

DRAFT FINAL REPORT 1

Working Group to support the implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's accession to the EHEA

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Roadmap for San Marino's accession to the EHEA

The EHEA Ministers welcomed San Marino as a new member of the European Higher Education Area in Rome 2020 Conference: ***"We are pleased to welcome San Marino as a new Member of the EHEA. San Marino will be supported in the implementation of its commitments with an agreed roadmap."***

In view of the fact that San Marino joined the European Higher Education Area 21 years after the launch of the Bologna Process and 10 years after the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was officially established, the Sammarinese authorities and the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) worked together on developing a roadmap for higher education reform in San Marino in accordance with the values, principles, and goals of the EHEA.

The roadmap (annex 1) builds on the national report submitted by San Marino in conjunction with its application for accession to the EHEA, the declarations and communiqués adopted by the EHEA Ministers, the Bologna Process Implementation Report, and discussions between the BFUG and the Sammarinese authorities. Under the roadmap the Sammarinese authorities have, in full respect of the competences of the Government, the Parliament, the University, and other stakeholders committed to structural and legislative reforms.

The roadmap covers structural reforms, social dimension and lifelong learning and higher education governance and higher education legislation with specific provisions identified through an analysis of the Sammarinese national report and discussions with the Sammarinese authorities.

This roadmap is implemented by the Sammarinese authorities and stakeholders in cooperation with the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG). The BFUG appointed a small working group of members and consultative members that has facilitated cooperation and informed the BFUG on progress in the implementation of the road map.

The roadmap outlines two sets of actions. A first set concerns the launching of implementation measures, for which the deadline is generally 1 June 2021. A second set of actions concerns the completion of these actions by 1 November 2023. Sammarinese authorities prepared their own implementation plan for the reforms based on the roadmap.

1.2. Overview of the San Marino's higher education system

San Marino has a small higher education system with one public university, Università degli Studi della Repubblica di San Marino. There are no private institutions.

In April 2023 a new law on higher education was approved regulating all aspects of higher education in the Republic of San Marino (Legge 27 aprile 2023, n. 69).

In June 2023 a new Decree on the University was approved regulating the governance and organization of the University of San Marino (Decreto Delegato 1 giugno 2023, n. 90).

Before the accession, in 2014 San Marino had adopted a framework university law. The motivation for legislative reform was to reform higher education in line with the objectives and commitments of the Bologna Process. The reform introduced implementation of the three cycle degree structure, policies of internal and external quality assurance, implementation and use of the ECTS system, promotion of students and staff mobility, improvement of student services and reforms in university governance.

San Marino's higher education degree system corresponds to the Italian qualifications framework. It consists of first cycle programmes (Corsi di Laurea) of 180 ECTS, second cycle programmes (Corsi di Laurea Magistrale) of 120 ECTS and third cycle (Corsi di Dottorato di Ricerca). The legislation includes the possibility to establish integrated long degree programmes (Laurea Magistrale a ciclo unico), but no such programme exists at the moment. In 2019 there were 130 graduates from the first cycle and 23 graduates from the second cycle. The university is working on expanding the second cycle and making it more attractive. In the third cycle there is one programme in Historical Studies.

In addition, there are several other programmes outside the Bologna structures (Corsi di Master Universitario di primo livello e secondo livello, Corsi di Alta Formazione). These programmes offer for example further specialization or continuing education after the completion of the first and second cycle degrees. The number of these programmes changes every year as the courses are organized on the basis of the labour market's needs. About 180-200 students study in these other programmes, which therefore concern 1/5 of all the students of the University of San Marino.

The university has about 940 students enrolled in the 2022/2023 academic year. The number of students has increased in recent years. Over 80% of the students are Italian, about 15% are Sammarinese and 4% are other international students in the programmes in the first, second and third cycle. The share of Sammarinese students is higher in the programmes outside the Bologna structure as these directly serve the local labour market. The annual intake is about 781 students in the first, second and third cycle programmes and about 159 in the programmes outside Bologna structure. Students pay tuition fees in all the higher education programmes.

All degrees awarded by the University are double degrees (titoli doppi) with Italian partner universities, with one exception which is a joint degree. Depending on individual agreements, students normally spend the first two years in San Marino and 6 months of the third year at the Italian partner university. Some students do the first two years at the Italian university and in the third year come for 6 months to San Marino to obtain the double degree. Double degrees help students to find employment in Italy or in San Marino.

