



EU2022.CZ



## BFUG Meeting LXXXII

7-8 November 2022  
Brno, Czech Republic

Minutes of Meeting

### List of Participants

Delegation/Working structures	First Name	Last Name
Albania (BFUG Vice-Chair)	Linda	Pustina
Andorra	Jordi	Llombart
Andorra	Maria Del Mar	Martínez
Armenia	Tatevik	Gharibyan
Austria/ BICG Co-Chair	Helga	Posset
Azerbaijan (Outgoing BFUG Co-Chair)	Vusala	Gurbanova
Belgium Flemish Community/ CG on GPD Co-Chair	Magalie	Soenen
Belgium French Community	Caroline	Hollela
Belgium French Community	Dominique	Denis
Council of Europe	Katia	Dolgova-Dreyer
Croatia	Dijana	Mandić
Croatia/ WG on Social Dimension Co-Chair	Ninoslav Šćukanec	Schmidt
Cyprus	Kyriacos	Charalambous
Czech Republic	Michal	Karpíšek
Czech Republic	Tomas	Kust
Czech Republic (BFUG Co-Chair)	Karolina	Gondkova
Czech Republic	Samuel	Jezný
Czech Republic	Tereza	Neumann Kotásková
Denmark	Jonas	Johannnesen
ENQA	Anna	Gover
ENQA	Øystein	Lund
EURASHE	Jakub	Grodecki
ESU/ WG on Social Dimension Co-Chair	Horia-Șerban	Onita
ESU	Katrīna	Sproģe
ESU	Matteo	Vespa
EUA	Maria	Kelo
EUA	Michael	Gaebel
EURASHE	Armando	Pires
EURASHE/ WG Learning & Teaching Co-Chair	Ana	Tecilazić
EQAR	Colin	Tück
EQAR	Melinda	Szabo
Estonia	Janne	Pukk
European Commission	Vanessa	Debiais-Sainton
European Commission	Lucie	Trojanova
EURYDICE/ WG on Monitoring Co-Chair	David	Crosier
Finland/ WG on San Marino Roadmap Co-Chair	Maija	Innola
France (Outgoing BFUG Co-Chair)	Patrick	Nédellec
France	Mathieu	Musquin
Georgia	Maia	Shukhoshvili
Germany	Andreae	Lisette
Germany	Achim	Weber

Greece	Alexandra	Karvouni
Holy See	Melanie	Rosenbaum
Hungary	Marianna	Bodolai-Marcsek
Iceland	Una Strand	Viðarsdóttir
Ireland	Joseph	Gleeson
Ireland	Padraig	Hennigan
Italy/ TF on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing Co-Chair	Luca	Lantero
Italy	Chiara	Finocchietti
Kazakhstan (BFUG Co-Chair)	Kuanysh	Yergaliyev
Kazakhstan	Aitzhan	Kulumzhanova
Latvia	Daiga	Ivsina
Liechtenstein	Eva	Meirer
Lithuania	Andrius	Zalitis
Luxembourg	Patricia	Marx
Malta/ WG on Fundamental Values Co-Chair	Rose Anne	Cuschieri
The Netherlands	Sophie	Duijser
Portugal	Joaquim	Mourato
Romania	Daniela Cristina	Ghițulică
San Marino	Remo	Massari
Slovak Republic	Peter	Ondreicka
Slovak Republic	Marcel	Vysocký
Slovenia	Mateja	Robič
Spain	Isabel	Rodriguez
Sweden	Kristina	Haskas
Sweden (Incoming BFUG Co-Chair)	Robin	Moberg
Switzerland	Aurélia	Robert-Tissot
Ukraine	Kateryna	Suprun
United Kingdom	Pamela	Wilkinson
BFUG Secretariat (Head)	Oltion	Rrumbullaku
BFUG Secretariat	Aida	Myrto
BFUG Secretariat	Jora	Vaso
BFUG Secretariat	Kristina	Metallari

Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Bulgaria, EI-ETUCE, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Turkey, UNESCO and United Kingdom (Scotland) did not attend the meeting.

### **Welcome Adresses**

Prof. Radka Wildova, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic

Prof. Radka Wildova (Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic) welcomed everyone to the 82nd BFUG meeting, and expressed gratitude to the Kazakhstan Co-Chairs and the BFUG Secretariat for their contribution and support to the organization of this meeting. The outgoing BFUG Co-Chairs, France and Azerbaijan, received praise from Prof. Wildova for their work supporting Ukraine and for how they addressed the Russian aggression. She thanked all BFUG members for sending a strong message of support to Ukraine throughout the previous semester and applauded their leadership during these trying times. Prof. Wildova also exhorted the Bologna Process community to keep looking for ways to support the HE community, as well as Ukraine and other affected parties. She stressed the significance of concentrating on EHEA's primary goal of developing the European HE system to provide students with high-quality education, teaching, and learning. She underlined, with reference to the Rome Communique, that the EHEA committed to building an inclusive, innovative, and interconnected EHEA, and as a result, it was agreed to dedicate a thematic session on learning and teaching at this BFUG meeting. Prof. Wildova concluded by wishing for a successful meeting while encouraging everyone to share their knowledge, experience, and best practices at this session.

Opening remarks by Jiri Nantl, Deputy Governor of the South Moravian region, Director of the Central European Institute of Technology, Masaryk University

Jiri Nantl welcomed all participants in the name of the South Moravian region, and thanked the BFUG Chairs for their contributions in organizing this meeting. He asserted that the Bologna Process has been one of Europe's most effective programs, changing higher education in both European and non-European countries while also influencing future generations of students and academic staff. He emphasized that as a result of this process,

they now have forums for interaction and collaboration across higher education institutions. He noted that the presence of stakeholders as consultative members like EUA, EQAR, and ENQA in the BFUG is the best illustration of this productive partnership, and that the Bologna Process has helped to advance the effective changes to the Moravian Higher Education. He continued by stating that the Moravian Region was undoubtedly one of the examples of how the Bologna Process supported the internationalization of HE, that it could be a driving force behind the improvement of people's lives in the region, and that it would be reflected in the digitalization of its social health services. Mr. Nantl sent his best wishes for everyone's pleasant stay in Brno and wished for a successful meeting.

## **1. Welcome and Introduction**

### **1.1 Welcome by the BFUG Co-Chairs (Czech Republic and Kazakhstan)**

Karolina Gondkova (Co-Chair, Czech Republic) welcomed everyone and thanked the BFUG Chairs and the BFUG Secretariat for their contribution and support to the organization of the meeting, and concluded by wishing for a successful meeting.

Kuanysh Yergaliyev (Co-Chair, Kazakhstan) welcomed all participants to the BFUG meeting and expressed gratitude to the Czech Chairs, stating that this opportunity to co-chair has been a big responsibility. Mr. Yergaliyev affirmed that Kazakhstan joined the Bologna Process twelve years ago and they are the only central-Asian country that is a full EHEA member. He added that being part of the Bologna Process permits them to be aware of the latest trends in HE and to implement them in order to transform their HE at the local level. Mr. Yergaliyev spoke about the Central Asia Higher Education Area, listing member countries and explaining the benefits they enjoy from their collaboration. He added that, in October, following the Board Meeting held in Astana, a forum was organized which culminated in a joint statement. He concluded that these activities are crucial in promoting the Bologna principles and ideas in Central Asia and beyond.

