



EUROPEAN  
Higher Education Area



MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI NAȚIONALE



Republic of North Macedonia  
Ministry of Education and Science

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## BFUG MEETING LXV

4-5 April 2019

Bucharest (Romania)

### Minutes

#### List of participants

Delegation	First Name	Surname
Albania	Linda	Pustina
Andorra	Enric Manel	Garcia Lopez
Armenia	Gayane	Harutyunyan
Armenia	Samvel	Karabekyan
Austria	Gottfried	Bacher
Austria	Stephan	De Pasqualin
Azerbaijan	Tofig	Ahmadov
Azerbaijan	Shahin	Bayramov
Belarus	Elena	Betenya
Belarus	Serhei	Kasperovich
Belgium Flemish Community	Magalie	Soenen
Belgium French Community	Caroline	Hollela
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Petar	Maric
Bulgaria	Stefka	Shirokanska
Croatia	Marina	Crcic Sokol
Croatia	Ana	Tecilazic Gorsic
Croatia (AG1 Co-chair)	Ninoslav	Scukanec Schmidt
Cyprus	Panicos	Giorgoudes



Czech Republic	Karolina	Gondkova
Czech Republic	Lucie	Trojanova
Denmark	Trine Bolette	Svensson
Denmark	Maria	Ulf-Moeller
Estonia	Janne	Pukk
European Commission	Vanessa	Debiais-Sainton
European Commission	Klara	Engels-Perenyi
Finland	Sanna	Hirsivaara
Finland	Maija	Innola
Finland	Jonna	Korhonen
France	Sandrine	Crouzet
France	Denis	Despréaux
France	Hélène	Lagier
Georgia	Ekaterine	Bagishvili
Georgia	Maia	Margvelashvili
Georgia	George	Vashakidze
Germany	Frank	Petrikowski
Greece	Alexandra	Karvouni
Holy See	Melanie	Rosenbaum
Hungary	Beatrix	Borza
Hungary	Ernő	Keszei
Iceland	Una	Viðarsdóttir
Ireland	Joseph	Gleeson
Italy (BFUG Vice-Chair)	Ann Katherine	Isaacs
Italy	Vincenzo	Zara
Kazakhstan	Unzeilya	Khassenova
Kazakhstan	Adlet	Toibayev
Latvia	Daiga	Ivsina
Liechtenstein	Daniel	Miescher

Lithuania	Andrius	Zalitis
Luxembourg	Isabelle	Reinhardt
Malta	Rose Anne	Cuschieri
Malta	Tanya	Sammut-Bonnici
Moldova	Nadejda	Velisco
Netherlands	Tessa	Bijvank
North Macedonia (BFUG Co-chair)	Borcho	Aleksov
Poland	Maria	Boltruszko
Portugal	Afonso	Martins
Portugal	João	Queiroz
Romania	Raluca	Boldan
Romania	Ligia	Deca
Romania	Irina	Geantă
Romania (BFUG Co-chair)	Cristina	Ghițulică
Romania (BFUG Co-chair)	Cezar	Hâj
Romania	Madalina	Matei
Romania	Camelia	Mircea Sturza
Romania	Oana	Moșoiu
Romania	Radu	Szekely
Romania	Antonela	Toma
Russian Federation	Nadezda	Kamynina
Russian Federation	Olga	Valueva
Russian Federation	Boris	Zhelezov
Serbia	Vanja	Nedeljkovic
Slovak Republic	Jozef	Jurkovič
Slovenia	Erika	Rustja
Slovenia	Jana	Sedej
Spain	Margarita	de Lezcano-Mújica Núñez
Sweden	Martin	Persson

