

# Teacher Satisfaction in Spain with the European Higher Education Area: Arts and Humanities\*

## Satisfacción del profesorado en España con el Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior: Artes y Humanidades

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### ABSTRACT

In Spain reforms to university educational policy have been made in order to adapt to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Therefore, the objective of this study was to find out the level of satisfaction of Arts and Humanities university teaching staff towards the implementation of the EHEA. It is a population-based, descriptive study using a cross-sectional survey with a probability sample. The sample consisted of 1605 Spanish teachers of Arts and Humanities from public universities (with an average age of 48 years, of which 52 % were women and 48 % men). They were applied an ad hoc survey ( $\alpha = 0.82$ ) consisting of questions (grouped into eight sections) about the degree of satisfaction towards different aspects of the EHEA. In the results can be observed that teachers are not completely satisfied with the way in which educational institutions have adapted university education to the EHEA and they have identified certain needs that limit the quality of Arts and Humanities teaching. In conclusion, the most of teachers thought that the implementation of the EHEA could be improved, although a small percentage believed that it had not been implemented correctly.

### Keywords

Bologna process; Higher Education; satisfaction; teachers; Arts and Humanities.

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### RESUMEN

En España se han hecho reformas en la política educativa universitaria con el objetivo de adaptarse al Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES). Por ello, la finalidad del estudio fue conocer la satisfacción del profesorado universitario de Artes y Humanidades hacia la implantación del EEES. Es un estudio descriptivo de poblaciones mediante encuesta con muestreo probabilístico, tipo transversal. La muestra estuvo compuesta por 1605 profesores españoles de Artes y Humanidades de universidades públicas (con una edad media de 48 años, de los cuales 52 % eran mujeres y 48 % hombres). Se les aplicó una encuesta elaborada ad hoc ( $\alpha = 0.82$ ) formada por preguntas (agrupadas en ocho secciones) sobre el grado de satisfacción hacia diferentes aspectos del EEES. En los resultados se puede observar que los profesores no están completamente satisfechos con el modo en que las instituciones educativas han adaptado las enseñanzas universitarias al EEES y han detectado necesidades que limitan la calidad

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de las enseñanzas de Artes y Humanidades. En conclusión, la mayoría de los profesores creen que la aplicación del EEES se podría mejorar, aunque un pequeño porcentaje informan que no se ha aplicado correctamente.

**Palabras clave**

Proceso de Bolonia; Educación Superior; satisfacción; profesorado; Artes y Humanidades.

Spain joined the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) with the Bologna Declaration (1999), committing itself to the adoption of a comparable degree system and the promotion of student and teacher mobility. Furthermore, during the Lisbon European Council (2000) a strategy was formed towards the creation of the European Research Area (ERA) in order to facilitate the mobility of researchers and coordinate research policies in Europe. In Bucharest is passed the "2020 Mobility Strategy: Better Learning Strategy", in which it was established that national and institutional strategies for internationalisation and mobility in Higher Education (Ministerial Conference Bucharest, 2012). All this is reflected in studies on resources will help researchers (v.gr., Palma i Muñoz, 2019), the research of Spanish public universities (v.gr., Buela-Casal, Guillén-Riquelme, Díaz-Román, Carneiro-Barrera, & Quevedo-Blasco, 2019; Buela-Casal, Guillén-Riquelme, Ramiro-Sánchez, & Quevedo-Blasco, 2017), the analysis of doctoral theses (v.gr., Carneiro-Barrera, Ruiz-Herrera, & Díaz-Román, 2019), and the university teaching innovation experiences (v.gr., Cano García, Pons Seguí, & Lluch Molins, 2018). Therefore, an initiative aimed at modernizing Spanish universities was developed. This initiative was called University Strategy 2015 (Ministerio de Educación, 2011) and was created to facilitate consolidation between the EHEA and the ERA (see as well, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2016). The rest of the EHEA member countries also established measures to adapt to the Bologna Plan, showing progression in their university educational policy.

In order to promote employability and competitiveness, Royal Decree 1044/2003 was elaborated in Spain, regulating the European

Diploma Supplement. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and the grading system were regulated with Royal Decree 1125/2003. In the system prior to the EHEA in Spain, a credit was made up of ten teaching hours by the student, whilst the ECTS is equivalent to 25-30 hours of work by the student. The adoption of Royal Decree 1393/2007 established teaching structure and the verification and accreditation of qualifications. The three-cycle system was implemented (Degree, Master, and Doctorate) and new syllabuses created were evaluated by the National Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación, ANECA). According to this decree, previous qualifications (the three-year Diploma and five-year Degree [Licenciatura]) are substituted by the new Degree [Grado], in which 240 ECTS have to be passed in four years. As for Master programs, studies will have between 60 and 120 ECTS (from one to two years). Besides this, Royal Decree 99/2011 states that doctoral studies will have a duration of three years full-time, and also regulates the creation of Doctoral Schools.