### **1.2 Welcome by the BFUG Vice-Chair (Albania)**

Linda Pustina (Vice-Chair) welcomed all members and consultative members to the BFUG meeting and thanked the Co-Chairs for organizing it. She added that the work for the Ministerial meeting in Tirana has begun and that, during this meeting, a wide range of topics will be discussed, from changes in the voting process of the RoP and a Task Force to detailed topics like the thematic blocks on L&T and the support for Ukraine. Ms. Pustina underlined the importance of strengthening the collaboration between BFUG members so as to face the challenges in today's society. She concluded by thanking all of the BFUG working structures for the intensive work done so far and the BFUG Secretariat for their support during this period.

## **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda of the meeting was adopted without changes.

For more information, please see: [BFUG Board CZ KZ 82 2.2 Draft Annotated Agenda](#)

## **3. Information by the outgoing BFUG Co-Chairs (France and Azerbaijan)**

### **3.1 BFUG Board Meeting hosted by Azerbaijan, online, 9 February 2022**

Vusala Gurbanova (Azerbaijan) expressed her gratitude to the BFUG Secretariat and Chairs for the organization of today's meeting. Ms. Gurbanova also thanked the Kazakhstan Co-Chairs for the well-organized meeting in Astana. She briefly presented the Board meeting agenda<sup>1</sup> and its conclusions and decisions, stating that the meeting was held online in Baku due to Covid-19. One of the main points of the meeting was the discussion on the Rules of Procedure (RoP) and the suggestion of the Board to modify the RoP, and also to consider changes in the voting and minutes of the meetings. Finally, it was decided that a revised draft of the RoP should be sent to the BFUG to be revised in the next BFUG meeting.

For more information, please see: [BFUG Board FR AZ 79 Minutes of Meeting](#)

### **3.2 BFUG Meeting hosted by France, 11-12 April 2022**

Patrick Nédellec (Co-Chair, France) thanked the BFUG Co-Chairs for the organization of the meeting. He gave a summary of the key points of the BFUG meeting LXXX: addressing the response to the Russian aggression in Ukraine, which gave also the opportunity to listen to the needs expressed by Ukraine for supporting its higher education institutions (HEIs); the amendments of the RoP which was postponed for further discussions; and a

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<sup>1</sup> BFUG Board Meeting LXXIX, online hosted by Azerbaijan, 9 February 2022

thematic block on mobility where delegates had the possibility to share information and policies and to engage for a better student mobility experience. Finally, Mr. Nédellec thanked the Co-Chairs of Azerbaijan and wished for a fruitful meeting.

For more information, please see: [BFUG FR AZ 80 Minutes of Meeting](#)

#### **4. Information on the BFUG Board Meeting**

##### **4.1. BFUG Board Meeting, hosted by Kazakhstan, online, Astana, 5 October 2022**

Kuanysh Yergaliyev (Co-Chair, Kazakhstan) summarized the key takeaways from the BFUG Board Meeting LXXXI, highlighting that during the Board meeting, the update on the situation on Ukraine was added to the BFUG meeting agenda and it was also agreed to give extra time to the BFUG working structures to present their work. Mr. Yergaliyev added that there was much discussion on possible amendments to the RoP and the main topic was to separate it from the creation of an ad-hoc group. A revised version of the RoP was distributed to the BFUG, with the incorporation of comments on specific aspects.

Per the task force, Mr. Yergaliyev added that it was advised that the composition should be small and experienced in the Bologna procedures, principles and ideas. Another crucial point was the approval of the draft for the roadmap towards the Ministerial conference and Global Forum 2024, highlighting that its purpose is to simplify the process and workflow of the different working structures. After the suspension of the right of representation of Russia and Belarus from EHEA, it was confirmed that the WG on Monitoring does not plan to collect data from these countries for this working period. Mr. Yergaliyev thanked the Secretariat for the valuable consultation and their collaboration for organizing the Board Meeting in Astana and greeted the co-chairs of BFUG for their work.

#### **5. Update from the BFUG Secretariat**

Oltion Rrumbullaku (Head of BFUG Secretariat) provided an overview of the functions of the Secretariat as an impartial support system for the BFUG, as well as information on the support provided to the BFUG working structures and sub-structures for this working period. He continued by addressing the concerns expressed by two WGs, noting that technical difficulties resulting from a cyberattack on Albanian government facilities prevented adequate support from being given to the WG on Fundamental Values, with regards to its meeting on July 11–12 in Malta. Mr. Rrumbullaku spoke of the internal procedures that caused the Secretariat to not attend the meeting of the Working Group to Support the Implementation of the Roadmap for San Marino's Accession to the EHEA (26-27 September 2022) but added that recent meetings with the Albanian Ministry of Education have led to a great commitment to facilitate the organization of the Secretariat's work trips in the future. Mr. Rrumbullaku ensured BFUG members that several measures are being taken to avoid issues in the future and that the Secretariat team is expanding to include more experts.

Regarding the organisation of the BFUG Board and BFUG meetings, he suggested that at least six-week interval would be more productive, as the five weeks between the BFUG and BFUG Board meetings did not provide enough time for adequate planning and organization. Further, to make scheduling meetings easier, it was suggested that all BFUG working structures share a calendar, to be provided by the Secretariat. Mr. Rrumbullaku thanked the BFUG Chairs for their support and wished for a fruitful meeting.

#### **6. Update from the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG)**

Helga Posset (Co-Chair, BICG) provided an update of the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group, focusing on the Thematic Peer Groups and their state-of-play. Ms. Posset highlighted the aim of the BICG to facilitate the coordinated implementation of the three key commitments of the EHEA, through close collaboration with the TPGs, and informed that five online meetings have been organized thus far. Furthermore, an overview of the work of the three TPGs, that are all supported by Erasmus+ projects, was provided, as well as information on organization of meetings and establishment of working groups within each TPG to further their work.

Ms. Posset informed that TPG A on Qualifications Framework has held four peer group meetings, and has 4 Peer-Learning-Activities (PLA) planned, with one PLA<sup>2</sup> already held in Riga, Latvia on 21 October 2021. Following this, it was highlighted that TPG B on Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) has held three meetings, as well as public seminars on automatic recognition and on digitalization. Ad-hoc peer support activities have also been established on digitalization for the recognition agenda and alternative pathways. With regards to TPG C on Quality Assurance (QA), Ms. Posset informed that it has held two meetings and one PLA on "Aligning the legal framework with the ESG" on 1 September 2022. She highlighted that the Staff mobility programme has begun, and informed that a second call for proposals is planned on February-March 2023. It was added that there is coordination among the

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<sup>2</sup> PLA on Micro-credentials and use of QF by stakeholders.

TPGs as there are many overlapping topics and themes (i.e., micro-credentials) to avoid parallel actions.

