1*, a new knowledge production, *Mode 2*, has been emerging over the last decades (Gibbons et al., p. 1). One of its characteristics is that the research groups are interdisciplinary and “less firmly institutionalized” and encourage ‘an increase in the number of potential sites where knowledge can be created’ (Gibbons et al., p. 6). In other words, the market of research is not unambiguously following the EHEA market; it is even operating outside of the higher education institutions (HEIs). This production of knowledge do not favour the qualified, but the qualified with abilities to imply their knowledge in order to solve a problem demanding interdisciplinary cooperation. This is an example of how the knowledge producers themselves, basically in the context of application, practice ‘problem solving capability on the move,’ as an answer to the need of more flexibility (Gibbons et al., p. 5). Mode 2 demands new skills and offers new ways of favouring scholars beyond the traditional, challenging the university-monopoly of certifying competence (Gibbons et al., p. 139). Gibbons even predicts that the quality control will become a hybrid form in the future; a combination of various actors inside and outside the HEIs will decide who is qualified or not. In other words, universities’ reality today is far beyond Weber. To him, our universities, both old and new ones, may not even be the entity he addresses. If so, his dilemma is still vivid: knowledge production demands a bureaucracy. And when it is settled, it has a tendency

to frame the way into the future. Whether Mode 2 provides a solution or a further headache in terms of this issue, remains to be seen, but Gibbons states that the diffusion of boundaries between knowledge production within universities and outside them, shakes the solid organizational stability of academia: "Because knowledge production is becoming more dynamic and open-ended, its modes of organization are less stable and permanent" (Gibbons 2012, p. 140).

According to Weber, the very *nature* of education is violated by the bureaucratization following mass education. The Bologna Process, leading Europe towards universal access to HE, indeed changed the very nature of HE in Europe. Three new universities in Norway between 2005 and 2010 are examples of how this destabilization process turned out in favour of knowledge production in new regions of the country. Still, the prize to pay was the transformation from mass to universal university, and the transition of formal power from the faculty to the administration. The introduction of Mode 2 is a part of the new nature of education, named the universal university (Trow 1974). It partly explains why the bureaucracy of HEIs in Norway emerged as more flexible than indestructible during the implementation of the Bologna Process; it has turned from serving status quo, aiming at stronger adaptive capacity to rapid changes in order to cope with the future (Trow 1974, p. 64). I will come back to the implementation of the Bologna Process in Norway later in this article.

### 3.0 Humboldt's Ideal vs. Democratic Values

In order to understand the clash between democracy and bureaucracy in HE, the ideal of Humboldt also needs a remark. The key values of Humboldt's educational ideal have existed in both university and college circles since the early 19th century: personal culture (*Bildung*), scholars' freedom to teach and conduct research and students' freedom to choose education. The autonomy of the university was crucial in this tradition when it came to topics and academic thinking, even though it was administrated by the state, which employed its professors.<sup>6</sup> Weber's example of direct democracy in academia was the elected President and Dean, but only as long as the numbers of the electorate were low. Humboldt's ideal was challenged by proponents of mass education because it was reserved for a small group of scholars and thus represented a democracy for the privileged.

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<sup>6</sup> Sett under ett NOU 2008:3, p. 18. Fosslund, Jørgen, "Wilhelm von Humboldt: Dannelse og frihet – Det moderne universitet", in Steinholdt, Kjetil and Lars Løvlie (Eds.), *Pedagogikkens mange ansikter. Pedagogisk idehistorie fra antikken til det postmoderne*, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, 2004, p. 210.

Hence, Humboldt's ideal was seen as a challenge in terms of preparing academia for the masses and establishing universal access to HE through EHEA between 2000 and 2010.

In 2007, the European University Association (EUA)'s Trends V report stated that: "... the greatest barrier to the successful implementation of Bologna is the traditional model of universities as independent and loosely connected faculties ..." (EUA Trends V report, 2007) In other words, the traditional perspective inspired by Humboldt was the biggest threat to the Bologna Process. How could the process be so successful despite rejecting these traditional values? In 2005, the ministers participating in the process stated in the Bergen Communiqué that the Bologna Process did not overregulate HE in Europe, at the same time as they "urge universities to ensure that their doctoral programs promote interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills, thus meeting the needs of the wider employment market" (Bergen Communiqué, p. 4)<sup>7</sup>