The Bologna process has aroused the interest of Spanish researchers in analyzing aspects such as the adaptation of qualifications to the EHEA (Cañadas, Santos-Pastor, & Castejón, 2018), teaching and learning methodologies (Gaebel & Zhang, 2018; Vargas & Montero, 2016), and competence based assessment (Cano García & Fernández Ferrer, 2016; Leví Orta, & Ramos Méndez, 2012; Martínez Clares & González Morgia, 2018). Since the introduction of the EHEA the teaching methodology encouraged involves the student taking on a more active role and the teacher taking the role of guide/mediator. The implementation of the ECTS and the emergence of competence-based learning have prompted this change of methodology (v.gr., Bezanilla, García Olalla, Paños Castro, & Poblete Ruiz, 2019; Martín & García García, 2018). Therefore, students should abandon the passive role adopted previously and become the key players in search of their own knowledge and competences (v.gr., Carrión-Martínez, Fernández-Martínez, Pérez-

Fuentes, & Gázquez-Linares, 2018; Martínez Clares & González Morga, 2019; Moreno-Murcia, Pintado, Huéscar, & Marzo, 2018; Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2016; Sandoval & Pérez-Zapata, 2017).

In the evaluation of attitude of Spanish university teachers towards the Bologna Process, in the study by Fernández Díaz, Carballo Santaolalla and Galán González (2010) detected negative attitudes towards the reform at the end of the period of change, related to a lack of information and uncertainty, although they found that the Humanities teachers are more optimistic than those from other fields of knowledge with regard to updating teaching methods. Therefore, once finalized the period of adapting qualifications to the EHEA and the recent implementation of measures to achieve consolidation in Spanish universities, it is necessary to find out the opinion of all those involved in this change. This educational reform has not only implied certain structural changes in Higher Education, but also a new way of conceiving education and the way in which the professor teaches. This new educational paradigm implies that the teacher abandons the traditional role he has been assuming until now, ceasing to be only a transmitter of basic knowledge of the discipline to become a mediator in the teaching-learning process, in which supervision and student tutoring are essential (Canet Vélez & Violant Holz, 2014). For all the above, the knowledge of teacher satisfaction regarding this institutionalization process is fundamental since there has been a historical fact in Europe in the educational field.

Given the lack of research carried out in the Arts and Humanities field, the aim of this study is to evaluate the satisfaction of the Spanish university teachers of the aforementioned field of knowledge towards the implementation of the Bologna Process. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to evaluate the main aspects in which teachers have been involved in their adaptation to the EHEA (both in undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes). For this, it is necessary to use a survey (as it is the format that best suits the type of questions

required) with questions oriented to general and institutional issues related to the EHEA, variables related to teaching, research and management, issues related to coordination, organization and teaching resources, the teaching-learning process, the methodology used in the university after the implementation of the EHEA, variables related to the evaluation of teaching and training aspects, among others.

## Method

### *Participants*

In total, 1,605 teachers participated in this study, from qualifications belonging to Arts and Humanities in Spanish public universities, with an average age of 48 years ( $SD = 9$ ), of which 52 % were women and 48 % men (the faculty they belong to can be seen in Table 1). The average years of teaching experience is 19 ( $SD = 11$ ) and the majority (36 %) has not received a six-year bonus (a productivity bonus offered to permanent university teachers for six years of research activity). The universities with a higher participation can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 1**

*Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to their professional category*

Category	%
Senior University staff	16.2
University staff	45.8
Senior University School staff	0.4
University School staff	1.9
Non-permanent staff	33.1

**Table 2**

*Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers with a higher participation in the study according to their institutional affiliation*

University	%
Barcelona	8.7
Complutense de Madrid	6.4
Salamanca	4.6
Granada	4.4
Sevilla	4.4
Autónoma de Barcelona	4.3
Autónoma de Madrid	4.3
Santiago de Compostela	4.2
Castilla La Mancha	3.5
Alicante	3.4

Note: In this list only institutions with a participation percentage of over 3.2 per cent appear. The universities with the same participation percentage have been ordered alphabetically.