The academic staff of the university consists of full professors, associate professors, researchers and teaching assistants. The university has 13 full-time professors (docenti strutturati), who can either be full or associate professors or researchers. In addition, there are Italian partner universities' professors who have specific contracts for teaching in the University of San Marino.

60% of the funding of the university comes from the government, 36,5% from tuition fees, 1,5% from other public entities, and 2% from private entities that fund specific projects.

2. The mandate and the work of the working group

The Working group to support the implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA was set up by the BFUG in its work plan for the period of 2021-2024. The purpose of the working group was to follow up the San Marino Roadmap together with the Sammarinese authorities and to assist the Sammarinese authorities in implementing the roadmap and in developing specific policy areas. The working group on San Marino Roadmap also organised peer-learning activities and facilitated cooperation between San Marino and the BFUG.

Specific tasks of the working group in the terms of reference:

- To follow up the San Marino roadmap together with the Sammarinese authorities;
- To develop a timetable for implementing the higher education reforms, building on the milestones set out in the San Marino roadmap;
- To assist the Sammarinese authorities in implementing the roadmap and in developing specific policy areas;
- To assist in peer-learning activities and to facilitate cooperation;
- To present regular updates to the Board and to the BFUG on the state of implementation of the roadmap;
- To present a final report to the BFUG meeting by the beginning of 2024;

The BFUG will report back to the EHEA Ministers in Tirana on the implementation of the roadmap.

Composition of the working group: Andorra, Jordi Llobart (co-chair); Finland, Maija Innola (co-chair); Council of Europe, Sjur Bergan; ENQA/EUA, Maria Kelo; Holy See, Melanie Rosenbaum; Italy, Paola Castelluci and Vera Lucke; Liechtenstein, Daniel Miescher (2021-2022) and Eva Meirer (2003-); San Marino, Monica Cavalli, Paula Cenci, Elena D’Amelio, Remo Massari and Marica Montemaggi.

The working group met twice a year. Three meetings were held in San Marino, which enabled the working group to meet relevant stakeholders. The work of the working group has covered all aspects of the Roadmap.

Time and place	Topics covered
17 May 2021, online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organisation and working methods of the working group ● Establishment of a timetable for the implementation of the San Marino Roadmap
10-11 November 2021, San Marino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update on the implementation in San Marino ● Discussions with University of San Marino representatives, students and staff member ● Peer learning on NQF and QA ● Identification of possible further support measures needed
21 March 2022, online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update on the implementation in San Marino ● Feedback on peer support sessions
26-27 September, San Marino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update and analysis of the progress on the implementation in San Marino ● Meeting with stakeholders representatives on NQF ● Peer learning on alternative pathways to higher education
14-15 February 2023, San Marino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update and analysis of the progress on the implementation in San Marino ● Discussion on the legislative reforms and meeting with members of the parliament ● Peer learning on NQF (self certification, short cycle) ● First discussion about the final report of the working group
5-6 October 2023, Andorra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Follow-up on the implementation ● Draft final report of the WG ● Agreement on the conclusions and suggestions of the final report
December 2023 – January 2024 if needed (online)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalization of the draft final report

The working group reported regularly on the progress of its work and on the implementation of the roadmap to the BFUG.

In the following chapters of this final report of the working group presents and reviews the implementation of the roadmap and highlights good practices of the higher education system of San Marino. The assessment is based on the follow up of San Marino’s reforms and discussions with Sammarinese authorities and stakeholders. The working group also gives recommendations to BFUG for the next Ministerial Communiqué.

3. Implementation of the Roadmap

3.1. Qualification framework

3.1.1. Implementation of reforms

The system of ECTS was adopted and used as a credit system by the University of San Marino before joining the EHEA. The University links study credits with both learning outcomes and student workload and includes attainment of learning outcomes in assessment procedures.

The development of a National Qualifications Framework of San Marino started before San Marino's accession to the EHEA. The Government had decided to set up a comprehensive National Qualifications Framework for the entire education system, including higher education. A working group in charge of drafting the NQF was established in March 2020. In the accession assessment, it was considered to be in its early stages: steps 1-3 but it was noted there was a clear commitment to development of a NQF compatible with the QF-EHEA.