According to the American professor Paul Gaston, the stakeholders have solved the challenge of overregulation by following two tracks; *both* quality assurance and the strengthening of courses and institutions. In strengthening the institutions, the increasing formal demands on the management allowed it to gain more formal power, while the single faculty member lost some of his or her influence along the way. To a certain extent, the on-campus channels of participation for faculty members did not match the Bologna Process at large and were removed. A European framework demanded institutions with stronger management on all levels, but the Bologna Process was voluntarily to attend and even to follow as participant. As a final remark on the European Parliament-Committee on Culture and Education in October 2011, the Italian professor Giunio Luzzatto underlined the need of more top-down power while stating that "Probably, good will is no more sufficient, if we aim at achieving completely the ambitious goals of EHEA; decisions at top institutional levels are needed" (Luzzato, 2011, p. 11).

As early as in 2005, the EUA Trends IV report had suggested that strong and sensitive leadership "allowing enough space for internal deliberation" was needed in order to continue the reform (Gaston 2010, p. 63). At the 3rd Conference on the Knowledge Base for Higher Education Politics in Norway arranged by The Research Council of Norway, Director General Arvid Hallén stated during the opening session that the area of politics concerning higher education also needs to be based on research (Hallén 2014, web). Another question is therefore whether there is a democratic challenge to a society giving the key roles to researchers rather than to elected politicians in shaping the future of academia (Meyer 2002, p. 14). A related question is: What happens when the politicians and the experts are talking the same language?

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<sup>7</sup> Cited in Gaston, 2010, p. 66.



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5 What happens with democracy when those who are to represent the people, speak and act in  
6 the language of the experts? What has the state become, when those who govern, are  
7 thinking in concepts which lie far behind the experiences of common people? (Høvik, 2002,  
8 p. 50.)  
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13 Researchers Kehm, Michelsen and Vabø (2010) state that the Humboldtian ideal of *Bildung* and  
14 *Lehrenfreiheit* in HE has been altered in the Bologna Process towards a system that more and more  
15 values the combination of *Bildung* and professional training: “A ‘pure’ Humboldtian model was  
16 impossible to justify within the framework of a mass system of higher education” (p. 240). In  
17 opening up to the masses, the Humboldtian values emerged as too élitist; to quote Weber, they  
18 served a qualified “caste” of academics, not society at large. The Humboldtian ideal showed itself  
19 insufficient for the new HE reality where *Ausbildung* and *Bildung* had to meet and today still need  
20 to adjust to each other.  
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#### 28 29 **4.0 The Ivory Tower replaced by an Ebony One?**

30 A natural question to ask, is whether the Humboldtian university, promoting “ivory towers” through the  
31 Bologna Process is replaced with a university model promoting the development and legitimacy of  
32 bureaucracy. Let us call it an “ebony tower” which tends to replace that of ivory.  
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#### 36 **4.1 The Examination System**