Switzerland	Muriel	Meister-Gampert
Turkey	Tuncay	Dögeroğlu
Turkey	Elif	Huntürk
Ukraine	Olexandr	Smyrnov
Ukraine	Iryna	Zolotaryova
United Kingdom	Pamela	Wilkinson
United Kingdom (Scotland)	Michael	Watney
BUSINESSEUROPE	Rasmus	Dahl
Council of Europe	Sjur	Bergan
EI-ETUCE	Agnes	Roman
ENQA	Christoph	Grolimund
ENQA	Maria	Kelo
EQAR	Karl	Dittrich
EQAR	Colin	Tück
ESU	Adam	Gajek
ESU	Katrina	Koppel
ESU	Robert	Napier
ESU	Petrişor Laurenţiu	Ţucă
EUA	Michael	Gaebel
EUA	Tia	Loukkola
EURASHE	Michal	Karpíšek
UNESCO	Andreas	Snildal
EAIE - BFUG partner	Sabine	Pendl
EUROSTUDENT - BFUG technical experts	Kristina	Hauschildt
Eurydice European Commission - BFUG technical experts	David	Crosier
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni	Finocchietti
BFUG Secretariat	Edlira Adi	Kahani Subashi
BFUG Secretariat	Luca	Lantero

BFUG Secretariat	Vera	Lucke
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Apologies from Montenegro and Norway.

## **Welcome by Mihnea Costoiu, Rector of University Politehnica of Bucurest**

### **Welcome by Ecaterina Andronescu, Minister of National Education**

Romanian and North Macedonian BFUG Co-chairs welcomed the BFUG participants. Then, after welcoming from his side all the participants, the Rector of University Polytechnic of Bucharest (UPB), emphasised the achievements of UPB in its 200 year of establishment, underlining, among others, the role of academic freedom, scientific innovation and impact on society, and internationalisation of Higher Education (HE) as keys of its institutional development.

The participants were greeted also by the Minister of National Education, Ms. Ecaterina Andronescu. The Minister welcomed the BFUG Meeting participants, and expressed her belief that Education is the best investment of the EHEA countries on their future. Looking at its role in shaping HE on all levels, from institutions to governments, the Bologna Process (BP) should consider the progress made and the economic and social challenges for the future including, among others, diversity of HE systems, demographic trends, employment, social inequalities as well as migration and radicalisation issues. HE has a crucial role in providing solutions for those issues.

## **1. Welcome and introduction**

### 1.1 Welcome by the current BFUG Co-chairs: Romania/North Macedonia

The Romanian Co-chair underlined the importance of the BFUG Meeting in the framework of the Romanian EU Presidency and thanked the UPB for hosting the event. Over 100 people – BFUG members, consultative members and partners – were attending the BFUG Meeting, whose main theme is developing a vision on the future of the EHEA. This requires active involvement of all participants, and their feedback on the issues raised in the discussions. She thanked the outgoing Austrian and Swiss Co-chairs for the work done during their BFUG chairmanship. The North-Macedonian Co-chair joined the thanks, and gave the floor to the BFUG Vice-chair.

### 1.2 Information by the BFUG Vice-chair (Italy)

The BFUG Vice-chair gave a summary of the work carried out since the BFUG Meeting in Vienna. She emphasized that all Working, Advisory and Coordination Groups (WG/AGs and CGs) are very active and a huge amount of work is going on. She underlined that the discussions on the future of the EHEA, that starts with this BFUG meeting, will prove whether the BFUG can be a productive and strategic agent for planning and carrying out

the work of the future decade. She also recommended that all members at the national level, should inform Ministers and other stakeholders and ask for their input to feed into the work of the different groups. If the BFUG is able to work in this way, involving ministerial and other actors in all countries, it will be able play a very important and strategic role.

## **2. Adoption of the agenda**

The Meeting Agenda was adopted with no amendments.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_2a\_Draft Agenda.pdf*

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_2b\_Draft Annotated Agenda.pdf*

## **3. Feedback from the last meetings**

### 3.1 Report from BFUG meeting LXIII in Vienna, 27-28 September 2018

The outgoing Austrian Co-chair, also on behalf of the outgoing Swiss Co-chair, gave a short summary of the work carried out during their Co-chairing semester. All the groups were established, their composition clarified and they all started to work. The minutes of the Meeting in Vienna were approved.