The roadmap set a goal for San Marino ***to develop a National Qualifications Framework compatible with the QF-EHEA, incorporating a learning outcomes approach, and proceed to self-certifying the NQF against the Overarching Framework of Qualification of the EHEA (QF-EHEA) with the participation of foreign experts.***

In the development of the NQF:

- ***Give due consideration to including flexible learning paths in the NQF, including alternative access routes to higher education other than by earning an academic secondary school leaving qualification.***
- ***Give consideration to and specify the place of the Corsi di Master Universitario, the Master universitario di primo livello, and the Master universitario di secondo livello within the NQF, including progress routes in terms of further study and access to the labor market available to holders of these qualifications.***

San Marino adjusted the initial work plan in the field of NQF. It was initially set to approve a Law on NQF, but along the process, the authorities of San Marino considered that it would be better to first approve a Law on higher education and at a later stage approve the Decree regulating the San Marino NQF.

New law on higher education was approved by the Parliament in April 2023, art. 3 of the law delegates to a specific Decree the NQF implementation.

Time	Roadmap	San Marino's implementation plan	Implemented reforms
By 1 June 2021	Establish a timetable for this work and identify a national steering group and launch work on the NQF by 1 June 2021.	March 2020: Working group on QF by the Ministry has been established. March 2022: involvement of all stakeholders. September 2022: A national point of coordination for the independent evaluation of the self-certification of the	Creation of working group on NQF and launch of work. Involvement of experts.

		NQF against the EHEA-QF has been established under Ministry of Education and the involvement of San Marino Job Centre. Cooperation with Italy.	
March 2022		First draft of the San Marino NQF	
August 2022		Nomination of Foreign Experts for the development of the NQF: Rector Miquel Nicolau, University of Andorra and Director Luca Lantero, CIMEA Italy.	
November 18 th , 2022			First reading of Higher Education Law (art. 3 implementation of San Marino NQF)
February 2023		First meeting with foreign experts for revision NQF draft.	
By February 2024	Complete the NQF, including self-certification	Participation of foreign experts in the development of the NQF and establishment of the self-certification.	

3.1.2. *Assessment of the working group and good practices*

3.2. Quality assurance

3.2.1. *Implementation of reforms*

The accession assessment pointed out that San Marino faces specific challenges for quality assuring higher education as a small system of higher education. Some reforms to strengthen both internal and external quality assurance were implemented before the accession. The internal quality assurance system covered curricula design, teaching and research activities, the third mission and administrative processes. Internal quality is monitored through questionnaires to all students.

An Independent Assessment Body (IAB) was established in December 2019.

Since the beginning, San Marino did not plan to establish a national quality assurance agency, instead it chose to make an agreement with a foreign QA agency: Institutional Evaluation Programme, IEP.

The goal set by the roadmap is to **develop a plan for quality assuring higher education in San Marino in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).**

During the meetings of the WG, improvements to the internal quality assurance system have been discussed, with particular attention to the development of students' evaluation through questionnaires that guarantee their involvement regarding: perception on the quality of teaching staff, the timing of didactic material acquisition, the relative and overall teaching load.

In January 2023 the first IAB report on teaching quality was presented to the Rector and to the General Director of the University, it was later shared with the directors of the university programs who are directly involved in the QA procedures.

The outcomes include a systematic assessment of students' perceptions on teaching effectiveness and subsequent corrective actions. The testing phase of participatory assessment was carried out during the second period of Academic Year 2022/23 and the official phase will begin in October 2023 with all courses of each degree program. The Student Guarantor is in charge of preparing periodic reports to the IAB on the outcomes of student's assessment and follow proper implementation of corrective actions.

Following the suggestions to the WG, the internal quality assurance system was better formalized and in June 2023 the Academic Senate ratified, through a deliberation, the University Quality Policies Document, that identifies the objectives and tools aimed at continuous quality improvement, in close connection with the principles set out in the new Higher Education Law (n. 69/2023) and with the priorities defined in the University Strategic Plan.

Through the implementation of the University Quality Policies Document, the University of San Marino will promote the dissemination of the culture of quality, with the active involvement of students, scientific and technical staff, interpreting it as an organizational tool for improving the efficiency of the University activities.

The internal quality assurance system is now clearly attributed to specific bodies that operate together with the University governance and the IAB, in particular, the University Quality Unit/Committee (Presidio della Qualità di Ateneo) will operate within the University structure, through a specific Regulation that has been also ratified in June 2023 by the Academic Senate of the University of San Marino.