37 When Weber examines the effects of the rational bureaucratic system of government on society, he  
38 points to its effect on the nature of education and personal culture (*Erziehung* and *Bildung*) (Weber  
39 1978, p. 998). This imply that higher education is highly effected by its bureaucracy. In the Bologna  
40 Process, the examination system was one of the main issues in order to harmonize the EHEA and  
41 tear down the thresholds for students to exchange between the HEIs. Weber points at the  
42 examination system as a crucial part of both higher education and bureaucracy – it is a point of  
43 practice where these meet and join in a way that makes education serve bureaucracy more than  
44 democracy (Haukland 2014):  
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51 First, it creates a culture of choosing and preferring the qualified by introducing a system of  
52 specialized examinations. During the Bologna Process, a division of higher education into smaller  
53 examination units was one of the solutions in order to gain accessibility for students to the whole  
54 EHEA, allowing them to take courses instead of semesters at another campus and to get credits for a  
55 program not yet finished. Weber states that the choosing and preferring of the qualified alters the  
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3 nature of education towards bureaucratic procedures, as bureaucracy itself is dependent on the  
4 possibility of ranking officials by the degree of qualification. The nature of education has changed  
5 from elite to mass education followed by the Bologna Process, which was aimed at giving universal  
6 access to higher education in Europe. Martin Trow (1974) presents some crucial aspects of these  
7 transitions when it comes to the examination system. The exams of the elitist universities, defined  
8 as HEIs recruiting under 15 percent of the age grade, are specialized but still not given in programs  
9 separated in courses. In contrast, the mass universities, defined as HEIs recruiting between 15 and  
10 50 percent of the age grade, reflect the change in function from preparing elites in bringing forward  
11 knowledge, to preparing the elite in a broader sense, including technical and economic education.  
12 The exams is given in separate courses which is a part of a programme and the focus on *bildung* is  
13 not as evident. In the universities with universal access, defined as recruiting over 50 percent of the  
14 age grade, the education given is seen as an obligation in order to get a good job. The aim is to train  
15 the students to adapt ongoing changes both socially and technologically, providing different  
16 perspectives as tools. Mass communication has replaced the tight bounds between student and  
17 professor, and the grades are not as important because of the need for flexibility and adaptation  
18 skills. This development is running while some HEIs in parallel keep their elitist or mass profile.  
19 The transition from elite to universal universities basically changes the examination system from  
20 one or two exams each semester to over the double. This development requires a larger  
21 administration, which can secure the formal procedures for qualification.  
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35 Second, Weber states that the qualified citizens become a privileged “caste” which favours  
36 some against others according to their diplomas, again, for the benefit of the bureaucracy because of  
37 its need of new job opportunities in order to consolidate its hegemony.  
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41 If we hear from all sides demands for the introduction of regulated curricula culminating in  
42 specialized examinations, the reason behind this is, not a suddenly awakened “thirst for  
43 education,” but rather the desire to limit the supply of candidates for these positions (high  
44 status and economical beneficial positions, my remark) and to monopolize them for the  
45 holders of educational patents (Weber 1978, p. 1000).  
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51 During the Bologna Process, one of the key efforts was on regulating the curricula in order to make  
52 the exams fit a bachelor and master degree shared by all participants.  
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55 Third, the diplomas also give social prestige and the rights to demand payment according to  
56 status instead of outcome (Weber 2000, p. 154). In other words, the development of the “patent of  
57 education” is furthered by the expected social prestige and economical outcome (Weber 1978, p.  
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3 1000). In EHEA this point is recognized in the benefit of universal universities both on the  
4 individual, institutional, national and European level. The individual gain of a European market of  
5 higher education is more opportunities of both education and jobs. As for the institutions, the  
6 development is strengthening their autonomy. On the national level, HEIs that can cooperate with  
7 other HEIs abroad strengthens the domestic research and gives access to more researchers and  
8 students. On the European level, the benefit of an education market is, among others, a working  
9 force with comparable degrees, allowing lack of competence to be filled across the borders.

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17 According to Weber, the nature of bureaucracy, serving itself and not democracy, paves the way for  
18 less democratic development. By nature it struggles to gain its own employees, who tend to form a  
19 social class of their own with their benefits and rights (Weber 2000, p. 155). Bureaucracy has  
20 always been established relatively late in a institutional process (Weber 1978, p. 983). But when  
21 bureaucracy is fully established in an administration, the system it creates is “practically  
22 indestructible” and cannot be replaced or disposed of (Weber 1978, p. 987, 988). Weber warns of  
23 generalizing on this topic; every historical case must be analysed on its own to see how bureaucracy  
24 develops (Weber 1978, p. 991). As for the Bologna Process, this is a part of the picture. But some of  
25 the participating countries, such as Poland and Greece, did not adjust as easily as for example  
26 Norway and Ireland. The process is postponed and a new goal is to achieve a common European  
27 education market in 2020. The opposition may be linked to the top-down nature of the new  
28 autonomy in HEIs which eliminates the central role of faculty members in the development of the  
29 HEIs in Europe. In summary, Weber gives us the perspective that the bureaucratization of education  
30 equals an increasing demand for theorization and documentation of knowledge in the educational  
31 system, favouring the “specialist” instead of the “cultivated man”:  
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43 Behind all the present discussions about basic questions of the educational system there  
44 lurks decisively the struggle of the “specialist” type of man against the older type of the  
45 “cultivated man”, a struggle conditioned by the irresistibly expanding bureaucratization of  
46 all public and private relations of authority and by the ever increasing importance of experts  
47 and specialized knowledge. (Weber 1978, p. 1002)