### *Materials and instrument*

- Survey regarding the satisfaction of Spanish University Teaching Staff towards EHEA adaptation (Ariza, Quevedo-Blasco, Ramiro, & Bermúdez, 2013), made up of 65 mixed questions (with Likert scale and multiple-choice questions and a final open-ended one) divided into seven sections (related to teaching staff data, the EHEA implementation process on a general and institutional level, tasks of the teaching staff, methodology and the teaching-learning process, student assessment, teacher training, and coordination, organization and center resources), and a final section (comments and/or suggestions) for any possible suggestions the teaching staff may have (eight sections in total). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the evaluation of teaching staff satisfaction was 0.82.

- Database with the email of the selected teaching staff.
- IT program for creating and sending surveys.

### *Design and procedure*

It is a population-based, descriptive study using a cross-sectional survey with a probability sample. Firstly, updated information (based on the legislation and literature analyzed) regarding the implementation of the EHEA was found in national and international databases in order to formulate the survey questions *ad hoc*. The survey was evaluated using the judgment of experts, with experience in teaching and in the adaptation process of degrees to the EHEA (in order to verify the suitability of either the thematic blocks or the questions). After the evaluation and following the recommendations of the experts, some items of the questionnaire were reformulated, but for their suitability, the same number of questions from the initial version was maintained. Finally, it was checked that everything was correct and that the application was working properly. The sample was selected with a 97 % confidence level and an estimation error of 3 %. An invitation to participate in the study was sent to the email of the selected teachers, including survey information, along with a link through which each subject could access the questions using an assigned personal password in order to answer them individually (only once). Participant anonymity was guaranteed and the Spanish data protection law was applied (guaranteeing the confidentiality of the data). In addition, there are no ethical implications for participants.

## **Results**

### *General and institutional aspects*

In total, 46 % of teachers thought that the adaptation of Spanish Higher Education to the EHEA could be improved, followed by those that considered that the process has not been implemented correctly (44 %). Besides, 49 % doubted the benefits of the changes in Spanish universities and 29 % stated that the modifications would not be positive for Higher Education. It is worth mentioning that almost 40

% found it difficult to adapt their lesson planning (see Table 3). On the other hand, 60 % found it easy to adapt to the EHEA, followed by 20 % who were not prepared for the change in the system. In Figure 1 it can be observed that the majority of teachers showed a moderate satisfaction towards the new qualifications structure, the ECTS credit and qualifications system, the European Diploma Supplement (EDS), along with teaching accreditation. Despite this, 41 % would return to the old system, compared to 40 % that prefers the EHEA.

**Table 3**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the level of effort dedicated to the adaptation of lesson planning

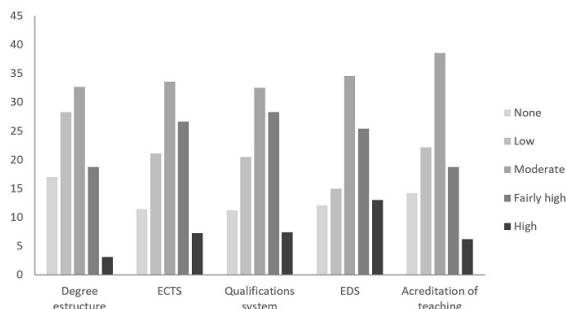
Level	%
None	2.3
Few	6.6
Moderate	27.3
Fairly high	39.8
High	23.8

would increase only slightly, followed by those who believed that it would do so moderately (29 %) (see Table 4). The percentages regarding the duration they consider most appropriate for degree studies can be seen in Figure 2. Regarding official research masters, almost 52 % were of the opinion that they should be 120 ECTS (two years). Besides, 47 % maintained having received enough information regarding the Bologna Process, compared to 27 % who considered having received very little. Limitations observed on a general and institutional level, along with possible solutions, can be observed in Table 5.