Ms. Posset also brought up several points for discussion and reflection related to the TPGs' success, with particular focus on how to encourage more active participation in TPGs activities by all countries, guarantee that both countries that believe they have fully implemented the Key Commitments and those that believe they need support participate fully and actively, and emphasize the necessity of coordination among the various representatives (in different TPGs) of each country. Furthermore, despite the natural inclination to focus on innovative themes, it was underlined that the TPGs' emphasis should be focused on ensuring that the basis of the Key Commitments remain at the center of the TPGs' attention. Hence, a balance between innovative themes and the Key Commitments must be achieved. Ms. Posset concluded by wishing for a successful meeting.

Chiara Finnochietti (TPG B, Co-Chair) informed that the coordination work of BICG has been very successful, and that is very good cooperation among Co-Chairs of all TPGs, particularly on transversal themes like micro-credentials. Particularly on the work on recognition, Ms. Finnochietti announced that the next LRC committee will be held on 15 November 2022, where the LRC monitoring report is foreseen to be approved.

For more information, please see: [BICG Update Presentation](#)

## **7. Updates from the Working Groups and Task Force**

### **7.1 Working Group on Monitoring the Implementation of the Bologna Process**

David Crosier (Co-Chair, WG on Monitoring) stated that the first chapter of the Bologna Process Implementation Report will include key information on the EHEA reality and will be based only on Eurostat data. He introduced a new additional topic of the report, covering BFUG members' support to Ukrainian displaced students, and asked for recommendations on methods of including this section in the report. Kateryna Suprun (Ukraine) suggested that the section be an integral part of the report, not a stand-alone document.

Mr. Crosier confirmed the questionnaire will be available to BFUG members by February 2023 and they will have two months to complete it. Several clarifications on indicators were requested by members and Mr. Crosier ensured them that knowing the format of indicators is not essential in answering the questionnaire. To the claim that two months are not sufficient for members to answer the questionnaire, in parallel, give feedback for the indicators. Mr. Crosier replied that the Co-Chairs of the WG on Monitoring are confident in the work and selection of indicators of the working groups as well as the ongoing cooperation among all WGs and the Monitoring WG.

It was recommended that, in the final report, there should be harmony of key results by different WGs, that results should reinforce each other and not be perceived as separate. There were questions on the use of transitional incomplete indicators in the final report and Mr. Crosier clarified that this is the case only for the Fundamental Values chapter. It was suggested that data collection take place after the final approval of the final indicators, so as to avoid data influence. Mr. Crosier replied that data collection cannot be pushed back and will be launched in February 2023 as planned, and that about 95% of indicators are already determined. He clarified that the questionnaire will ask about a country's legal and administrative reality and answers will be then linked to indicators. In addition, other sources of data for the Report will be collected from E4 members, Academic Freedom index etc. He reaffirmed that, as long as they are suspended, the Russian Federation and Belarus will not be included in the report.

In conclusion, Mr. Crosier confirmed that the drafting of the chapters will be done so that the narrative sections balance the significant difference on the number of indicators in each chapter. It was decided that he will send the revised indicators, along with clear explanations on how they are measured, to BFUG members at the beginning of 2023 and work on indicators, as a separate process to the data collection through the questionnaire, will proceed from then.

For more information, please see: [Preparation of 2024 Bologna Process Implementation Report](#)

### **7.2 Working Group on Fundamental Values**

Rose-Anne Cuschieri (Co-Chair, WG on FV) gave an overview of the WG's key objectives and meetings organized thus far. Ms. Cuschieri provided an overview of the meeting structure for the third WG meeting, which was held in a hybrid format in Malta. She noted that there was a brief presentation on the Council of Europe (CoE) study on fundamental values (FV), as well as presentations of the draft statements by experts focusing on the concept, definition, and structure of the fundamental values statements. There were discussions and clarifications among the WG members and experts on the draft statements and after the meeting, the WG members had the possibility to provide input, which the Co-Chairs and experts subsequently incorporated accordingly. The WG is working on the statements in collaboration with the experts with the aim of gathering as much feedback to bring the draft statements to a similar context to the text on academic freedom. On the fourth WG meeting held in October, the revised statements were shared, where the indicators were also presented, and it was worked to agree on the

ones to be used for the Bologna Process Implementation Report 2024. The next WG meeting, which will take place in Bucharest on 6-7 December 2022, will discuss the draft statements, and a PLA on institutional autonomy will also be launched. ESU and experts will present a draft statement on academic integrity prior to this meeting. Feedback on the mapping report from the "New building blocks of the Bologna Process: fundamental values" (NewFAV) project is being collected and collated, which will help in the formulation of the statements.

A remark was made that the draft statements should be formatted in a more concise, pragmatic and strategic manner. The question of whether these statements would just be utilized at the EHEA level or whether they would also be used elsewhere was also raised. To this, it was explained that the format of statements had already been decided in the previous cycle, and the new statements would be given in a format akin to that of academic freedom. It was noted that high importance is being placed on the indicators, and consecutively the statements need to link in the indicators that will be developed. Ms. Cuschieri explained that the WG is attempting to strike a balance between the statements' requirement for conciseness and their requirement for a holistic approach and comprehensiveness. She added in her final remark that the statements are meant to be applied to the higher education community as a whole and used beyond the EHEA level.

### 7.3 Working Group on Social Dimension

Ninoslav Šćukanec Schmidt (Co-Chair, WG on SD) gave an overview of the WG on SD's progress to date, emphasizing the importance of the updated definition of SD, the Principles and Guidelines (PAGs), and the need to build a framework for the PAGs' implementation. The Work Plan 2021-2024 was presented, containing the objectives, timeline and methods of work. Seven WG meetings have been held thus far, with an upcoming online meeting to be held on 14 November 2022. Collaboration with other BFUG WGs, such as the WG on Monitoring and the WG on Learning and Teaching, has also been established. On June 20, 2022, the Erasmus+ project was launched, and a list of the PLAs that had been completed thus far was presented. It was informed that the forthcoming PLA on social dimension will take place on November 16–17, 2022, and will be hosted by the Croatian Ministry of Education and Science.

Mr. Schmidt informed that the WG on SD worked on indicators for the principles of social dimension in higher education in the period 2021-2022, which should be adopted by the BFUG until 2024. The ten principles have a total of 42 indicators, which combine both qualitative and quantitative indicators. Each indicator has several explanatory descriptors (for the moment called subindicators), which give further details on how an indicator can be implemented. He added that during 2021-2022, in parallel with the work of the WG on SD, Eurydice developed indicators for the principles of social dimension<sup>3</sup>, and both entities cooperated closely on the above activities. In agreement with Eurydice, the WG on SD adopted the majority of indicators from Eurydice and, when needed, adapted them. Mr. Schmidt encouraged the BFUG members and working structures to provide feedback on the indicators, and advised that comments be sent via the BFUG Secretariat.

A point was raised on the expectations placed upon QA agencies, and it was proposed to avoid equating QA agencies duties with those of Public Authorities (PA). Another comment was made regarding the coordination between the creation of final indicators and the indicators to be included in the monitoring report, particularly regarding the relationship between these two timelines given that the latter must be completed sooner. It was also questioned if implementing all the explanatory descriptors for each indicator was mandatory for the indicator to be considered fulfilled. In order to clarify the expectations for QA agencies, Horia Onita (Co-Chair) informed that the indicators on QA were taken from the Eurydice report and the WG worked on them to be in line with QA commitments. Furthermore, in order to improve the phrasing, and address other pertinent issues, consultations with ENQA and EQAR will be held. Additionally, it was clarified that, in the context of the BPIR 2024, the explanatory descriptors will not be monitored as such, and only the indicators were sent to the WG on Monitoring. Mr. Onita added that their role is still being discussed and feedback from the BFUG is welcomed to help in finalizing the system of indicators for PAGs.