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53 Hence, bureaucracy and democracy will always be in conflict because of their opposite natures.  
54 Every democracy faces the challenge of a bureaucracy both administering and undermining its  
55 values. Nevertheless, mass democracy cannot exist without a certain amount of bureaucracy, which  
56 is one of its premises. One problem is that individual needs will not be cared for until they concern  
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3 a certain amount of people. In this way, democratization might weaken individuals and strengthen  
4 those in power. Weber calls the meeting between common man and officials “the levelling of the  
5 governed” (Weber 1978, p. 985). In the transition from mass to universal universities in Europe, the  
6 Bologna Process, the demand for education had become strong enough to level common man into a  
7 new architecture of HE.  
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## 11 12 13 **4.2 Between Democracy and Bureaucracy** 14

15 Weber’s analysis of the threat against HE posed by the bureaucratization needed to  
16 document and exercise legitimate authority underlines that this challenge is not new, although it  
17 appears in new areas and ways. Weber sheds light on the bureaucratization of HEI in Europe by  
18 three parameters, revealing some crucial aspects on *how* and *why* the process represented a clash  
19 between bureaucracy and democratic values in the examination system (Haukland 2014): It built a  
20 bureaucracy which favoured the qualified, established them as a privileged “caste” and provided the  
21 qualified with social rights and prestige. In the following, I will examine the development of HEIs  
22 in Norway during the Bologna Process in order to take a closer look on the democracy-bureaucracy  
23 dilemma.  
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### 31 **4.2.1 Passive Democratization through Bureaucratization** 32

33 In the development at the European level described above, we see an increasing and more  
34 uniform bureaucratization of EHEA. According to Weber, an administration establishing  
35 bureaucratic rules on a large scale will end up with a system which can hardly be reversed or  
36 destroyed. If we take a closer look at the processes going on in EHEA during the decade being  
37 considered in this article, there are some changes taking place that demonstrate and make Weber’s  
38 remarks relevant.  
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43 Through the Bologna Process, Norway being ahead of most participant countries in the  
44 implementation of reforms, the HE sector in Europe headed towards a more uniform shape in order  
45 to exchange students and staff. In this process, the administrations grew, both in universities and  
46 university colleges, in order to establish new and a higher number of exams, a new degree system,  
47 new marks and new curricula. As the administration grew, the bureaucratization process provided  
48 space for what Weber called ‘passive democratization,’ a development which was obvious on the  
49 individual level, but difficult to predict for its opponents on the institutional level. The Norwegian  
50 willingness to adapt to the process affected the institutional level in a fundamental way. Space was  
51 created through giving the old universities and the university colleges the same law, formal  
52 demands and bureaucratic systems. The two thereby became more alike. Further on in the process,  
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3 passive democratization was found, among others, in the formalization of the demands for  
4 accreditation of new universities. In 2003 the reform of higher education in Norway started, partly a  
5 result of the European Bologna Process, named the Quality Reform. The establishment of NOKUT  
6 (Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) the same year was a part of the reform.  
7 NOKUT were to define the terms for becoming a university. There was strong resistance from both  
8 politicians and academics when it came to whether or not university colleges should achieve  
9 university status, and there were no established accreditation requirements before 2003. From then,  
10 the question of whether the three should achieve university status became just a matter of time after  
11 they fulfilled the requirements.<sup>8</sup>  
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20 It was a political decision to give the applications for accreditation to professionals engaged by  
21 NOKUT. This decision established accreditation according to rules instead of discretion, even  
22 though the politicians still had the last word. The playing field was now levelled in a manner that  
23 allowed the university colleges respectively in the cities of Stavanger, Kristiansand and Bodø to  
24 gain university status, as they fulfilled a set of universalized rules administered by NOKUT.<sup>9</sup> The  
25 clash between bureaucratization and democratization facilitated a collapse of the former university  
26 monopoly in Norway, giving space for the establishment of three new universities during 2005-  
27 2011; The University of Stavanger, the University of Agder (Kristiansand) and the University of  
28 Nordland (Bodø).  
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35 In this process, Humboldt's ideal based on academic freedom (of the academic elite) was  
36 violated, as the professors participated in a system that moulded them rather than vice versa. In  
37 *Economy and Society* Weber underlines that when the specializing develop, there is a need for the  
38 government to utilise the experts competence without "having to abdicate in their favour" (Weber  
39 1978, p. 994).  
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45 This is also a dilemma of the Bologna Process. While the bureaucratization of HE provides for a  
46 stronger position of the professional elite in academia, it also provides it with constraints. It both  
47 empowers and undermines their position as more and more power is handed over to the central  
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51 <sup>8</sup> *Kvalitetsreformen i lys av Bologna-prosessen*, 10 July 2007, published on  
52 [http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/tema/hoyere\\_utdanning/bolognaprosessen/kvalitetsreformen-  
53 i-lys-av-bologna-prose.html?regj\\_oss=1&id=439552](http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/tema/hoyere_utdanning/bolognaprosessen/kvalitetsreformen-i-lys-av-bologna-prose.html?regj_oss=1&id=439552).