**Table 4**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to their opinion regarding how much Higher Education will improve with the European Higher Education Area

Level	%
None	23.8
Few	30.8
Moderate	29.0
Fairly high	14.5
High	1.8

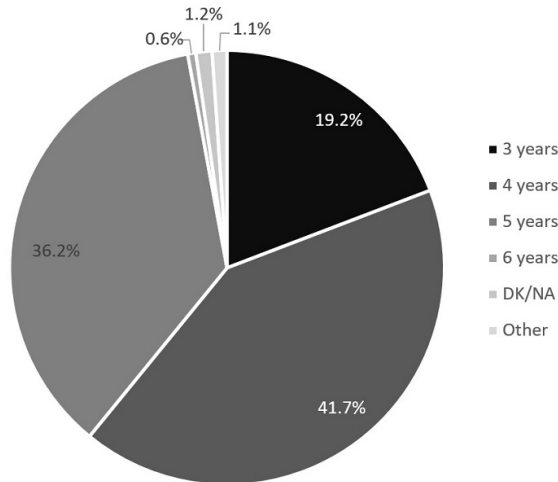
**Figure 1.**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the level of satisfaction towards different aspects of the EHEA.



Note: ECTS= European Credit Transfer System; EDS= European Diploma Supplement.

Approximately 31 % of the teaching staff thought that the quality of Higher Education

**Figure 2.**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the length they consider appropriate for Degree studies



**Table 5**  
General and institutional limitations and possible solutions suggested by Arts and Humanities teachers to improve the European Higher Education Area

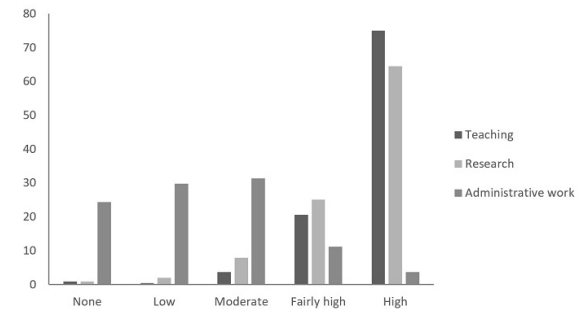
Limitations
- It is a good plan in theory with bad understanding and practical implementation.
- Qualifications are not automatically recognized and the same thing happens with foreign ones.
- Monitoring and improvement systems excessively increase the volume of bureaucratic work, which does not lead to an improvement in teaching, as it implies less time for teaching and research tasks.
- The 4+1 structure (Degree+Master) does not facilitate mobility in all countries.
- Student specialization and development is difficult with one-year Master studies.
- Continual reforms (three Decrees regarding doctoral studies in the past eight years).
- A lack of organization in syllabus design by planning Master studies first and then Degree studies.
- Badly organized teaching plans: basic subjects being studied in the final years; lack of basic subjects; compulsory subjects that should be optional and vice versa; redundant subjects.
- While designing syllabuses what future students should learn for a more sound and competitive training was not taken into account.
- The trimester system is unfavorable for core and compulsory subjects, because when students are starting to absorb and carry out tasks independently the subject ends.
- Subject areas are understood as fragmented elements without any kind of connection between them.
- ECTS credits for evaluating teaching are inadequate as they only take into account classroom time, but not individual tutorials or preparation and supervision time.
- Change is not favored on an institutional level as schedules are done the same as before and teachers are not able to modulate workload throughout the academic year.
- The excessive level of lesson planning impairs the adaptation of contents at the class level and the inclusion of individual needs.
- It was an error to create Music as a specialist area, without taking into account the Higher Conservatories.
- Lack of motivation and involvement of teaching staff.
Proposed solutions
- Reduce bureaucracy.
- Introduce the three-year degree and two-year Master.
- Define teaching credits more accurately.
- Revise objectives, competences and contents from the experience of recent years.
- Create core subjects with a yearly length.
- Establish qualifications with real employment prospects.
- Promote the professional guidance of certain qualifications, with a wider development of work experience systems in businesses and institutions.
- Introduce a higher number of optional subjects according to specialist fields.
- Allow more flexibility in programming in order to adapt it to the class dynamic.

### Tasks of Spanish Teaching Staff

For the majority of the Arts and Humanities teaching staff, teaching and research tasks are priorities (see Figure 3). Teaching staff pointed out that their teaching planning is quite well

adjusted to the EHEA (see Table 6). In Table 7 the level of effort required to carry out teaching functions can be observed. At present, 54 % need more time for preparation, followed by 30 % who take the same time as they did before the process.

