Comparative Regional Perspectives: Successes and Challenges for Implementing the Bologna Process
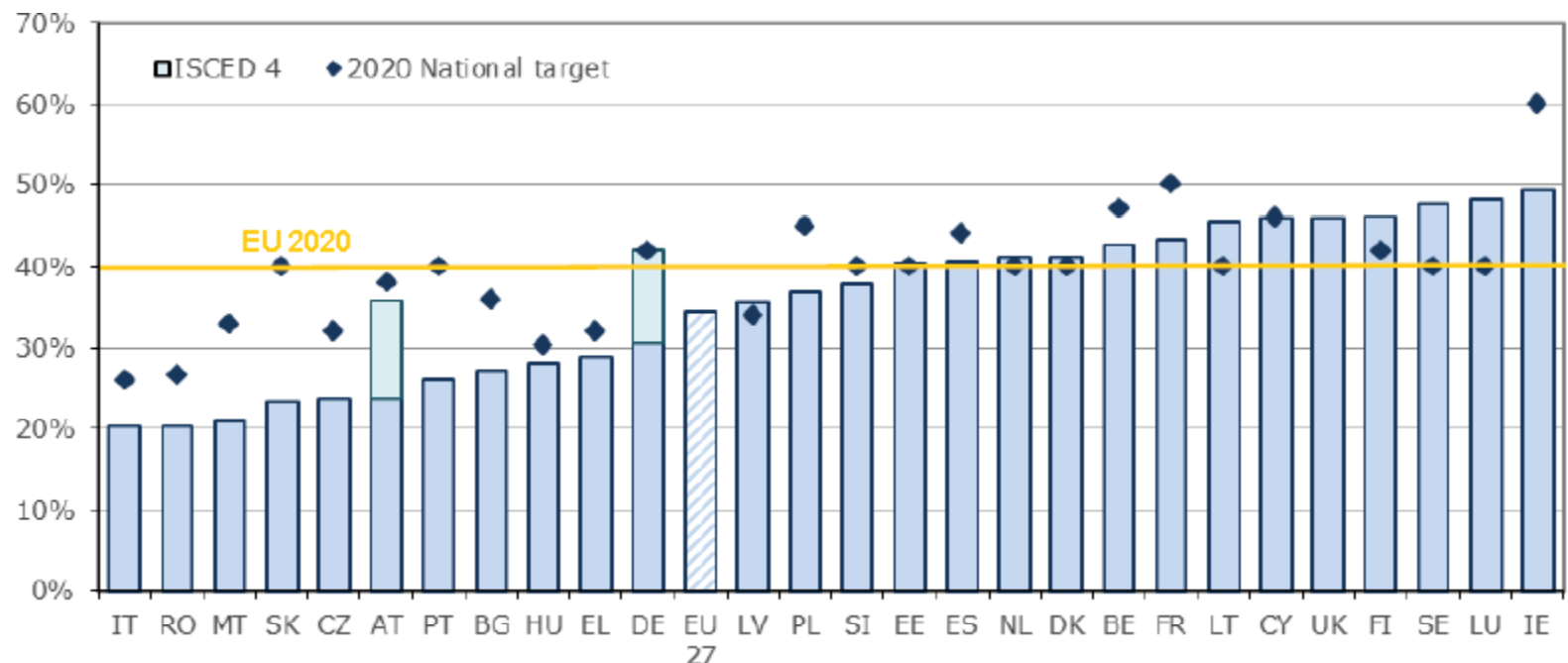
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Tertiary Attainment Levels in EU

Figure 1. Tertiary attainment level (%), 2011

Source: Eurostat (Labour Force Survey). Note: The lighter blue parts for Austria and Germany denotes inclusion of postsecondary attainment (ISCED 4).

National targets (minimum) for 2020 (%), source NRP

IT	RO	MT	SK	CZ	AT	PT	BG	HU	EL	DE	EU27	LV	PL	SI	EE	ES	NL	DK	BE	FR	LT	CY	UK	FI	SE	LU	IE
26	26	33	40	32	38	40	36	30.3	32	42	40	34	45	40	40	44	40	40	47	50	40	46	-	42	40	66	60

Literature Review & Theoretical Frameworks

- Paul Pierson (2004, 2000) historical institutionalism
- Andrew Moravcsik (1998) intergovernmentalism
- Vivien Schmidt (2009, 2005) Europeanization
- Mario Regini (2011) market logic in higher education

Successes and Challenges
Bologna Process Implementation

Incentives and Successes

* Innovation
  * EU target: 3% R&D/GDP
* Access
  * towards 40% target HE attainment
  * for 30-34 year-olds, in Europe 2020
  * Adopted by 47 Bologna Process countries for EHEA

Barriers and Challenges

* Funding policy gap
* Political and Economic uncertainty about the European Union

Regional Groupings

Northern:
Belgium
Denmark
Finland
Ireland
Sweden
The Netherlands
United Kingdom

Southern:
Cyprus
France
Italy
Malta
Portugal
Spain

Central:
Austria
Czech Republic
Germany
Hungary
Poland
Slovakia

Eastern:
Bulgaria
Estonia
Latvia
Lithuania
Romania
Slovenia

Note: Greece and Luxembourg are not included due to limited data.

Research Question & Hypothesis

RQ 1 What are the political and economic explanations for achieving the criteria on higher education reform for countries in the Bologna Process?

H1 If there are positive macroeconomic indicators, then educational reforms will correspond positively on a path dependent trajectory.

Regression Model:

Tertiary education attainment = a + b1(Govt spending Ed) + b2(Investment in R&D) + b3(Trade/GDP) + b4(Employment) + b5(GDP per capita) + b6(Population)

Regression: Northern & Central

Models regressed on Tertiary Education Completion: Standardized Coefficients

Northern		Central	
Education Spending (% GDP)	.792	Education Spending (% GDP)	.460
R&D/GDP	-.322	R&D/GDP	-.698***
Trade/GDP	-.471	Trade/GDP	.141
Employment	-.877**	Employment	-1.185**
GDP Per Capita	1.005***	GDP Per Capita	1.218***
Population	-.227	Population	.340***

***$p < .01$, **$p < .05$, *$p < .10$
$R^2 = 0.46$

***$p < .01$, **$p < .05$, *$p < .10$
$R^2 = 0.45$

Regression: Eastern & Southern

Models regressed on Tertiary Education Completion: Standardized Coefficients

Eastern		Southern	
Education Spending (% GDP)	.309	Education Spending (% GDP)	.450
R&D/GDP	-.376**	R&D/GDP	-.115
Trade/GDP	.779***	Trade/GDP	.368*
Employment	- 1.297*	Employment	3.152***
GDP Per Capita	.741***	GDP Per Capita	1.278***
Population	-.098	Population	.277

$***p < .01, **p < .05, *p < .10$

$R^2 = 0.51$

$***p < .01, **p < .05, *p < .10$

$R^2 = 0.57$

Research Findings

* Employment has statistical significance in each model
  * Three models, except Southern, have an inverse relationship between employment and tertiary education attainment

* GDP Per Capita and RDP/GDP are highly correlated
  * GDP Per Capita has highest statistical significance, ***$p < .01$, in each of the four regional models
  * RDP/GDP has a negative coefficient in each model, indicating an inverse relationship with Tertiary Education

Bologna Process & EHEA Information

Europe 2020: Europe's Economic Growth Strategy

* http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

Bologna Process, Bucharest Ministerial Conference

* http://www.bologna-bucharest2012.ehea.info/

European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

* http://www.ehea.info/news-details.aspx?ArticleId=262