*Attachment: BFUG\_AU\_CH\_63\_Minutes.pdf*

### 3.2 Report from BFUG Board meeting LXIV in Skopje, 12 February 2019

North Macedonia BFUG Co-chair informed the BFUG members on the outcomes of the Board meeting in Skopje in February 2019. The minutes and related documents of the Board meeting have been made available on the [web site](#). The minutes of the Meeting were approved. The BFUG members were also informed about the request of the *Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)* to become a BFUG partner, which was discussed during the Board meeting. The Board recommended to welcome AEC as BFUG partner considering their representativeness and activity within the field of higher education. Following this information the BFUG was asked whether there were any objections, and since there were none, the BFUG Co-chair declared that the request was approved and that the AEC would be informed of the outcome and be invited to future meetings.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_64\_Minutes.pdf*

## **4. Information from the BFUG Secretariat**

The Head of the BFUG Secretariat gave a summary of the work done, and focused on three main items:

- The updated [EHEA](#) web site is on line since the beginning of 2019, and the BFUG is invited to navigate and use it, giving the BFUG Secretariat feedback;

- The possibility for all groups to open a restricted area on the web site; AG1 on Social Dimension is already using this opportunity;
- The constant need to update the BFUG mailing list and the contact details for all members, enabling the Secretariat to share information, reaching the right BFUG members. The contact details of every delegation will be checked and updated during this meeting.

If BFUG members want to get information on the groups' work, they can find agendas, meeting minutes, presentations and further material on the groups' sections of the EHEA website.

Every country has provided their updated contact details on the country specific section of the EHEA website ([http://ehea.info/page-full\\_members](http://ehea.info/page-full_members)), to facilitate exchange between the BFUG members. This information is constantly updated by the BFUG Secretariat based on indications received by each BFUG member.

## **5. Updates from the AGs, CG and WG**

### 5.1 Advisory Group 1 on Social Dimension (AG1)

AG1 is co-chaired by Croatia and ESU and is comprised of 19 members and stakeholders. Two meetings have already taken place, minutes and reports being uploaded on the dedicated section of the EHEA [web site](#). The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting (Zagreb, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019) was a discussion about the ToRs of the AG1; a vision for the Principles and Guidelines (PAGs) for the Social Dimension was discussed in a workshop, an agreement being reached that the PAGs should be short and concise. A detailed timeline for 2019-2020 and the upcoming meetings were agreed. A first draft of the PAGs will be presented and discussed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Group (Vienna, 5 June 2019), and a second draft will be ready to be presented at the BFUG Meeting in November 2019. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting (Bruxelles, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019) a number of presentations and proposals submitted by members and stakeholders were discussed, with the aim of collecting inputs and formulating ideas and proposals on how to structure the PAGs for the Social Dimension. As an outcome of a workshop held during the meeting, a list was drafted containing two sets of principles that could be implemented at national HE system level, and at HE institution level. The composition of a Drafting Committee, to write the first draft of the PAGs, was decided.

In the discussion the importance of the progress made by the Group was underlined, and the idea that AG1 should be able to share a draft document within the BFUG meeting in November 2019 was well received. It was stressed that the same deadline should apply to all groups.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_1\_AG1.pdf*

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_1\_AG1\_Presentation.pdf*

### 5.2 Advisory Group 2 on Learning and Teaching (AG2)

AG2 is co-chaired by Eurashe, France and The Netherlands. The Dutch Co-chair gave information about the work carried out. Before the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Group (Brussels, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019), a survey was carried out among the members, targeted at selecting the

key topics for the work of AG2. A common understanding of what is meant when speaking of L&T, and the agreement reached in the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting, on the list of topics and the set of priorities to be addressed by the Group for the work ahead, are quite a big step. The issue of L&T is a very broad one, and it would be impossible to tackle all aspects. The selected topics were grouped in three thematic clusters: Learning - students' perspective; Fostering learning through improved teaching - skills and competences of teachers; Organisation and support to innovative learning and teaching (Institutional perspective). The target of the next meeting (Paris, 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> April 2019) is to produce a set of principles addressing the agreed topics, respecting and including the importance of academic freedom and institutional autonomy of the HE institutions. The principles will be complemented with guidelines on how governments may initiate and/or ensure those principles at national level. Good practice examples will be presented and discussed in the Meeting. A Google doc platform was created to share information and documents. The Dutch Co-chair agreed with the recommendation to have draft reports in the coming BFUG meeting in Helsinki in November 2019.