**Figure 3.**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the priority assigned to their attributed tasks



**Table 6**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the level which their teaching planning is adapted to the European Higher Education Area

Level	%
None	1.1
Few	3.3
Moderate	15.0
Fairly high	50.9
High	29.5

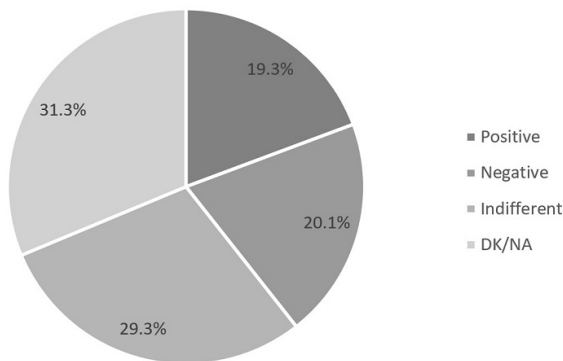
**Table 7**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the level of effort required for carrying out teaching related tasks

Level of effort	Teach. role	Theory	Practical	Sem.	Sup.	Tutorial	Assess.	Coor.
None	9.6	9.3	7.2	9.2	6.9	9.1	4.9	5.9
Low	13.2	17.2	11.2	12.0	11.4	15.3	8.1	10.9
Moderate	32.2	33.9	25.8	31.0	25.7	29.7	24.6	29.7
Fairly high	28.7	26.6	31.6	29.2	28.3	25.2	29.7	28.7
High	16.2	12.8	23.9	18.4	27.4	20.5	32.4	24.6

Note: Teach. role = Role of teacher; Sem. = Seminars; Sup. = Supervision; Assess. = Assessment; Coor. = Teaching coordination.  
Source: own work.

Furthermore, attitudes towards the ERA were positive amongst 59% of teachers, followed by 24% who had a negative vision. Since joining the EHEA 53% declared not having dedicated more time to research, although they would have liked to, while 28% stated that they dedicate the same time as before and 67% would prefer to dedicate less hours to administration. With regard to doctoral studies, 32% said they prefer the new postgraduate system (Master and Doctorate) and 31% would prefer the traditional system. Regarding the doctoral thesis, 80% would choose the traditional thesis and only 8% declared that they prefer the collection of scientific articles. With regard to financing the thesis in a period of three years, approximately 52% considered it to be possible, depending on the research area, followed by those who did not find it viable (26%). Likewise, almost 71% did not believe that thesis quality would improve with the new doctoral organization. Opinion regarding Doctoral Schools can be seen in Figure 4. The teachers also pointed out limitations and proposed possible solutions to improve teaching and research in the EHEA context (see Table 8).

**Figure 4.**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to their attitude towards Doctoral Schools



**Table 8**  
*Teaching and research limitations and possible solutions suggested by Arts and Humanities teachers for the improvement of the European Higher Education Area*

Limitations
- Teachers have an excessive workload impeding the correct implementation of other teaching methodologies, continuous assessment, tutorials, virtual classroom and it is also incompatible with research.
- There is no incentive for teaching quality as there is for research quality.
- There is much less available time for research.
Possible solutions
- Count teachers' work outside of the classroom as part of their teaching dedication.
- Designate a tutor to carry out seminars in small groups (around ten students) and the teacher in charge of the subject can give theoretical classes to the whole group.
- Teachers should give classes in the area where they have better training.

*Methodology and the teaching-learning*

In total, 62 % of teachers said they agree with the teaching and learning methodology in which the teacher acts as a guide/mediator, compared to 21 % who do not agree. However, 48 % stated that they do not think that it increases learning quality. Furthermore, 68 % will not continue to give classes with a predominance of lectures, while 23 % will continue with this method. In Tables 9 and 10 the motivation of students in the search of their own knowledge is illustrated, and also the frequency with which they use tutorials to ask subject queries. Moreover, 41 % of teachers affirmed that competences are quite well developed in their students (see Table 11). On the other hand, 58% doubted that the current doctoral system guarantees competence development in doctoral students, followed by 16 % who chose the “Don't know/No answer (DK/NA)” option and 13 % who answered yes. In Table 12 the limitations detected by teaching staff in relation to this section can be observed.

**Table 9**  
*Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the level of motivation of their students towards an active role in their learning*

Level	%
None	11.6
Few	35.8
Moderate	38.0
Fairly high	13.1
High	1.2

**Table 10**  
*Frequency with which students assist tutorials according to the Arts and Humanities teachers*

Frequency	%
Never	5.9
Little	49.7
Moderate	27.4
Fairly high	12.8
High	3.9

**Table 11**  
*Level of development of student competences according to the Arts and Humanities teachers*

Level	%
None	1.7
Few	3.8
Moderate	22.9
Fairly high	46.1
High	25.3

**Table 12**  
*Limitations in methodology and in the teaching and learning process and possible solutions suggested by Arts and Humanities teachers for the improvement of the European Higher Education Area*

