

Joint degree programs are high on the agenda of higher education policy in Europe. They are relevant to the objectives and, at their best, fulfil the goals of the Bologna process (the Bologna declaration of 1999, the Prague Communiqué of 2001, and subsequent developments). However, internationalisation of learning environments in the spirit of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) brings benefits as well as problems. An open and transparent education space with increased mobility is usually very much welcomed by students on an all-European level but creates frustrations when there is no corresponding advancement in the recognition of degrees. Some fear that the harmonization of structures means standardizing the contents of studies, which represses the plurality of academic and national traditions and leads to brain drain. Others argue that integrated curricula and joint programs are means of increasing diversity and enhancing the dialogue of research approaches and traditions in ways that sharpen the students' analytical skills and create a basis for qualified research communication.

In this report, lecturers, administrators, and students who have participated in the design and implementation of joint international Master's programs reflect on their experiences in transforming the often lofty words about Bologna standards and international cooperation into hands-on practice. The report includes presentations at the conference "Bologna Beyond Words: Taking Stock of Experience", which took place at Lund University on 4-5 December, 2006. The conference was organized by the Nordplus Neighbour network "The European North and EU-Russian International Relations" and hosted by the Department of Political Science and the Centre for European Studies (CFE) at Lund University. The participants of the network are Lund University, University of Tampere, Petrozavodsk State University, St. Petersburg State University and University of Tartu. The conference was supported by the Nordplus Neighbour Program



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## THE BOLOGNA PROCESS ON THE GROUND

Experiences of Nordic-Baltic-Russian Cooperation in Higher Education



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