In the discussion concern was expressed that the focus on the developments of teaching is excessive while the learners' perspective is underrepresented. The BFUG recommended a balance between learning and teaching perspectives. The discussion also underlined the importance of having a BFUG member as a co-chair, and the need to ensure coordination with other groups, to avoid overlapping of topics.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_2\_AG2.pdf*

### 5.3 Coordination Group 1 on Global Policy Dialogue (CG1)

CG on GPD is co-chaired by Belgium Flemish Community and Italy. The Belgium Flemish Community Co-chair presented the activities of the Group. The CG1 was intended to be a small operational group, but turned up to be a rather large group after all. The start-up phase was longer than expected and the 1<sup>st</sup> face to face meeting took place in Brussels on 8 February 2019. The ToR was reviewed, and members' expertise was mapped in the meeting. The text of a follow up letter concerning the Bologna Policy Forum in Paris 2018 was drafted. Letters were to be sent to the non-EHEA ministers who attended the Bologna Policy Forum in the Paris Ministerial Meeting in 2018, to those who were invited but didn't attend as well as those who were not invited. The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting will be held in Bologna, back to back with the XX Anniversary of the Bologna Declaration Event, while a 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be held in October 2019 in Rome, back to back with an *ad hoc* event targeted to the diplomatic representatives of non-EHEA countries in Italy, to introduce the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference and the Global Policy Forum.

The CG1 is mandated to organize specific events and/or participate in events carried out by others. CG1 has expressed interest to participate in the Council of Europe's "Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy and the Future of Democracy" to be held in June 2019. The CG1 will formulate the draft Global Policy Forum (GPF) Statement under the aegis of the Drafting Committee for the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference. The CG1 will also draw up plans on how to organize the GPF to interact in an optimal way with the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference; the topic will be further discussed in the upcoming BFUG Board meetings. The GPF focus should be addressed on a macro/regional level rather than on a country level, also inviting regional key players/stakeholders/partners. The



Group discussed also the idea of a newsletter to create awareness within the EHEA countries on the “state of the play”, to update on the BP events and share information with the EHEA as well as with international partners. In the following discussions, the proposal of the newsletter received comments underlining the potential benefits for members and stakeholders, as well as the operational difficulties. The feasibility of such a newsletter in terms of resources needs to be evaluated and will be further discussed between the BFUG Secretariat and the BFUG Board.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_3\_CG1.pdf*

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_3\_CG1\_Presentation.pdf*

#### 5.4 Working Group 1 on Monitoring (WG1)

WG1 is co-chaired by European Commission (EURYDICE) and Norway. The EURYDICE Co-chair presented the proposal for the 2020 Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR), that was developed in the Group’s meetings held in July (informal) and November 2018 (Vienna). It was agreed that the 2020 BIPR should focus on the long-term development and trends in the EHEA as a whole, making use of existing data, and embed indicators within a clear narrative report, focused on discussing key topics, and changes over time. The indicators to update and put in the report were selected, and a list of thematic issues for the narrative text was agreed, among others including: the development of QA systems, the development of the social dimension, the development of internationalisation in HE, the degree structure reforms. At the moment, the statistical data collection is being undertaken by contractors, and the possible authors for the narrative texts have been identified and informed. A short questionnaire is being finalised and will be sent to BFUG members, to update the qualitative indicators that will be used in the BPIR. Following the Paris Communiqué’s strong commitment to promoting and protecting fundamental values throughout the EHEA, a Task Force (TF) on monitoring academic values was established on November 2018 at the 1<sup>st</sup> WG1 meeting in Brussels; as a sub-group of WG1. EUA, ESU and EI joined the TF, together with the WG1 Co-Chairs; Italy and Germany expressed their interest to participate and, in order to ensure a balance between the BFUG countries and organizations, Finland and Romania were also invited to join; both agreed. The Council of Europe and the Magna Charta Observatory were invited as members. Following a preparatory meeting (January 2019), the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the TF was held on 25 March 2019; it was agreed that the “fundamental values” to consider are those stated in the Paris Communiqué, i.e. academic freedom, institutional autonomy, student and staff participation in HE governance) and a common definition was agreed. The TF agreed that monitoring needs to take into account both the *de jure* and *de facto* implementation. Academic and other stakeholders which have interest in these topics will be invited for consultation: two hearings (Berlin, May 2019 and Bologna, June 2019) will be organised. Germany and the Council of Europe could make some financial resources available to invite experts. A draft document proposal will be available for the Helsinki BFUG Meeting.