The CoE representative highlighted the importance of this topic, which has now been taken onboard in the CoE, and announced that the 26<sup>th</sup> session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education on the theme 'The Transformative Power of Education: Universal Values and Civic Renewal' will take place on 28-29 September 2023 in Strasbourg. One of the main topics that will be covered is the renewal of education's civic mission, and it was highlighted the significance of making sure that this topic is connected across all levels of education.

For more information, please see: [WG on Social Dimension - Overview of progress](#)

### 7.4 Working Group on Learning & Teaching

Ana Tecilazic (Co-Chair, WG on L&T) provided an overview of the state-of-play of the WG, including background

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<sup>3</sup> "Towards equity and inclusion in higher education in Europe", Eurydice (2022).

information, reference to the Rome Communiqué and the thematic framework. Moreover, Ms. Tecilazic, informed on the implemented activities, including the organization of WG and subgroup meetings. She informed that the WG on L&T is planning and carrying out its activities around the topics listed in the thematic framework and always looking at the system level (not the institutional) initiatives and practices relevant across the EHEA. Ms. Tecilazic added that one PLA on the topic of staff development has been held in Paris, on 26-27 October 2022, where it was discussed on the skills for teachers in higher education, teaching and digitalisation, as well as teaching support and careers. Two upcoming PLAs are planned on the topics of student-centred learning and innovative learning and teaching in 2023.

A list of topics and possible indicators have been submitted to the WG on Monitoring. It was further disclosed that the WG is developing recommendations on specific policy actions to be sent to the BFUG and ministers regarding the implementation of micro-credentials in the EHEA, in line with developments in the European Education Area (with the TPG A on Qualifications Frameworks and the ERASMUS+ QUATRA Project). Additionally, it is working on setting up forums/seminars for decision-makers, examining the PROFFORMANCE Assessment tool further, and sharing the findings of a survey on the lessons learned from COVID-19. The annual Work Plan 2022 has been implemented almost entirely as planned with the work on indicators completed, and support to the implementation of the ministerial recommendations provided through share of good practices. It was informed that the annual Work Plan 2023 is focused on gathering evidence on good examples of the implementation of the ministerial recommendations in a standardised and methodical manner that would allow to make recommendations on transposing good practices across the EHEA. Ms. Tecilazic concluded by informing that the sixth meeting of the WG on L&T will be held in 1 December 2022, in which it is aimed to adopt the 2023 Work Plan.

A proposal was made to develop cooperation with TPG B on LRC and TPF C on QA as well, as they are both working on micro-credentials, to coordinate the efforts of all of these working structures in a more effective manner.

#### 7.5 Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Magalie Soenen (Co-Chair, CG on GPD) provided an overview of the state-of-play of the CG on GPD and its respective subgroups, as well as information on the meetings organized. Ms. Soenen informed on the composition and focus of the subgroups, which included two functional subgroups<sup>4</sup>, as well as three regional subgroups<sup>5</sup>. She informed that the regional subgroups have had several meetings and are working on mapping exercises concerning the establishment of a contact list of global partners, mapping of regional events & activities and mapping of themes and regions. Ms. Soenen also addressed the CG's contribution to the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference with a policy brief. More subgroup outcomes were provided, and it was announced that the 'Africa' subgroup will hold the first EHEA-Africa conversation webinar on the topic of recognition, around mid-December 2022. Further, the 'Americas' subgroup is planning on organizing similar online activities as the 'Africa' subgroup, especially with Mercosur on 5 December 2022 and with CHEA on 23 January 2023. Furthermore they are working on the draft communication text for contact with regional exchanges. Moreover, the 'Asia' subgroup has participated in conferences with Central Asia and Southeast Asia and is planning to streamline activities with the ASEM process. The Central Asian Higher Education Area (CAHEA) has been presented at the previous CG meeting. Next stages included promoting synergies between the CG and the IN-GLOBAL project. In addition, it was announced that the next CG meeting would be held on 16 January 2023, and the work of the subgroups on the Global Policy Forum and GPF statement would commence as well.

#### 7.6 Working Group on San Marino Roadmap

Jordi Llombart (Co-Chair of WG on the San Marino Roadmap) spoke of the WG's previous in-presence meeting, on Sept 26-27, 2022 in San Marino, confirming the ongoing cooperation among members of the WG with the San Marino (SM) authorities. He expressed that the past meeting of the group had been fruitful, with PLAs on flexible paths and QA, and that important concerns from relevant SM stakeholders had been addressed. Mr. Llombart concluded that he was glad to hear of the internal discussions held with authorities in Albania, regarding the issues of the BFUG Secretariat not attending the previous San Marino WG meeting, and that he looked forward to seeing the Secretariat in the WG's future meetings.

Remo Massari (San Marino) announced that San Marino has drafted a new qualification framework, which closely follows the EHEA example, and appointed two new external experts for work on the draft. He declared that, following the discussion of the WG, San Marino is preparing two bills. One is a new law on HE, due to be approved before November 23 as set on the roadmap, and the second, a new University Law that should be approved shortly after the law on HE. Mr. Massari indicated that San Marino is building a comprehensive ESG-compliant QA system and added that, while the current law already contains references to QA, in the new bill, QA will be better specified, as it will closely follow the suggestions of the WG.

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<sup>4</sup> Tirana Global Policy Forum; Drafting the statement.

<sup>5</sup> Asia; Africa; Americas.

The WG is working on the formulation of guidelines for internal QA and compliance with ESG, on placing an emphasis on digitalization for all data needed for QA, and on trying to expand opportunities for students. Mr. Massari confirmed that, regarding recognition, SM has a legal framework that is part of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, a mutual agreement with Italy for HE qualification, and a double degree program with Italian Universities.

Mr. Massari stated that University of SM has already an internationalization plan and added that San Marino has already established some tracks of recognition for non-formal and informal education, which can serve students through partial recognition and credits. He added that, the WG will also work on the social dimension aspect and explained that the small number of students makes it possible to build strategies that can support them financially and personally. Mr. Massari emphasized San Marino University's strong connection to the territory and stated that its advisory body, composed of university staff, local administration and social institutions, is proactive in the development of the university.

For more information, please see: [WG on San Marino Roadmap](#)

#### 7.7 Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge-Sharing in the EHEA community

Luca Lantero (Co-Chair, TF on Enhancing Knowledge-Sharing in the EHEA community) announced that the TF Action Plan was shared with the BFUG members, for electronic consultation, and was approved accordingly. Further, the TF disclosed the addition of Ukraine as a new country member. It was underlined that the Action Plan comprises of specific activities, as well as subsidiary activities that can assist the TF's efforts. Mr. Lantero concluded that future meetings will be held in the following stages to proceed with the implementation of the activities.