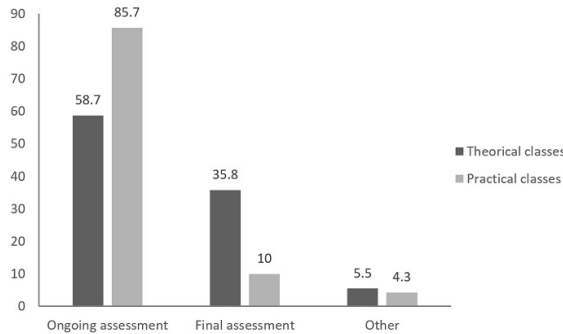
Limitations
- Having to uncouple theory from practice has been detrimental as there are disciplines (Translation for example) where work was competence based, with practical classes, active learning, group work, continuous assessment and critique before the Bologna Plan.
- No work is actually being made on competences.
- There are subjects given with IT programs which take up a lot of time and it is difficult for the students to learn independently.
- The seminar system is understood as onsite and in the classroom, without the possibility of undertaking it during visits or fieldwork.
- Lack of student effort and motivation, lack of interest to participate in lessons.
Possible solutions
- Promoting the use of ICTs by teaching staff.

### Assessment

In total, 68 % of teachers stated that they prefer an objective and competence based assessment, followed by 13 % who opted for assessment based only on objectives and 9 % based only on competences. Moreover, 54 % declared that they find assessment easy on a practical level, in contrast to 41 % who find it difficult. In Figure 5, the moment in which Arts and Humanities teachers carry out assessment can be observed. The majority opt for evaluating throughout the academic year, both in theory and practical lessons. The level of satisfaction with students' grades after the introduction of the EHEA can be seen in Table 13. In total, 38 % maintained that they were better before the consolidation of the process, followed by 35 % who did not think there have been any changes. In Table 14 requirements regarding assessment processes can be observed. Teachers did not propose any improvements regarding this section.



**Figure 5.**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the moment in which they carry out student assessment



**Table 13**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to their level of satisfaction with students' academic results

Level	%
None	2.9
Few	12.0
Moderate	36.7
Fairly high	39.6
High	8.6

**Table 14**  
Limitations in the assessment process suggested by Arts and Humanities teachers for the improvement of the European Higher Education Area

Limitations
- Competence based assessment and individual student attention is very complicated with a high number of students per class.
- Competence based assessment has not been developed correctly as in the final grade of a subject the breakdown of how each competence has been passed does not appear.
- Continuous assessment does not guarantee the knowledge acquired: it makes passing easy but hinders excellent grades.

### Training

Overall, 65 % thought that they have adequate training to give classes in the EHEA context. However, 30 % believed that they are not totally qualified and that they would need to

receive further training. Lifelong learning, one of the EHEA principles, is supported by 90 % of teachers, and 67 % had plans to carry out a temporary stay abroad to improve their knowledge. The limitations detected by teachers in the area of teacher and student training can be seen in Table 15, as well as the suggested improvements.

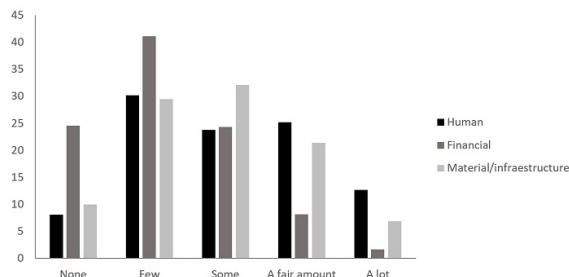
**Table 15**  
Training limitations suggested by Arts and Humanities teachers for the improvement of the European Higher Education Area

Limitations
- Teacher training is not adequate, courses are not effective and it is difficult to combine them with teaching and research.
- The trainers in charge of the training courses are not qualified to resolve the lack of teacher training or resolve their problems.
- Lack of teacher mobility.
- Difficulty for teachers to carry out stays abroad (for teaching and research) because of their high teaching workload and financial help offered only for long-term stays.
- Very low foreign language level amongst teachers.
- Students enter university with a very low level, making achieving the proposed objectives more difficult (they are not used to reading, giving a critical opinion, debating, etc.) and teachers find themselves forced to explain matters of general culture (not relevant to the specific training).
- Diploma/Degree students had a more solid training than those of the current Degree studies; there are shortages meaning that they are not sufficiently prepared for specialization (Master).
- Certain Research Master courses do not prepare students for research work in an appropriate and practical manner.
- There is no guarantee that foreign stays carried out by doctoral students will be useful and that students will acquire more knowledge than those that have been in Spain preparing their thesis and research.
Possible solutions
- Encourage the international exchange of teaching staff.
- Establish a University entrance exam, adapted to the field of knowledge chosen by the student.
- Demand a higher and more rigorous general training level in order to start university studies.
- More coordination between training phases (Primary, Secondary and University), introducing habits and skills in the first phases so that they are really achieved when finalizing university studies.