In the discussion ENQA offered to be involved in the elaboration of the narrative section of the development of quality assurance systems, an offer which was welcomed. It was clarified that the questionnaire should be sent to the BFUG members in order to be forwarded by them to national level institutions in their respective countries, as appropriate. Regarding the invitation to experts/scholars to give their contribution to the consultation to

be organised by the TF, members could forward proposals to the WG1 Co-chairs. Information was given on the list of scholars/experts invited to the Berlin hearing for contributing to the topics of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, as well as on the Council of Europe's Conference "Global Forum on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy", to be held in June 2019, for which information and invitation have been already forwarded to members. Because in the past the relevant BFUG Members had not received the BPIR questionnaire, the questionnaire will be forwarded to the BFUG members by the BFUG Secretariat, which has the most updated address list for all the BFUG countries. The draft BPIR will be shared in time before the Ministerial Conference with the BFUG.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_4\_WG1.pdf*

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_5\_4\_WG1\_Presentation.pdf*

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

BICG is co-chaired by Austria, Bulgaria and Croatia. The Croatian Co-chair gave a short update on the state of play of the Group, whose central task is organising and supporting the three thematic peer groups (TPG) focused on the three key commitments of the Bologna Process: Qualification Frameworks and ECTS (TPG A on QF); Recognition - Lisbon Recognition Convention and Diploma Supplement (TPG B on LRC); and Quality Assurance (TPG C on QA). All BFUG members are involved in at least one TPG, while most countries are involved in more than one. All TPGs held their 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and are currently finalising their respective action plans, based on an agreed Thematic Framework and a standard Action Plan template. The Co-chairs of the three TPGs gave an update on their respective group's composition and thematic orientations, and implementation of the workplan. While clear progress has been made in clarifying the concept of "peer support", the BICG is facing the challenge of a strong coordination at national level for all TPGs members: in fact, some country representatives do not have a mandate from their ministries to take decisions; thus, BFUG members and their respective ministry representatives should follow closely the TPGs' work, giving an informed support to their representatives in the TPGs, to help them and the Groups themselves to contribute to the implementation of the Key Commitments.

TPG A - there is an ongoing matchmaking process among countries. The issue of self-certification arose in the discussion, and an additional meeting (Prague, 3 May 2019) will address it.

TPG B - The TPG B is working on the template for recognition issues, and results will be discussed in the forthcoming meeting (Bologna, June 2019).

TPG C - Most countries and organisations are represented and there is the hope that all member countries will join. The workplan is focused on six key topics of QA, with forthcoming meeting to be held in Cyprus (May 2019).

The EC gave an update on the results of the selection of the projects submitted under the call for proposals "Support to the implementation of EHEA Reforms" published last year. The European Commission (EC) has selected for funding some projects for peer support to all three TPGs. The TPGs have submitted to the EC an "umbrella project" along with

projects addressing specific TPGs needs, and further projects have been approved and supported by the Commission (see below for details).