#### 7.8 Update from the EHEA Network of QF National Correspondents

Katia Dolgova Dreyer (CoE) informed on the meeting held on 2 September 2022 in Strasbourg, where she stated the state of affairs of the NQF, micro-credentials, the presentation of the European Learning Model project, and the framework of competences for democratic culture as the key topics of the meeting agenda. The participants completed an exercise, in which they compared and analyzed how the NQF and the reference framework of democratic culture related to one another. Three countries—Finland, the UK, and Andorra—made presentations, and it was recognized that while the NQF does not fully integrate the reference framework of competences for democratic culture, its components—values, knowledge, and attitudes—do find their way into the NQF.

For more information, please see: [Report by the Council of Europe Secretariat BFUG meeting LXXXII](#)

### **8. Finalization of the pending changes of the Rules of Procedure for 2022-2024**

Linda Pustina (Vice-Chair) began by stating that the Secretariat has distributed the draft of the Rules of Procedure (RoP) with the changes discussed in the previous BFUG and BFUG Board meetings. She continued that the long discussions on the two sections, on the voting process and the creation of a Task Force to review the RoP, have not led to a clear agreement on the final draft and expressed her hopes that the present meeting's discussions would lead to decisions on both of these sections.

She continued by introducing point F<sup>6</sup> of the RoP document, that every country has two delegates, with an appointed Head of delegation who is responsible for voting for that country and who can pass the right of vote to another member of the delegation, when necessary. This was agreed upon by all members.

A concern was raised on how voting, especially on vital issues, can take place when members need the appropriate time to consult at the national level. It was suggested that this may be something to be discussed in the Task Force. The Vice-Chair later proposed that countries should be notified of possible voting procedures ahead of time so as to have time to be granted approval by their respective national authorities.

After a rich discussion where delegates discussed if it was still necessary to define a framework for voting with less before the next ministerial conference there was an agreement that there is a need of interim, bridging solution for voting on procedural issues and more elaborated proposal on RoP voting procedures should be facilitated by the Task Force, been proposed thus far is accepted and that the mandate should be given to the Task Force to further address and resolve these issues. To the question whether the task force may change any decisions already taken by BFUG members, it was clarified that the Task Force will review the entire RoP and can propose and consult changes that can be approved by the BFUG members.

On the discussion on voting procedures, the idea of a qualified 2/3 majority on politically significant or procedural

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<sup>6</sup> It specifies the function of the designated Head of delegation in the BFUG meetings.



topics and a majority requirement on less significant questions was favored by many members. It was emphasized that in any circumstances it was required a quorum of at least half of the members present. It was reminded that members who are not present should not be able to block a final decision by their absence. Moreover, concerns were expressed on secret ballots. It was agreed to have, as possible voting formats, online vote and in person vote. Due to the fact that unforeseen proposals might rise during the discussions and in order to allow BFUG members to consult internally thus avoiding abstentions and the failure to reach the requested majority, it was agreed that, upon request, an in person vote can be postponed and an online vote can be carried out instead after the meeting, within a reasonable timeframe.

The proposed changes of the Rules of Procedures, as proposed by the BFUG Board, were accepted with the only change that the word "mainly" will be removed to ensure that the voting regards only the procedural matters within BFUG, accepting the proposed quorum of majority of the members, and the two-thirds of those present needed for the approval and eligibility of various formats of voting (online and in person, not hybrid). The Secretariat will incorporate the requested changes in the RoP document.

For more information, please see: [BFUG CZ KZ 82 8 Rules of Procedure](#)

## **9. Discussion on the creation of a Task Force for the Review of the Rules of Procedures**

Michal Karpisek presented the purpose and outcome of the Task Force (TF) for the Review of the Rules of Procedures to develop a proposed set of rules and regulations for the governance of the EHEA and its bodies, in particular the BFUG, the BFUG Board, the BFUG Secretariat, and the BFUG working structures. The timeframe to complete the review of the document is set until June 2024, as there may be some major proposals that may need to be reflected within the Ministerial Communique. As a result, it is anticipated that the Task Force will start working in January 2023 and will regularly update the BFUG on its progress. It was emphasized that the TF is invited to propose recommendations on any reforms of EHEA structures in line with needs identified within the work on updated rules of procedures.

It was also underlined that the composition of the TF should be kept to a limited number of individuals, including those with broad experience in the EHEA, particularly with the BFUG and Board, but preferably also with Ministerial conferences and working groups. The co-chairs presented a proposal of members within the Task Force, followed by the clarification of names of experts as appointment should be in: Albania (Vice-chair, Linda Pustina), Czech Republic (Michal Karpišek), European Commission (Kinga Szuly), EQAR (Colin Tuck), EUA (Michael Gaebel), Germany (Frank Petrikowski), Italy (Luca Lantero), Romania (Irina Geanta), and one BFUG international expert (Sjur Bergan supported by the Italy and project In-GLOBAL).

On point (v)<sup>7</sup> of the ToR document's section under "Values and principles," it was suggested that the term "simple majority" be removed in accordance with the decision taken in the agenda item titled "Finalization of the pending changes to the Rules of Procedure 2022–2024." The ToRs will be revised accordingly.

Romanian and German representatives contributed to the discussion by giving background information on the suggested experts from their countries as well as their expertise with the BFUG.

The discussion focused on benefits and risks of a two-fold role of the Task Force – the revision of existing rules of procedures (administrative view) and facilitation of discussion on possible revision of the BFUG working structures (strategic view), yet especially on urgency and necessity of having such task force.

The ToR document was approved by the members with the above mentioned modification, the nomination of experts was approved, as well. The Co-Chairs of the TF would be shared through the Secretariat for approval by end of December, and it was underlined that they would be required to report to the BFUG Board by March 2023 and to the BFUG by May 2023.

## **10. A thematic block on Learning and Teaching – introduction & presentations**

### **10.1. Enhancing the quality of teaching at Masaryk University'**

Prof. Jiří Hanuš (Vice-rector, Masaryk University) provided a presentation on 'Enhancing the quality of teaching at Masaryk University'. Firstly, Prof. Hanuš gave an overview on the general conditions for the enhancement of the quality of teaching and respective challenges. He explained that there are universities in the Czech Republic that enjoy institutional accreditation and intellectual freedom. These universities have the freedom to create new programs and conduct relevant scientific research within the context of a free curriculum, giving them a significant amount of control over the content of their activities. However, it is uncertain how they use this flexibility or whether they are innovative

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<sup>7</sup> While explicitly recognizing that decisions shall in principle be made by consensus, making, propose voting arrangements for cases where consensus cannot be reached in spite of the best efforts by the Co-Chairs, and identify issues on which more than a simple majority shall be required and submit proposals for the majority that shall be required in such cases.

to consider their subject area in a broader context. Finding a balance between research, teaching, and universities' third duty (relevance for society), as well as having open conversations about all three aspects, is the second general area. Thirdly, there are multiple degrees of competition between universities, and the Academy of Science. The connection between all of these elements and careers was also emphasized.