The University Quality Unit/Committee is the internal operating structure of the University that ensures the adequate performance of quality assurance processes in line with national and international guidelines (ESG). The unit/committee collaborates in implementing the quality policies defined by the Governing Bodies, thus contributing to the continuous improvement of all University structures, study programs and to the quality development of teaching, research and third mission activities. The Unit acts as a link between the central bodies and the structures equipped with teaching and research in the quality assurance processes and carries out training and information activities on related topics.

The Unit promotes improvement of the system through guidelines, consultation of all stakeholders, monitoring of indicators, analysis and sharing of the results of the self-assessment and internal and external assessment processes, enhancing the best practices identified. In carrying out its functions, the Unit liaises with the University's governing bodies, with the Department Directors, the Study Program Directors and the Independent Evaluation Body, in compliance with the specific prerogatives and responsibilities.

In July 2023 the subscription to IEP evaluation program was sent, the contract is due to subscription by the end of 2023.

It is important that the evaluation will take place when the university structure is ready to uphold and enhance quality, and that in order to do so, the quality assurance system and the recent documentation needs time to be implemented.

Time	Roadmap	San Marino's implementation plan	Implemented reforms
By 1 June 2021	Develop a timetable for establishing quality assurance arrangements. Clarify the roles and functions of the IAB engage in the activities and professional networks of ENQA	Independent Assessment Body (IAB) at the University of San Marino has recently been established to develop the guidelines of an initial and very streamlined internal QA System.	
January 2023		Definition of guidelines for internal quality assurance	
July 2023			Quality Policies Document University Quality Unit/Committee
July 2023			Registration form for initial IEP evaluation
By 1 November 2023	Conclude an agreement with a foreign quality assurance agency Legislation establishing the basis for conducting QA in conformity with the ESG.	Conclude an agreement with a foreign quality assurance agency.	

3.2.2. *Assessment of the working group and good practices*

3.3. Recognition of qualifications

3.3.1. *Implementation of reforms*

San Marino ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) in December 2011 and this is still the single legal framework for the recognition of foreign qualification. The new Law on Higher Education delegates to a new Decree the recognition of qualifications and alternative paths to facilitate the access to higher education, also in accordance with art. VII of the LRC.

In this subject, San Marino joined the EQPR project aiming to strengthening the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, article 7. In January 2023 San Marino expressed interest in becoming a member state of European Qualifications Passport for Refugees. The request was accepted, and two delegates (from CINERTA, ENIC-NARIC San Marino Centre, and the Ministry of Education) have been taking part to training sessions and meetings as part of the program. This is a step towards the recognition of qualifications and a more inclusive society.

Academic recognition is mainly the responsibility of the University of San Marino. It applies the principles of LRC. The responsibility of the public authorities to verify the compliance with the LRC is carried out in close

cooperation with the University. CINERTA (ENIC San Marino) works very closely with the student office of the university. If there are doubts with regard to specific applications, the ENIC assists and in general makes sure that the LRC is respected.

Recognition for the labour market is the responsibility of the State administration. LRC is also used in certain cases.

The roadmap set an aim to ***give due consideration to the introduction of the recognition of prior learning, including informal and non-formal learning, as part of the implementation of the ECTS User's Guide.***

San Marino doesn't have yet any legal basis for recognizing informal or non-formal prior learning, although this is an aspect foreseen by the ECTS Users' Guide.

Access to higher education in the first cycle study programmes is on the basis of school leaving qualification (*maturità*) obtained after 13 years of primary and secondary schooling or with a foreign secondary school leaving qualification giving access to higher education. The accession review noted that no alternative access routes to higher education are contemplated and that there were no plans to introduce them.

Time	Roadmap	San Marino's implementation plan	Implemented reforms
By 1 June 2021	Establish a timetable for the introduction of the recognition of prior learning.	First draft of the document for the recognition of qualifications based on the evaluation report related to the modifications which are needed	
By 1 September 2022		implementation of measures in the University guidelines	Approval of Law April 2023 on Higher Education that plans to adopt of Decree on alternative paths (art. 6)
April 2023			The new Law delegates to a new Decree the recognition of qualifications and alternative paths to facilitate the access to higher education, also in accordance with art VII of the LRC.
By 1 November 2023	Implement measures to the extent they do not require modifying legislation and introduce any required legislation for submission to Parliament		

San Marino joined the EQPR project aiming to strengthening the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, article 7.

3.3.2. Assessment of the working group and good practices

3.4. Higher education governance

3.4.1. Implementation of the reforms

The central governing bodies of the San Marino University by legislation are the Rector, the University Council and the Academic Senate.