Out of the 18 projects submitted, 13 were selected on the basis of the available budget, 4 are on the reserve list, while one was assessed as not eligible. Projects involve 36 BFUG countries, 16 organisations and a broad spectrum of stakeholders; four projects refer to the TPG C, three to TPG B, and one to TPG A. A new invitation to submit proposals is scheduled for the end of May 2019, with deadline around August and the selection results made available by the end of the year. The kick-off meeting of the selected projects will be held on 14 June 2019 in Brussels, together with the Infoday for the new call. In the discussion it was suggested that the next call be published sooner than scheduled at present, due to the fact that the foreseen deadline will coincide with the summer holidays in many EHEA countries. BFUG members were called upon to apply also for small projects, targeted to the peer support that BFUG countries may need.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_6\_BICG.pdf*

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_6\_EC\_Project\_Presentation.pdf*

## **7. Update on EHEA Network of National Qualifications Frameworks Correspondents**

The representative of the Council of Europe, the coordinating institution, recalled the background of the Network, whose ToR were approved in the last BFUG Meeting (Vienna, September 2018). The Network will meet in 5-6 September 2019 together with the TPG A on QA. Two issues will be on the agenda; a) Short cycle higher education qualifications (SCHE): following the Paris 2018 Ministerial Conference's decisions, the Network could provide a forum for exchange of experience among countries which have already adopted the SCHE, while continuing to make clear that member countries are not obliged to adopt the SCHE; b) Self-certification of national QF against the QF-EHEA; reviews of QFs may require a renewed self-certification and referencing, and at the moment there is no good updated overview of those processes. The section of the EHEA website dedicated to the QFs should be reviewed, and should also be linked to the QF-EHEA and the European Qualification Frameworks (EQF) web sites, or even to merge them. Since the BICG TPG A on QF has been set up within the BICG, the Network and the peer group should be informed of each other's work; it is suggested that the Network's meeting agendas include updates on the work of the thematic peer group, while the CoE and the TPG co-chairs should consider coordinating the work between the peer group and the Network in a more extensive way. The CoE called upon all EHEA countries to be represented in the Network and participate in the meetings, as well as to provide the Secretariat with updated information on their representative(s) in the Network. The BFUG Secretariat will elaborate an updated list of NQF Correspondents.

In the discussion the question on how many EHEA countries have adopted SCHE was raised, and it was underlined that a clear description of the situation is difficult, due to the fact that in some countries SCHE is part of Higher VET while, in the past Implementation Report, Level 5 qualifications are considered as part of HE. The participants were informed about a project proposal regarding this issue, which should be submitted by EURASHE under the next EU Call.

## **8. Composition and work plan for the Drafting Committee for the 2020 Ministerial Communiqué and a Bologna Policy Forum Statement**

The composition of the Drafting Committee is established by the Rules of Procedure 2018-2020 (RoP) and will be as follows: the BFUG Co-chairs chairing in the first semester of 2020 (Croatia, Ukraine), the outgoing BFUG Co-chairs of the same period (Finland, Turkey), the former BFUG Co-chairs (Romania, The Republic of North Macedonia), the Vice-chair (Italy) and the BFUG Secretariat. The Drafting Committee will be operational from (late) Spring 2019 and will hold its first meeting in Bologna, on the occasion of the event on the XX Anniversary of the Bologna Declaration.

The Consultative Members have requested to the BFUG to add one of their representatives as full member into the Drafting Committee. The Board had recommended that the Consultative Members be represented and had taken note of the fact that they had proposed ESU as their representative. The BFUG decided to submit the change of rules through written consultation. A tight coordination between the Drafting Committee for the Ministerial Communiqué and the CG1 on Global Policy Dialogue, which will provide a first draft of the GPF Statement, was also recommended.

## **9. Future of the EHEA: Vision, thematic priorities and governance after 2020**

This part of the meeting started with the introduction of the WEF movie on the fourth industrial revolution <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/>

### 9.1 Introductory speech – Radu Szekely, Director of the Minister's Office, Ministry of National Education

Mr. Szekely in his speech put the emphasis specifically on the first question raised for discussion in the breakout sessions - major changes/improvements in HE necessary to enable HEIs of 2030 to play a fundamental societal role. There is the need to look at three different aspects of the societal role of the HEIs: the traditional role as guardian of the truth, the capitalist role of provider of cognitive and human capital at regional level and the political role associated with HEIs, which are promoting the EHEA and Europe as values.