54 <sup>9</sup> The University of Stavanger, however, applied for being judged by the old regime in their  
55 accreditation round due to their process of four PhD programmes which ended before NOKUT was  
56 established in 2003. Their request was heard, leaving their four doctoral programmes out of  
57 NOKUTs rules and regulations. This was partly the reason why they was accredited in 2005, two  
58 years before Agder and six years before Nordland.  
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3 administration of the HEIs. Professor Manuel Castells commented on the undemocratic nature of  
4 the Bologna Process during his visit at the University of Nordland in May 2014 as part of the  
5 Holberg-lectures (Castells 2014). As an academic situated both in Europe and the US, he stated that  
6 the European HE development is hampered by the strong mentality of top-bottom control and  
7 pattern-making instead of encouraging an organic system of HE stretching out even outside Europe:  
8 “The Bologna Process is creating more bureaucracy (than the American system of HE, my remark)  
9 because it is based on control from the EU Commission instead of excellence and quality ...”  
10 (Castells 2014).  
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#### 18 4.2.2 Social Prestige and Rights

19 It was rational to establish EHEA. The question to be asked is whether the Ministers behind  
20 the Bergen Communiqué who were insisting on not overregulating the HE of the participant  
21 countries failed to prevent this from happening. Professor Luzzatto at the University of Genoa  
22 stated during the hearing of the European Parliament-Committee on Culture and Education, under  
23 the heading “The European Higher Education Area: State of Play,” in Brussels on 5 October 2011  
24 that  
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30 ... We surely know that there are sectors of society, mainly outside Europe, which look at  
31 HE merely as a market, and consider the students merely as costumers; but this is not the  
32 prevailing European attitude, and in any case is not the Bologna spirit ... (Luzzato 2011.)  
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36 “The Bologna spirit” was to allow diversity within national frameworks adjusted to the EHEA, but  
37 the result came out differently (Gaston 2010, p. 61). While the adjustments to the European  
38 Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA (Bergen 2005) and the EQF (European Qualifications  
39 Framework) for lifelong learning (EU 2007) demanded a total reorganization of curricula and  
40 degree systems, the Bologna Process in reality moulded a new university model, with universities  
41 becoming a hybrid between a marketplace and an academy (Pinheiro 2012, p. 15).<sup>10</sup> On campus, the  
42 faculty staff were driven more by incentives than by professional values, leaving those who did not  
43 adjust to the new academic reality behind, with the overall threat of no time for research if they did  
44 not publish through blind peer review-channels. The market was not only potential students, but  
45 also the employment market – and the numerous meriting publication channels. Experts who had no  
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55 <sup>10</sup> Pinheiro, Romulo, “Internal Transformation and External Engagement: Building a New  
56 University”, HEIKwp 2012/02, p. 15. Pinheiro underlines that the hybrid between disciplinary  
57 studies and professional studies gains both the economy and the academic development of the  
58 region.  
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formal power to reverse the process, protested in vain, leaving those who followed the new set of academic rules with “bread and circus” – or, in Weber’s words – social prestige and rights.

#### 4.2.3 “Practically indestructible”?

As a non EU-member, Norway was ahead of the Bologna Process and one of the first to implement its action lines on a broad scale. These action lines were meant to facilitate the adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, the adoption of a system essentially based on bachelor/master’s degrees, the establishment of a system of credits, and the promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance and lifelong learning (Prague 2001). From 2003 the implementation in Norway was driven through the national Quality Reform. The growth in administration needed in order to implement the Quality Reform in new versus old universities in Norway revitalizes Weber’s remarks on education. According to Weber an established bureaucracy is “practically indestructible”:

Such an apparatus makes “revolution,” in the sense of the forceful creation of entirely new formations of authority, more and more impossible – technically, because of its control over the modern means of communications ..., and also because of its increasingly rationalized inner structure (Weber 2009, p. 219).