Prof. Hanuš introduced the European Digital University (EDUC), an association of European universities that work on a variety of topics, including virtual mobility, innovative short-term physical mobility schemes and blended learning. Other areas include the creation of new links between education and research and harmonization of teaching modules, in order to automatically recognize students' academic qualifications and learning periods. It was highlighted that student involvement was seen as beneficial in the university's Quality Assurance and Teaching Excellence areas, with students being part of the Internal Evaluation Board, the study program board, and as evaluators in the major internal evaluation of an existing degree program. The Center for the Development of Pedagogical and Personal Competences (CERPEK) Institute was established with the goals of providing courses and workshops for particular target groups who are involved in university teaching and need to develop new competencies, as well as adopting an inclusive teaching style by exchanging experience sharing between various generations. The advisory services for students were also discussed, and it is planned to offer these services to staff members as well so they may select the optimal career route, within the university. Prof. Hanuš concluded by noting that in order for the institution to be aware of the effects that these changes may have, it is important to maintain a certain level of continuity and to constantly develop.

## 10.2. Lotus project and other recent learning and teaching initiatives

Michael Gaebel (EUA) presented lessons learnt from the Lotus project, and other recent learning and teaching initiatives of EUA. He highlighted some strengths, including the Policy Dialogue (PD) that contributed to policy making at national and European level, and explored how different actors and stakeholders (HEIs, ministries, university organisations, dedicated national structures for L&T, QA agencies) develop effective policies for L&T. Moreover, he mentioned the Leadership Development Programme (LDP), a peer learning exercise of HEIs, to develop and implement structured and systematic approaches to enhance learning and teaching at the institutions, whilst trying to explore the issues of defining and exercising "leadership".

The primary focus was on the national and European level actions that needed to be taken. It was first acknowledged that system-level frameworks and processes are required to enable, support, and mainstream L&T innovation developed by the sector when the topic of institutional autonomy and system-level support was raised. In addition, it was noted as important to acknowledge and concur that change and development are necessary, to provide support through regulation, frameworks and funding, and to take into account innovative pilot programs. The task of transforming higher education was ascribed to institutions and policy makers. It was mentioned that ministries and other system-level organizations ought to accept the crucial role and accountability of HEIs in learning and teaching, give autonomy, and define their own role in supporting and complementing it. These included cooperative efforts to identify and remove system level impediments, as well as incentives for peer approaches and interinstitutional collaboration. Finally, it was mentioned that HEIs should be enabled to develop sector approaches & measures, such as continued professional development measures, recognition of teaching for career progression.

Collaboration at various levels was highlighted as being vital for institutions, as teaching should not just be seen as an activity of individual teachers but as a collaborative and collegial process and shared duty. This was noted to require collaboration across the HEIs and in the larger community. The ability to foster and value cooperation inside and across HEIs, rather than competition, as well as to have a strong consensus on challenges by focusing on generating solutions, were also highlighted as vital for inter-institutional collaboration. Additionally, it was believed that discussion and interchange at the national and European levels had a significant added value.

Mr. Gaebel noted that since 2015, peer learning groups that target leadership as well as other staff and students, have been implemented to gather groups of institutions to collaborate on a particular topic. He explained that these groups meet over several months and produce tangible results like institutional development plans.

"Leadership" was highlighted an emerging topic, where both the agency ought to develop strong strategic oversight, coordination and implementation for learning and teaching, and the institutional collective. Nonetheless, challenges included lack of an adequate leadership training offer. Moreover, there is the need for academic career reform to ensure recognition of teaching in academic careers as professional and scholarly activity. This was noted to remain a key structural obstacle, due to lack of financial resources, and lack of recognition for career teaching and career progression.

In conclusion, Mr. Gaebel summarized the key points which included the interaction between system-level and institutional level, peer learning and interinstitutional national and international collaboration, leadership in learning and teaching, and changes to academic careers.

### 10.3. Students' Mobility: Patterns, challenges and opportunities

Katrina Sproge (ESU) offered a general overview of the challenges students encounter while participating in mobility programs. With the adoption of the Rome communique, indicating the 20% target for mobility achievement, the numbers have not significantly increased since its adoption, with the pandemic being one of the factors. Nevertheless, Ms. Sproge emphasized a number of benefits for students who do engage in credit or degree mobility, including increased language proficiency and understanding of global affairs and other cultures. She pointed out that studies have shown that these mobility opportunities are very beneficial for students from underrepresented and marginalized groups, as it has been observed that their academic achievements have increased more significantly after the mobility period than those of their privileged peers. Additionally, there is the improvement of multicultural understanding and communication abilities.

She emphasized that while students are aware of the benefits mobility brings for both personal and professional development, a sizable percentage of them do not participate in any sort of mobility. One of the barriers was the cost of enrolling in mobility programs, which was also a barrier, coupled with the difficulty of having credits and degrees recognized. Additionally, it was noted that the majority of the problems that students mentioned were institutional and practical rather than environmental. The inability of non-mobile students to extend their degree programs due to financial or academic debts, obligations to family or career, etc., as well as a lack of finance and degree program flexibility were also mentioned as important barriers to participating in mobility programs.

Although blended mobility was introduced as an alternative to physical mobility, Ms. Sproge highlighted that this should not be used as the primary form, as physical mobility has the greatest added value and blended mobility should not be considered as a replacement. She concluded by underlining the importance to introduce potential solutions to lessen these obstacles.

### 10.4 Group discussions on the three thematic blocks

The three groups were divided to exchange on relevant European and national policies, good practices and discussion on possible policies and measures at the European (EHEA) and national levels. Each group focused on a specific area: Learning & Teaching, Academic Careers, and Mobility of Students and Staff.

The Learning & Teaching session, facilitated by Ana Tecilazić (WG Learning & Teaching Co-Chair, EURASHE) would focus on governmental support to innovative learning and teaching, reflection on learning & teaching trends and patterns after COVID, the role of leadership and the future organization of learning & teaching, and challenges and opportunities in learning & teaching. The Academic Careers session, facilitated by Vanessa Debiais-Sainton (European Commission) focused on academic staff capacity building, national regulations and requirements for academic staff qualifications, profile and career progress, reflection of learning and teaching activities, support to capacity building and institutional autonomy, expectations for national support and policies. The Mobility of Students and Staff session, facilitated by Matteo Vespa (ESU) would follow up on discussions of the previous BFUG on student groups involved in mobility, data collection and analysis, enhancing staff mobility, approaches to internationalization and mobility, national/European strategies and policies.

### 10.5 Conclusions on the three thematic blocks on Learning and Teaching

Horia Onita (ESU) summarized the key takeaways from the Learning and Teaching session. He stated that the focus of discussion was on methods of supporting flexible, high-quality, innovative learning and teaching at the EHEA level. The group also discussed links between LT and digitalization, lifelong learning, continuous education and LT policies, and funding streams for supporting LT. National good practices were shared, including student-centered learning practices from Portugal, support of student-led initiatives in Romania, and models of institutional holistic approaches reforms in Ireland. The group discussed whether Learning and Teaching policies should be considered a key commitment, and some of the members of the group objected to this on the grounds that currently we do not have yet the specific tools created at EHEA level to underpin it as a key commitment, but it can be seen as an objective. In the meanwhile, we need to develop the peer support system at EHEA level on LT and work on deepening common understanding through principles and guidelines at EHEA level. Finally, it was decided that more tools are needed to support LT at the EHEA level and that countries interested in higher cooperation at the European level on LT should help further the agenda of LT for the next ministerial conference.

