

The Future of Internationalisation in Europe and the Impact of the Bologna Process for Europe's *Fachhochschulen*

Bernd Wächter, Director
Academic Cooperation Association (ACA)

**2nd Annual Businet and Fesa Conference
Knokke, 4 October 2001**

This presentation will address the difficult question of the likely impacts and consequences of the "Bologna Process" on the *Fachhochschulen*, *hogescholen* and similar tertiary institutions in Europe which are not of the traditional university type. The chief elements of the Bologna Process to be looked at, and scrutinised as to their likely impacts, are the reform of the degree structure into a Bachelor/Master architecture, the introduction of quality assurance and accreditation across Europe, and the introduction of modular / credit-based systems.

With a view to the impacts of the "process", key questions to be addressed will be, amongst others: how will "Bologna" affect the position, in terms of relative strength or weakness, of the *Fachhochschul*-sector vis-à-vis the universities? Will the Bologna reforms change the identity of the sector, and if so, in which way: will the *Fachhochschulen* continue to be the professionally-oriented (applied) branch of European higher education systems, or will their specificity disappear? Is there a danger (some might say: a chance) that the "binary divide" will disappear, and that the *Fachhochschulen* will simply become "normal" universities?

While the issue of the future shape and fate of the *Fachhochschulen* will be central to the presentation, this will also highlight a second theme, that of internationalisation of higher education in Europe. This second theme has now become linked to "Bologna", since internationalisation in Europe is today understood more and more as system structure harmonisation. The presentation will therefore include a short overview of the changing concepts of internationalisation in post-world-war-II Europe, which led up to the new paradigm of internationalisation. It will also address the question if the earlier concepts of internationalisation have therefore become obsolete.