The roadmap required the implementation of principles of the EHEA, as expressed in successive declarations and communiqués adopted by the Ministers, concerning student and staff participation, with voting rights, in higher education governance.

In this context, the Roadmap requested a review the composition of the Consiglio dell'Università with a view to including student and staff representation as well as to a composition that would ensure the autonomy of the University. It was also recommended that the Rector would be elected by the appropriate body within the university without subsequent approval by the public authorities.

Thanks to the approval of the University of San Marino Decree (Delegate Decree n. 90 / 1st June 2023), the composition of the University Council, responsible for budgets and strategic development plans-now includes the rector, one representative of the professors for each of the three Departments and two members of the Parliament (one from the majority and one from the opposition). Students and administrative staff have one representative each with voting rights.

The Academic Senate is responsible for the academic affairs, education and research of the university. It includes the Rector, Directors of all University Departments, two representatives of professors from each Department, students and technical staff representatives.

The Rector is elected by the Academic Senate. The Parliament (*Consiglio Grande e Generale*) expresses its appreciation and agreement (*gradimento*). If the agreement is not reached, the Parliament can ask the senate to make a new proposal, after presenting appropriate reasons. The Parliament cannot appoint a candidate who has not been proposed by the University Senate.

The University has a Students' Council. The Students' Council elects its representatives who participate in the main governing bodies of the university. There are 9 student representatives in the governing bodies. The San Marino authorities report that it is sometimes difficult to involve students in the governance of the university because of the small dimension of the university. The positive side is that the interaction between professors, students and the administration is frequent and easily accessible. There is no formal student union.

As stated, most of the roadmap suggestions and requirements concerning the governing bodies of the University of San Marino have been adopted by the Decree.

Time	Roadmap	San Marino's implementation plan	Implemented reforms
By 1 June 2021	Establish a timetable and develop an overview of measures required to modify current arrangement		

By 1 June 2022		First draft of the new University law	
By 1 January 2023		start of the legislative process	
April 2023			Law 27 April 2023 n.69 on higher education was approved by the Parliament
By 1 November 2023	Submission of the required legislative measures to Parliament	adoption of the new law	Decree 1 June 2023 n.90 on the University of San Marino governance

3.4.2. *Assessment of the working group and good practices*

3.5. Lifelong learning and social dimension of higher education

3.5.1. *Implementation of reforms*

Before joining the EHEA San Marino had invested in supporting students with special needs and disabilities in education and training. State scholarships and study grants were granted based on merit and income to all San Marino students who apply for them. The University of San Marino offers scholarships to cover all or part of the tuition fees. Portability of loans and grants was not guaranteed, but each case was evaluated individually.

The roadmap set an aim ***to develop a plan and timetable for stimulating the participation of underrepresented groups in higher education and take measures to stimulate the participation of underrepresented groups in higher education, including creating flexible learning paths within the NQF.***

The university has enhanced its services to students with specific learning disabilities by providing scholarships to students who offer help and support to their peers with difficulties. The university promotes education and provides exemptions from fees for students over 65.

In Law N. 69 of 27 April 2023, Lifelong Learning programmes and the social dimension of higher education were included among the principles.

At the present time the San Marino University provides a vast range of post-graduate courses, with no age enrollment restrictions. These courses, designed for working people, have different length, workload and learning outcomes. Classes usually take place at weekends and some of them can be attended on-line.

For promoting lifelong learning, the University of San Marino provides flexible study times without extra fees for students already in working life.

The University collaborates with the institutions of the Republic of San Marino through various research projects, courses and seminars. The projects are mainly funded by the university and led by a professor with expertise in the specific area. The university also offers seminars on various topics, such as:

- San Marino's path towards European integration,
- educational programs,
- the prevention of repression and gender-based violence,
- labor law reform and the penitentiary system

Within the University, through the Territorial Pact, the university establishes connections with Representatives of trade and entrepreneurial associations can meet students for better integration and knowledge of the reality and working context.

???? partnerships with surrounding cities and institutions.

The principles and guidelines on Social Dimension have been revised. A reference has been established in the new higher education law regarding the Social Dimension, providing a legal basis for work in this area.