Knowledge and universities are so linked in the last 900 years, that one can not be understood without the other. Historically, knowledge was bound up also with the element of truth. Traditionally knowledge meant knowing the truth. The relationship among the three elements has been continuously linked, even with the changes each of them has undergone during time. The late XX century has seen a shift towards a more pragmatic sense of truth, while there is the development of digitalization knowledge, reallocation of disciplines and sub-disciplines, de-territorialisation of universities. Universities are no longer seen as guardian of the truth. There is the need to reconceptualize. Learning is not for the sake of learning, but learning for a purpose. Time has seen the establishment of new models of

universities, and universities should drive innovation and not simply offer courses and conduct research.

## 9.2 The BFUG Survey: Presentation and analysis

The Romanian Co-chair presented the results of the online BFUG survey on the future of the EHEA. The survey was carried out in October 2018, with 32 countries and 8 consultative members answering the questionnaire. The presentation gave an overview of the topics surveyed: priorities to pursue in the next decade; quantitative goals for 2030; working methods and working structure; governance post 2020 with respect to the BFUG Board, the BFUG and the BFUG Secretariat, the chairing arrangements, and the Bologna Policy Forum; timing of the Ministerial Conferences; suggestions for more fruitful connections with HE practitioners, and for Bologna events; and others. The rationale behind the survey is to prepare discussions in the BFUG and, more broadly, among the stakeholders in the various countries, that can lead to proposals to the ministers on how EHEA might look after 2020 up to 2030. Answers highlighted a great need for continuity, both in the working methods and in the timing of the Ministerial Conferences, as well as a need for the BFUG delegations to have close relations with their national authorities. Topics for the next decade should include an analysis on what is their added value for the EHEA. There is a need to focus on the fundamental values and also on new areas of cooperation. It was proposed to work on a longer timescale than just from one Ministerial Conference to another. This would enable the EHEA to have a broader vision, and each Ministerial Conference might be used to better specify or modify some of the goals.

Following the presentation of the results, the floor was opened for discussion. Regret was expressed that there had been only a limited number of replies to some of the points proposed; at the same time it was argued that non-responses might be interpreted as a consensus on the proposed theme. The proposal to raise the number of participants from each country in the BFUG meetings did not receive enough support, while it was argued that the goal of broader participation and deeper discussion could be achieved via, e.g., pre-BFUG preparatory meetings at national level, as well as through Bologna events. The consideration that the BFUG should concentrate its work on long-term strategies and policies, received wide consensus.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_9\_2\_Survey\_outcomes.pdf*

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_9\_2\_Survey\_outcomes\_Presentation.pdf*

## 9.3 Breakout sessions:

The Romanian Co-chair gave an introductory explanation about the breakout sessions, underlining the importance of all participants attending at least one of them, while avoiding more than one delegate from the same country attending the same discussion group. Active and creative discussions in the breakout sessions are very important, to reflect on both the remarkable achievements and the future goals of the EHEA. The discussion groups should focus on three topics; a) major changes/improvements in HE necessary to enable HEIs of 2030 to play its fundamental societal role; b) changes/improvements that can be



implemented by a loosely organised framework such as EHEA; c) which of these are already included in the EHEA commitments, and future key priorities.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_9\_3\_Breakout sessions.pdf*

## 9.4 Reports from the breakout sessions

The participants in all of the breakout sessions expressed the need of continuity of the Bologna Process. The moderators of each group reported to the plenary on the outcomes of these discussions.

### 9.4.1 Group I – moderated by the CoE and Switzerland

Switzerland informed that the first question on the changes, improvements and necessities for the universities to play their fundamental societal role brought up topics like inclusion and diversity in the social sense, concerning age-groups and across borders and accessibility for non-traditional learners. The discussions in the group raised mainly the necessity for internationalisation of curricula, and digitalisation for all aspects of HE (not only learning and teaching, but also administrative exchange of information and mobility). Other issues were the provision of soft skills for graduates and empowering the teaching environment. The group concluded that the EHEA has soft power and on the basis of ongoing discussion produced guidelines and principles which were successful when there was an implementation mechanism like the ESG. These kind of mechanisms could be used for other aspects. Discussions also emphasized that the Peer Support is working well as it leads to increased cooperation at national and EHEA level and therefore should be further developed for the future of the EHEA.