If a system of dominion established through rational bureaucracy on behalf of political democracy is very difficult to change and almost impossible to destroy, changes in the old universities would demand a stronger effort to accomplish than the younger ones. In other words, reforms are a greater headache for old HEIs than new ones. Weber warns against generalization in this issue; each historical development should be examined to see if his analysis fits. If so, the Bologna process, which created ‘entirely new formations of authority’, would have to conquer greater opposition or hardships in the administrations of the oldest universities in Norway. One way to examine this historical case is to assume that the reforms would demand more growth in the central administration of the four old universities in Norway than in the three new ones during the period between 2000 and 2010. Was this the case?

The question cannot be answered.<sup>11</sup> If we use numbers from the Norwegian database on higher education, DBH, we find that the growth in the central administration of the older

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<sup>11</sup> The following numbers are based on numbers from the Norwegian DBH-base, run by NSD. Link: <http://dbh.nsd.uib.no/> (Not available in English). Some corrections are done due to changes in the central administration caused by reorganizations at the University of Oslo (reduced with 150

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3 universities in the period was 37.3 percentage points, while the younger had a growth of 17.2  
4 percentage points. But, although the central administration grew more in the older universities, the  
5 reasons why was multiple. First, these universities had a smaller central administration in 2000 in  
6 proportion to their student number; 0.022 employees per student in 2000. The younger had a  
7 proportion of 0.124 the same year. Due to institutional differences, one of the explanations is that  
8 the older universities organized their staff differently with stronger faculty administrations than the  
9 younger. The central administration of the older universities was supplemented by strong  
10 administrations at the different faculties while at the younger universities, the central administration  
11 also served the faculties. Hence, a comparison of the two central administrations is not possible. A  
12 comparison of the growth in the numbers of administrative employees in general compared with the  
13 growth in faculty staff with competence as associate professors, may give us more insight.

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22 Weber's analysis does not match with the development in HE in Norway during the Bologna  
23 process when it comes to growth in administration in the old versus the new universities in Norway.  
24 In table 1, the growth in the numbers of faculty members holding a PhD and the growth in the  
25 numbers of administrative employees in general in the old and new universities, are presented. Here  
26 we see the opposite; the pro rata growth in the administration of the newer universities are almost  
27 the double compared with the old:  
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33 (Table 1)  
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37 Table 1 also shows that the pro rata growth in the number of faculty staff with PhD  
38 competence was a close race between the two. Summing up, the period implied a strong growth in  
39 the number of faculty members and a growth in administration in both categories, but strongest for  
40 the youngest universities. However, to find the strength of an administration in its number of  
41 employees is not sufficient; strength is rather a question of legitimacy and formal power.  
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45 According to Kwiek and Maassen (2012, p. 18), the Quality Reform increased the autonomy  
46 of the institutions of HE in Norway. They list up several areas where institutions now had more  
47 influence and, as a consequence of this, more responsibilities; increased rights for HE students, a  
48 system with Bachelor and Master degrees as standard elements, executive boards, increasing  
49 internationalization and student exchange, 40 per cent of the funding based on performance, and the  
50 possibility for University Colleges to apply for full university status on certain conditions (five  
51 Master programs and four PhD programs)(Haukland 2014). These changes all demanded new  
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57 administrative employees), the University of Tromsø (reduced with 44,5 administrative employees)  
58 and the University of Bergen (reduced with 140 administrative employees).  
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administrative practices, procedures and tools. In other words, the autonomy of the *administration* of HEIs was increased. While the numbers of the administration grew less than the numbers of faculty members, their formal authority increased.

In this way the Bologna process contributed to a shift in institutional power in the HEIs of Norway. One might wonder whether the administrations of HEIs in the future will become “practically indestructible” and what consequences this would have for the academic staff and development of EHEA after implementing the Bologna Action Lines on a large scale in Europe (Weber 1978, p. 987). One suggestion is that the knowledge production called Mode 2 by Gibbons et al. would modify such a development (Gibbons et al., p. 1). Universal universities are more affected of Mode 2, which has a more flexible organisation, than elitist and mass universities.

## 5.0 Conclusion

In this article, I have discussed the dilemma caused by the ratio between democracy and bureaucracy in the Bologna Process. Out of this discussion, we find that this dilemma follow three dimensions.