Peter Ondreicka (Slovak Republic) reported on the discussion of the Academic Careers session. Mr. Ondreicka stated that staff training should be taken up beyond the institutional level, by a higher more systematic approach, at the national and European levels. The group had also discussed that funding is necessary in supporting measures on academic careers at the central and institutional levels. The higher value placed on research as opposed to teaching was cited as inhibiting staff in enhancing pedagogical skills. It was suggested that government should do more to support and elevate the status of teaching, pedagogical skills of staff should become more emphasized in funding formulas, and teaching should become a more prominent element in the ranking and reputation measures of HEIs. The importance of supporting the connection between research and education was

cited as was the enhancement of institutional collaboration, addressing gender-based problems, and a balance of soft and hard measures employed by national governments.

Matteo Vespa (ESU) reported on the discussion on Mobility, which addressed the 20% mobility target and internationalization objectives that had been recalled during the BFUG meeting in Strasbourg. He clarified that though the mobility target is to have 20% of students have mobility within their studies through both credit and program mobility, the way this is operationalized is only through credit mobility. The issue of a lack of comparable data at the European level was identified as was the fact that statistics on international students are often inaccurate. Other challenges brought up were the high international student fees required from students from EHEA countries which are not part of the European Economic Area, and problematic visa regulations. It was proposed that the next Bologna program should have a section on mobility and internationalization and that related work begin within this cycle.

## **11. Update on the possible support and coordination on Ukraine**

Kateryna Suprun (Ukraine) began by presenting the current context in Ukraine. After 257 days of war in Ukraine, there are over 2406 institutions destroyed and damaged, 7.6 million Ukrainians residing outside Ukraine, around 6.2 million internally displaced people and a high number of casualties among children. The emergency measures taken by the government and by the HEIs include blended and/or online learning process, with exact numbers varying according to the safety situation and the decision on the learning modality lies with individual institutions.

Ms. Suprun continued that the situations of students who cannot resume the study process are recommended by the Ministry of Education to pursue internal academic mobility at other Ukrainian universities or to complete non-formal education studies that will be recognized by their home university. It was mentioned that the learning assessments like state final attestation for school leavers, external independent evaluation for entrants into HEIs, unified entrance examination and unified professional entrance test for Master's studies were suspended and new instruments of competitive examination were introduced, such as national multi-subject test for entrants into HEIs, Master's test of educational competence and Master's complex test for Master's studies. The 2022 admission campaign relies on e-applications and there is high entrance to Bachelor and Master programs, compared to 2021.

Ms. Suprun announced that the government adopted the Strategy on the Development of HE (2022-2032), which has relevance for the reconstruction period. The key takeaways and high priorities for the immediate reconstruction period, considering the high demand on Ukrainian HE, are rapid digital infrastructure provision, structural investments to revive the system, support for mental health issues, professional development for teachers and administrators, digital services for HE management and the need for fast-track and user-friendly recognition of Ukrainian qualifications. BFUG colleagues were also specifically requested to support data collection on externally displaced students by encouraging their national authorities for central data collection.

There were several comments to Ms. Suprun's presentations including:

- Suggestions and support on data collection for displaced Ukrainian students and staff in order to map the real situation and plan policies for the reconstruction period;
- The measures and actions undertaken thus far by the CoE in support of Ukraine as a priority issue;
- The actions taken by the ESU, as well as the intergovernmental appeals to deal with the emergency situation of Ukrainian students;
- Eurydice's support for the issue of data collection at the national level and the appeal to think about setting up better data collection at the central level for this type of emergency;
- EUA support on running a survey in the beginning of 2023 and the launch of the Task Force for the Reconstruction with some short- and medium-term goals;
- Action taken by the EU Commission to support Ukraine in all Erasmus+ actions, also through a new call for capacity building to provide support for building a digital open university;
- The expression of support from several representative countries regarding the situation of incoming students and staff as well as the collection of data about the situation in different states and information on the education area.

For more information, please see: [Update on the possible support and coordination on Ukraine](#)

## **12. Roadmap towards the Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum 2024**

The purpose of the roadmap document was highlighted to develop a comprehensive, in-depth process flow so that all parties involved in the various structures would be aware of how to bring the various activity strands together. It was underlined that this process flow should allow the BFUG structures to plan how to feed into the documents that will be discussed in the Ministerial Conference in Tirana. Moreover, it was proposed that incoming

BFUG Co-Chairs will review this document on regular basis, to be presented at the respective BFUG meetings, in order to maintain the concept of this roadmap relevant.

It was highlighted that there might be two BFUG Board meetings and two BFUG meetings in the semester prior to the Ministerial Conference; hosted by Belgium, with the dates yet to be decided. Further, it was underlined to have the finalized composition of the Drafting Committee by this BFUG meeting, as per the next year the Drafting Committee should start its work. It was informed that the Belgium Flemish and French communities will be both taking part in the Drafting Committee jointly. The consultative members informed that ESU will represent them within the Drafting Committee. An exact date for the Ministerial Conference 2024 might affect the Roadmap including the schedule for BFUG meetings and thus it was requested that these dates will be clarified soon to allow planning.

Also, the timeline for the following Ministerial Conference has to be decided, with a proposed timing being spring 2027. Moreover, the need to identify candidates for the host of the next Ministerial Conference and of the upcoming BFUG Secretariat by Spring 2023 in order to get into the scheme of the Erasmus+ funding program was stressed by the European Commission. The members were invited to consider the invitation.

It was suggested to revise the terminology of the roadmap document, and the terms "communique" and "statement" be clearly defined. Additionally, it was suggested that the Conference's setup and the Policy Forum be emphasized. Another comment was made on the outputs of the BFUG Working Groups, to be delivered earlier than anticipated, by late 2023, preferably during the final BFUG meeting in 2023, as opposed to the intended timeframe for the beginning of 2024. The Working Group on Social Dimension also asked that the communique's annex contain the group's output.

The roadmap document was acknowledged as a useful starting point for subsequent work, and it was decided that it would be regularly updated and modified as necessary. As a result, it would be required for the BFUG members and working structures to continuously provide updates on any changes. It was also agreed that the Secretariat would revise the terminology.

### **13. Reflection of current political, economic and social challenges, impact on higher education. Exchange on national policies.**

The session consisted in inviting participants to share updates and plans on the current socio-economic challenges and their impact in HE, mainly on the situation post-Covid 19, the energy crisis and financial issues. It was emphasized that the current challenges, at the socio-economic level, present a problem, and that there is need to have a discussion at the European level about the issues of energy, the financing of HE and how the governments are supporting the HE community.

Updates from the Czech Republic confirmed the additional budget allocated for HEIs to cover energy costs through a special state Act, currently in force, that regulates payment costs of institutions. An amendment to a law on social scholarships for students in need along with budget increases for socio-psychological support, are in process. In Kazakhstan, the direct impact of the war in Ukraine is felt, in terms of an increased effort to host a wider number of students, who previously headed to Ukraine or Russia for HE and who are now looking for alternatives in other countries, including Kazakhstan. Students are now allowed to transfer their studies during the semester through a regulation amendment which has come into force. There is a wider focus from the government in opening and supporting international education and branches to provide better quality education.