### Coordination, Student organization and Resources

51 % stated that there is little coordination with the rest of the teachers of their department, compared to 24 % who maintained that there is a lot of coordination. Furthermore, 69 % declared that the reduction of the ratio of students per classroom is not being applied in their center, although just over half claimed that the average number of students per class is 65 or less. Data regarding the availability of resources in the center can be seen in Figure 6. In Table 16, limitations detected by teaching staff with regard to teacher coordination, student ratio and available resources can be observed, along with possible solutions to overcome these problems.

**Figure 6.**  
Percentage of Arts and Humanities teachers according to the level of resources received in their center



**Table 16**  
*Limitations in coordination, organization, resources and possible solutions suggested by Arts and Humanities teachers for the improvement of the European Higher Education Area*

Limitations
-Lack of collaboration between teachers and coordination between subjects.
-Massification of classrooms because enough teachers aren't employed and there is no possibility of offering teacher training posts because of a lack of space, impeding quality teaching of theory, practice, seminars, workshops, etc.
-Scarce funding for human resources, research, maintenance, laboratory material, fieldwork or foreign trips.
Possible solutions
-Reduction of the student ratio.
-Improve research funding and offer a higher number of grants for doctoral students.
-Increase investment in the employment of more teachers and their training.
-Increase funding for foreign stays.
-Adequate infrastructures, starting with the distribution and capacity of classrooms.
-Establish more material resources and better equipped libraries.

## Discussion

During this study the satisfaction of Arts and Humanities teachers towards the EHEA has been analyzed. According to the results there is a wide range of opinions regarding the development of the process in Spain. The majority of teachers thought that the implementation of the EHEA could be improved, although a small percentage believed that it had not been implemented correctly. Overall, 50 % of teachers stated that they have doubts about the positive effects of the changes, the same as for Spanish teachers of Social and Legal Sciences, Health Sciences, Sciences, and Engineering and Architecture (Ariza, Quevedo-Blasco, & Buela-Casal, 2014; Ariza et al., 2013; Quevedo-Blasco, Ariza, & Buela-Casal, 2015; Quevedo-Blasco & Buela-Casal, 2017). The results are equal between the proportion of Arts and Humanities teachers that would like to return to the old system

and those that would not. The percentage is also comparable between those that think that the quality of Higher Education will improve only slightly and those that think there will be a moderate improvement. Despite the fact that the Arts and Humanities teachers received information that helped them to adapt their subject to the EHEA, they stated that subject planning had been quite difficult for them. It can be noted that, in general, the educational institutions kept teachers informed about the process.

The Arts and Humanities teachers showed moderate satisfaction towards the new European credit, the European Diploma Supplement, the grading system and the accreditation of qualifications. The level of satisfaction towards the new structure of university studies is also moderate. The majority of teaching staff considered that the most appropriate length for degree studies is four years, as has been applied in Spain, unlike in other EHEA countries. Although part of the teaching staff thought that the ideal length would be five years, like some of the previous Spanish degrees. Regarding this, for example, Ramiro-Sánchez, Buela-Casal, and Bermúdez (2016), concluded that there is no improvement with the adaptation to EHEA.

For Master studies giving way to doctoral studies, the majority opted for a length of two years. With regard to doctoral studies there is a wide range of opinions, as part of the teachers would prefer the new postgraduate studies while the other part leaned towards the traditional doctoral studies established before the reform. The results are clear regarding the format of the doctoral thesis, as 82 % chose the traditional thesis, rather than the thesis made up of a collection of published scientific articles. Maybe this is due to the difficulty in publishing in Web of Science or Scopus journals in this area. In fact, in the study by Quevedo-Blasco, Ariza, Bermúdez, and Buela-Casal (2013) it was revealed that the Arts and Humanities teachers do not agree that doctoral students should have articles published in order to defend their thesis.