The first dimension is what I call the change of towers. The ivory towers of academia are replaced with ones of ebony, consisting of the bureaucracy, which has increased its legitimacy and authority through the last decade of educational reforms in Europe. In Norway, the Quality Reform strengthened the autonomy of the HEIs, an argument used against those who feared a top-down development of EHEA. As it was the administrations who was strengthened, the faculty members lost authority and influence. This suggests a new elite in academia; the administration. As it is strengthened, the university turns its focus from research as much as possible over to produce as much research as possible (Mode 2). This “ebony tower” is challenging Weber’s democracy remark that democratization should “ensure that the leaders represent ‘public opinion’”. At the same time, it is allowing universal access, ensures quality, equal opportunities and, as a fruit, both active and passive democratization.

The second dimension is that experts now increasingly work as shields for political decision making. The development has placed power in new places for example in the institutions of accreditation. The democratization process implies that we localize these new concentrations of power and search to give the “demos” an opportunity to elect leaders who represent themselves. It is rational and effective for the politicians to hand the accreditation process over to experts, but in this way they can be used as a shield for unpopular political decisions. It is not as easy to criticize

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3 an expert as one who is elected by the people. This relocating of power from elected representatives  
4 to experts closes a channel of power for the people, which no longer can influence the development  
5 through their votes. Experts playing the politicians role in decision making can lay a smokescreen  
6 over political government.  
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10 The third dimension is what we can call the tyranny of the majority. In the democratization  
11 of higher education in Europe, some rational limits is a part of the puzzle. All universities did not  
12 imply the action lines of Bologna. In some countries there were great opposition. In giving all  
13 access to higher education, you also change the very nature of higher education. In order not to  
14 loose all “ivory towers”, other parameters than democratic values have to be used. It is not possible  
15 for experts to be representative because they are specialists. It is in the nature of their mission to be  
16 unique. The Bologna Process opened up for recruiting from new parts of the population. At the  
17 same time, the large student numbers and production demands are threatening the basic research  
18 with an unsecure outcome. The demand for experts to be useful for society and not to build “ivory  
19 towers”, is therefore a challenge. It can result in more and more premature and short-sighted  
20 research. The “demon” do not know what is best in a subject. Researchers should be allowed to  
21 build some “ivory towers” without having to come down and assure us all that they are useful.  
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31 No one of these dimensions can be removed in order to solve the democracy-bureaucracy  
32 dilemma. They highlight that democracy is challenged by its ‘inevitably following’ bureaucracy. At  
33 the same time, bureaucratization provides for passive democratization through its ‘levelling of  
34 equals’. Looking at the Bologna process, Weber’s analysis gives new understanding of this  
35 dilemma in a present context. The European and national structural changes led to a more rule-  
36 controlled administration and therefore challenged the democratic process it was born out of  
37 (Haukland 2014).  
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43 Weber questions the passive democratization following bureaucratization because it is often  
44 connected to certain social elitist groups. The EHEA could be seen as a threat to classical  
45 democratic values, as the bureaucracy takes over some of the autonomy in academia (Haukland  
46 2014). One of the goals of the Bologna Process was to build a Europe of Knowledge, educating  
47 people for democratic citizenship.<sup>12</sup> This aim is both threatened and carried along by the increasing  
48 bureaucratization which ‘inevitably’ follows it. His remarks give us insights which is important, and  
49 present a dilemma between democracy and bureaucracy in academia which cannot be solved. It is  
50 still present in EHEA facing Mode 2 even though it will take new forms. The awareness of this  
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58 <sup>12</sup> This aim was declared in the conclusion from the presidency of the Lisbon European Council on  
59 24.03.2000.  
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dilemma, however, and the discussion of it, can prevent it from undermining democratic values in EHEA.

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Ernst Håkon Jahr, professor and previous president at the University of Agder, 19.03.2014.

Frode Mellemvik, professor and previous president at UiN, 03.01.2011. The interview was

conducted together with my colleague, Svein Lundestad.

For Peer Review Only

<b>Table 1<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Growth administration</b>	<b>Growth ass. professorship</b>
<b>Older universities (UiO, UiB, NTNU, UiT)</b>	39,6%	90,8%
<b>Younger universities (UiS, UiA, UiN)</b>	77.6%	93.6%

<sup>1</sup> University of Oslo (UiO), University of Bergen (UiB), Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), University of Tromsø (UiT), University of Stavanger (UiS, achieved university status in 2005), University of Agder (UiA, achieved university status in 2007, main campus in the city of Kristiansand), University of Nordland (UiN, achieved university status in 2010, main campus in the city of Bodø).