Time	Roadmap	San Marino's implementation plan	Implemented reforms
By 1 June 2021	Develop a plan and timetable for stimulating the participation of underrepresented groups in higher education		
January 2022		A working group will start an assessment of specific needs and possible amendments	
By 1 November 2023	Take measures to stimulate participation of underrepresented groups. If these require legislative amendments submit them to Parliament.	New University law	

3.5.2. Assessment of the working group and good practices

Good practice: Territorial Pact

The Territorial Pact is an advisory body of the University of San Marino. The representatives of this body come from a wide range of stakeholders such as local schools, local administration, employers, trade unions and the sports and cultural sectors. Territorial Pact is chaired by the Rector and also university students and staff are members of it.

The Territorial Pact functions are:

- Suggest programs for the development of the University (proactive function of stakeholders);
- Provide opinions on the strategic and development plan of the University (advisory function of stakeholders);
- Provide information to stakeholders, on the University actual and future programs (communicative function of University);
- Encourage fund-raising.

The Territorial Pact enables stakeholders to engage in the strategic development of the University in a systematic way and it helps the University to understand and respond to the needs of the society. The involvement of the stakeholders has raised a greater awareness towards social dimension of higher education.

3.6. San Marino's participation in the BFUG work program

San Marino was accepted as a member of the EHEA in Rome Ministerial Conference with same rights and duties as other members. The Roadmap obliges San Marino **to appoint a delegation of 1-2 members to the BFUG to attend the meetings of the BFUG, starting with the first meeting to be held after the Rome Ministerial Conference, and ensure continuity in the Sammarinese representation throughout the work period.** The roadmap also states that San Marino should **ensure participation in the BFUG Thematic Peer Groups (TPGs) for the implementation of the key commitments, coordinated by the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group, and relevant seminars and other peer learning activities.**

During the work period 2021-2024 San Marino has participated in the BFUG meetings and in the work of the Thematic Peer Group A on Qualifications Framework and in part of the Thematic Peer Group B on Recognition and C on Quality Assurance. Following the WG suggestions to participate in the TPG starting from the beginning of each cycle San Marino will select a delegation to participate to specific TPG in full.

San Marino has participated in the BFUG data collection for the Bologna Process Implementation Report 2024. The working group further encouraged San Marino to participate actively in shaping and implementing policies of the EHEA in the future.

San Marino adjusted the initial work plan in the field of governance. It was initially set to approve a Law of the University of San Marino regulating the major issues related to governance. Along the process, the authorities of San Marino considered that it would be better to first approve a Law on higher education and at a later stage approve the Law of the University of San Marino.

New law on higher education was approved by the Parliament in April 2023.

San Marino appreciated the work and the support of the WG, and its full availability in finding solutions that guaranteed San Marino's compliance to the Roadmap.

Some aspects need further work but the Roadmap helped San Marino acknowledge and realize the implementations needed, it was never meant as a 'checklist' but as a 'guide' along the path to full compliance to the EHEA system.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. The implementation status

San Marino has demonstrated willingness and ability to develop a higher education system along the lines agreed in the roadmap.

There has been a good cooperation between Sammarinese authorities and the working group and discussions were held in an open atmosphere. The working group met in several occasions with relevant stakeholders and decision makers including some members of the Parliament.

The progress achieved in the implementation of the commitments has been significant. San Marino has not yet fully implemented all the key commitments, but full implementation of all the commitments has not been reached by any of the EHEA members so far. The Bologna Implementation report gives further guidance and indication on the areas where improvements should be made in the future.

The working group recommends that in the Tirana Communiqué Ministers acknowledge the work and the efforts done by San Marino in implementing the roadmap.

4.2. Roadmap as an instrument for all future accessions

The decision to accept new members to the European Higher Education Area is taken by the Ministers responsible for higher education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process. As EHEA has evolved over 20 years since it was established it was decided that San Marino would be supported in the implementation of its commitments with an agreed roadmap taking into account that Belarus was accepted in 2017 through a roadmap as well.

The practice of accessing EHEA with agreed roadmap has proven useful. The Roadmap gives clear indication of the next steps and sets timeline for the reforms. A small working group appointed by the BFUG can assist a new member in further reforms and follow up the implementation. In addition, the authorities of San Marino have found the peer learning organized by the working group useful and complementary to the work of TPGs because the information provided is tailored-made for the needs of San Marino.

The working group recommends that in the future, any new members accessing the EHEA will be supported in the implementation of its commitments with a roadmap and peer learning. The purpose of the roadmap is to give further guidance and support to a new member and to clarify how and when a member will meet the specific challenges of the implementation of EHEA goals and principles.

Annexes

Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the European Higher Education Area