



Opportunities in Higher Education in Sciences for Cultural Heritage in Europe

Giovanni Ettore Gigante

La Sapienza University; p.le A. Moro 5, 00185 ROME (Italy)

Abstract

The old Europe look out from the main streams of industrial development with the only prospective to find a role in the sector of global services. In this area tourism and related sectors is the only remaining field in which Europe has a leadership still now. This is the reason for the continuous pressures from political authorities to actualize this sector to the new technologies with the aim to maintain this leadership. Unfortunately the sector of tourism in which this modernization is effective are that in which the international competition is stronger, and in which Europe is losing positions. There is a sector in which Europe has a strong leadership it is the tourism bond to the cultural activities and the cultural heritage, in which is more difficult the alignment to the new technologies for the friction with the traditional management style. This situation ground on a apparent inconceivability of humanistic culture - that rightly manage the patrimony - with the technology. In order to overcome this situation is necessary to create a new framework able to remove the obstacle to the insertions of the new technologies that are necessary for a correct management of our town and territory in the present age. As is typical of modern technologies the answer is the creation of new professionals able to avoid the immunological rejection of the system. This is happen in the recent times in sectors as environment and health in which the transfer of new technologies requires specific abilities. In the field of Cultural Heritage this phenomenon is only at the start, not yet visible because hidden by many others events. Peculiar things is the conservation that is the most important activity.

Introduction

The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has been developed after the Sorbonne declaration of 1998 as an harmonization process among the educational systems of all EU countries in view to the creation of a common market of work. The idea is to proceed toward an educational area with a system of recognition that would guarantee the accreditation of students in all EU counties. To do this it was mandatory to reduce the distances among the countries and, contemporary, creating an European framework acting as a reference system for all the harmonization activities. This intense activity led to the introduction of some common concepts as the fact of a higher education area articulated in three main levels: the identification of levels facilitate the recognition. In many educational area, as for example that of medicine and engineering, but also in sciences, this process went ahead quickly, because the internationalization level of these area's shorted in advance the distances. In some others areas, more strictly bond to the local interest, this process proceed very slowly.

EHEA for Cultural Heritage

In the field of Cultural Heritage the above said activity it is only at the start, because the level of internationalization is very low, apart some sectors in which there are professional working in an international framework. This is one of the reasons for the low interest of the European research agencies for the financing of technological research in this area. In the FP7 the Cultural Heritage was inserted as a small field in the big project dedicated to the Environment. The concept is that the

environment, and in particular the climate changes, play a role in the economy more important than the management of our patrimony.

Starting from the top the higher qualification level is the third (corresponding to the 8th in the general framework) that in Italy correspond to the Doctorate or in alternative to the specialization degree. In Italian tradition in the cultural heritage are live together these two alternative being the doctorate devoted only to the research. The following level (second level) is the master that is the reference one for all activities except that requiring a strong specialization or a very high level of autonomy. These two levels are the more attractive in the international framework, therefore are the levels of choice for an university initiative.



Scheme of the methodology followed in the EHEA to recognize the qualification levels.

The European program Erasmus Mundus devoted to the enhancement of EAEA in the global context support initiative to activate masters and/or PhD through a co-operation among several European universities. This is an extraordinary opportunity for universities that want to reach a leadership in the education of scientific staff for the development of technologies for Cultural Heritage. In this sector the international competition is only among some European countries therefore it is an internal competition that can be managed using the solutions suggested by the EU authorities.

In this frame it is useful to recall the initiative of an European Doctorates, cold EPISCON (European PhD in Science for Conservation), of the University of Bologna with the collaboration of some universities from Greece, France, More recently the team of the University of Roma "La Sapienza" was involved in the proposal of an European Master cold Archimat having the aim to furnish a high level interdisciplinary education on the methods and technique for the study and characterization of materials of historical and archaeological interest.

Conclusions

There is a need of high professional qualification in the area of conservation and management of risks for cultural heritage in many countries that hold a conspicuous patrimony but have not developed a system to do the correct action based on a correct scientific framework. Therefore, there is in the world a request of courses for the education of scientific staff to do this work. Our situation is privileged because these course can use the experience and practice that in our country was accumulated through the management of the enormous cultural patrimony of Italy.

References

- 1) European Higher Education Area (EHEA), references can be found in: <http://www.ehea.info/> and http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc62_en.htm , accessed at Aug 2010
- 2) ENCoRE, Network Organisation of Higher Educational Institutions, <http://www.encore-edu.org> , accessed at Aug 2010