Measures taken from the government in the context of the rising energy prices in Romania, confirm that for HEIs the prices will remain the same, because the government will pay the difference. It was also mentioned that it is possible for students to get compensation from the state to cover the price of the energy. The new law on education currently under process, foresees significant budget increase, introducing of the short cycle studies, the dual courses in HE, the micro credentials and also reinforces the part of recognition of informal and formal learning.

In France there is significant budget increases for students' grants. The "one euro meal" policy for students is in force and the government has allocated specific funds to help HEIs to cover extra costs of energy. In addition, policies and budgets addressing the issue against sexual violence and gender-based violence have been enhanced. Measures taken in Germany with regard to the energy crisis are both at the individual-level, through direct student cash support and energy bill subsidies, and at the institutional level, the HEIs and research institutions profit from the overall policy of the government which states that energy costs will be subsidized and maintained at a relatively low level. The session ended by emphasizing the importance of keeping the universities and buildings open, despite current challenges, as a matter of the right to education.

### **14. Update from the Consultative Members (highlights)**

Anna Gover (ENQA) began by stating that ENQA's written report highlights two current activities of interest. The

first is the recently-launched ongoing QA Fit project, focused on mapping the status of QA across the EHEA and developing recommendations for ESG. The first stage of the project is a survey, to be distributed to all stakeholders, and present members were reminded to respond to it soon. The second ESG project has been supporting the QA agencies in meeting the expectations of ESG in several countries. A key takeaway has been that some agencies are moving toward external reviews of QA agencies. The first round is coming to a successful end, results will be presented in an upcoming webinar, and its second round will start next year in other countries.

For more information, please see: [ENQA report](#)

Matteo Vespa (ESU) began by stating that the first cycle of Bologna with Students Eyes (BWSE) came to a close in May, and that the second cycle involves collaboration with ministries. He expressed that the main takeaway is a timely report that can feed into the BPIR report, especially on de facto indicators and policy recommendations. He announced ESU's general assembly in Prague on that same week, where the organization will approve a statement on Academic Integrity, emphasizing that this is the first organization to do so at the European level. Other work included ESU's approval of a statement on student-centered learning and a resolution on the future of automatic recognition, an upcoming approval of the resolution on the campaign against student poverty, Education is Freezing and the new mandate for a permanent working group on Ukraine within ESU's executive committee.

For more information, please see: [ESU update](#)

Michael Gaebel (EUA) began by stating that the new EUA report is more strategically structured than before, and that it includes sections on upcoming events, publications, initiatives and resources for BFUG and other relevant information. He continued by announcing that EUA has done 16 projects and more than 40 webinars. Mr. Gaebel mentioned the LOTUS and NEWLEAD project and confirmed that the Spotlight on Recognition project resulted in a self-evaluation tool. At the beginning of next year, a survey will be sent out to all universities in time for the 2024 Ministerial, which will gauge the progress of HEIs along the Bologna process. Mr. Gaebel concluded that EUA currently has a higher participation of countries and systems than in the past.

For more information, please see: [EUA report](#)

Armando Pires (EURASHE) announced that the EURASHE hybrid conference was a success with about 300 participants. She noted that in the next general assembly of November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022, EURASHE's strategy for the next three years would be adopted. Some of the main objectives are on different types of HEIs, innovative LT methods, applied research, future skills, local and regional impact, QA, and internationalization. She mentioned that special attention will be paid to Level 5 and Level 8 studies. Reminding members that the European year of youth will be followed by the year of skills, she announced the topic will be addressed at EURASHE's annual conference on June 2023 at the University of Bucharest.

Katia Dolgova-Dreyer (Council of Europe) announced the CoE's current focus on the development and adoption of its education strategy, a new undertaking for the organization, which will include CoE's vision of HE until 2030. She mentioned that the [European Qualifications Passport for Refugees \(EQPR\)](#) project includes 20 countries, and that the publication from the 7<sup>th</sup> Global Forum (June 2022) on the democratic mission of HE will be available in spring 2023. She confirmed that the CoE is looking to develop new action lines on the digital dimension of HE and artificial intelligence in HE and that, in September 2022, CoE signed with the IAU the Memorandum of Understanding on the internationalization of HE. The CoE continues to hold the co-secretariat of the LRC and ENIC network and that, the 2<sup>nd</sup> monitoring report on the implementation of the convention will be presented. She added that the pan-European platform on ethics, transparency and integrity in education will examine ways to implement the Recommendation adopted by the Committee of Ministers on countering education fraud and concluded that the first cycle of CoE's best practice program, which rewards HEIs and academics that exemplify Academic Integrity, has been successfully carried out and its results will be widely disseminated.

For more information, please see: [CoE report](#)

Colin Tück (EQAR) began by reminding members that the report in EQAR updates would be sent out shortly. Mr. Tück mentioned the EQAR Members' Dialogue to be hosted by the Czech Republic in December, where there will be an opportunity to discuss current topics like QA of European Universities, micro-credentials and cross-border QA. He reiterated the importance of members' feedback by answering the surveys sent out by ENQA as part of the QA FIT<sup>8</sup> project so that discussion in the future can be evidence-based. Mr. Tück concluded that, in the coming year, the IMINQA project<sup>9</sup> on QA will be co-organizing 2 PLAs: one on Cross-border QA and QA of Transnational Education and a second one on the European Approach for Joint Programmes, which will provide excellent opportunities for ongoing dialogue.

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<sup>8</sup>About the QA FIT project: <https://www.enqa.eu/projects/quality-assurance-fit-for-the-future-qa-fit/>

<sup>9</sup>About the IMINQA project: <http://ehea.info/page-TPG-C-on-QA-Meetings-2021-2024#h61slbqps7o9t9ay8p1ys562l19y8x9j>

## **15. Information by the Incoming BFUG Co-Chairs**

### **15.1. BFUG Board Meeting LXXXIII (Bosnia & Hercegovina)**

Bosnia & Herzegovina Co-Chair apologized for not being able to attend the meeting.

### **15.2. BFUG Meeting in Sweden (11-12 May 2023)**

Robin Moberg (Incoming BFUG Co-Chair) expressed gratitude to the BFUG Co-Chairs for the organization of the meeting in Brno. He delivered an update on the incoming Swedish Presidency and its priorities adding important dates of activities during the first semester of 2023. He affirmed that the upcoming BFUG Meeting would be held on 11-12 May 2023.

## **16. AOB**

Colin Tück shared with the participants the news that he decided to step down from his position as EQAR Director by March 2023 and expressed his gratitude for the collaboration all these years with the BFUG. All the participants greeted Mr. Tück for his work. Michael Gaebel (EUA) asked to recirculate the action plan of the TF on Enhancing Knowledge and Sharing that was already shared in August 2022. Luca Lantero asked the Secretariat to recirculate the email to the BFUG members and the Consultative members.

The BFUG Chairs congratulated the Czech Republic for the wonderful organization of the meeting. The BFUG meeting LXXXII was successfully concluded.