Another of the EHEA modifications has been to limit the time to carry out the thesis to

three years (see Jiménez-Ramírez, 2017; Jiménez-Ramírez & Sevilla Merino, 2017), but the Arts and Humanities teachers thought that it is only possible to finalize it in this period depending on the research area, as research in certain areas requires more time than in others. Likewise, the majority did not think that thesis quality would improve with the new doctoral structure. The fact that the majority did not comment on Doctoral Schools and almost the same proportion of teachers showed indifference towards these institutions could be due to the lack of information regarding their implementation. There was a generally positive opinion towards the creation of the ERA.

The methodology promoted since the introduction of the EHEA is that of the teacher as a guide-mediator and not only as a transmitter of knowledge which has caused moderate effort for Arts and Humanities teachers. Although the majority believed that this methodology would not increase students' learning quality. Likewise, students' level of motivation in the search of their own knowledge is moderate to low and they do not assist tutorials very frequently (see Torrecilla-Sánchez, Burguera-Condon, Olmos-Miguélañez, & Pérez-Herrero, 2018). This is a negative aspect, as motivation is vital for them to have an active role in class (Valle et al., 2015), along with other indicators (Cabanach, Souto-Gestal, & Franco, 2016; Casanova, Cervero, Núñez, Almeida, & Bernardo, 2018; García-Ripa, Sánchez-García, & Riquez, 2018; Garzón Umerenkova & Gil Flores, 2017; Vizoso-Gómez & Arias-Gundín, 2018).

It is positive that the majority of teachers develop competences in their students, although they doubt to what extent doctoral students acquire competences with the new system. However, student assessment is the task that requires most effort by teachers. It is worth noting that competence only based assessment is accepted by only a small group of teachers, maybe because more than 40% find it hard to assess competences. In this context Cano and Ion (2012) highlighted the negative aspects surrounding this type of assessment, such as an increase in workload, reduction of

teaching independence and it depends on the attitude towards the change, on the number of students and on the coordination with other teachers. Also, Abella, Ausín, Delgado, Hortigüela, and Solano (2018) pointed out the necessity for teacher training, Hortigüela Alcalá, Ausín Villaverde, Delgado Benito, and Abella García (2017) informed of the importance of some indicators for education quality in Spain, and Torres-Coronas and Vidal-Blasco (2015) analyze the students and employers perception about the development of digital skills in Higher Education.

The majority of teachers opted for continuous assessment, both for theory and practical classes. Although it has been noted that the amount of passes increases, contents learning is not guaranteed. In general, Arts and Humanities teachers are quite satisfied with the academic results of their students. Nevertheless, they think they were better before EHEA consolidation (38%) although 35% think that the results of students from old and new degrees are practically the same.

According to Cáceres-Lorenzo and Salas-Pascual (2012) there seems to be a link between the development of competences and the increase of bureaucracy. As pointed out by the Arts and Humanities teachers, the excessive bureaucracy, the increase of teaching work and the continual legislative changes are some of the limitations of university policy in Spain. This makes life more difficult for teachers, who have a lot of pressure to carry out administrative tasks and increase their scientific production (Galán, González Galán, & Román, 2012). Besides, according to the teachers, since the introduction of the EHEA they need more time to prepare classes, so they have less time for research and because of this they would like to be able to invest more time in research tasks. Likewise, a high percentage of teachers would prefer to dedicate less time to administrative tasks. This could be due to the fact that this task is not a high priority for them. Because of this the managers of European organizations for university management and quality maintain that there is a need to make

university management more professional, while Spanish managers do not think this has priority (Mira Solves et al., 2012).

65% of the Arts and Humanities teachers thought that they had sufficient training to teach in the EHEA context. Updating knowledge through lifelong learning is supported by almost all teachers, along with mobility in order to improve as a professional by 67%, which is very positive. Finally, the lack of coordination and resources detected by the Arts and Humanities teachers is also explained by Martín Martín and Bobb Wolff (2011) in qualifications in this field. From the results obtained it can be concluded that Spanish Arts and Humanities teachers are not completely satisfied with the implementation of the EHEA in Spanish university studies. There are certain limitations that should be overcome in order to facilitate the adequate consolidation of the principles of the Bologna Process (see for example, Pozo Muñoz, & Bretones Nieto, 2015; Quesada Serra, Rodríguez Gómez, & Ibarra Sáiz, 2017). The solutions proposed by the group could maybe help to improve this reform which will only be successful with the involvement of the educational policy managers, the institutions and all members of the educational community.

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## Notes

- \* Research article.