### 9.4.2 Group II – moderated by ESU and Finland

Discussions in this group underlined the fact of the necessity to work into two clusters of policies towards 2030: learning and teaching and social dimension. The Group stated that among the main objectives there should be mobilities, flexibility and global dialogue. Discussants in the group argued that the goal should be achieved through flexible learning and the flexibility should be emphasized also in linking the clusters together. The discussions in the group raised also the importance on focusing on the academic freedom. One of the main issues that was discussed in the Group was the Social Dimension, and the need to address inclusion from elementary and secondary school level on, as well as considering the social dimension of the Universities.

### 9.4.3 Group III - moderated by EUA and Turkey

The discussion of this group emphasized the fact that, some countries are developing their strategy with respect to the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution. The discussions also raised the issue that, while there is new emphasis on enhancing it, teaching as part of the academic career does not receive the appropriate attention and participants of the group suggested to monitor the topic and its developments. This group emphasized the importance of Lifelong

Learning (LLL) and flexible education, affirming that this is not a new topic, and although it has been discussed several times in the BFUG, there is still the need to address the issue again. The group argued that, with regard to digitization, it is necessary to establish EHEA standards and protocol, rather than leaving it to very national or even individual HEI to develop their own. It was also suggested to pay attention that achievements of successes of the BP are adequately presented. The group raised the need of a better synergy with the EU.

#### **9.4.4 Group IV – moderated by the EC and Austria**

This group found very useful and dynamic the formula of the breakout sessions to discuss EHEA future goals and proposed that it should be repeated in the coming BFUG meetings.

Discussions by participants in this group emphasized the conviction that Bologna Process is still valid, but they also underlined the importance to do more, with staff mobility, among other things, making the EHEA more attractive to the world. They underlined that EHEA has soft power with the agenda set during the years, student-centered learning, training of teachers, etc. The group claimed that mobility should be blended mixing physical with virtual learning and proposed reinforcing the cooperation within the EHEA, taking into account IT and other ways of cooperation. To do so, they emphasized the importance of continuing to work on transparency and trust with respect to recognition because it is a Key Commitment which is necessary in order to achieve this important target. The importance of Continuity in the education sector from primary to LLL, with a particular attention to the learners' journey, was emphasized during the discussions.

#### **9.5 Concluding remarks**

Ligia Deca (Romania) gave the concluding remarks to the discussion. Essentially, the debate in regarding the future of the EHEA is not new, being formally organised by the BFUG on two previous occasions – in 2008 in Sarajevo and in 2014 in Rome. Usually, the discussions were structured in three main parts in the past: what can be done to move things along regarding existing EHEA priorities, what should be the future priorities and governance arrangements to underpin them. At the current BFUG meeting, the focus was overwhelmingly on the future of the EHEA. In Deca's view, even though the discussion seems to revolve around "what else should we do?" or "how should we change the structures", in fact the problem is a political one – "what do we want from Europe when it comes to HE cooperation?".

Discussions in the working groups during the 1st day of the BFUG meeting could be wrapped up into:

- Main priorities for the future in the EHEA: social dimension/ Lifelong learning+ learning and teaching/ Students-centred learning;
- Many points made on the increasingly complex role of HE and HEIs, importance of flexibility in order to cater for diverse learner profiles and the role of digitalization;

- Expansion of the recognition, QF and QA frameworks to new types of learning: online, Lifelong learning, student-centered learning, blended, micro-qualifications etc;
- A general feeling that identifying key commitments and focusing on enhancing the level of implementation starts to work at national level;
- Underlining once more the importance of the EHEA fundamental values, with concrete actions to guarantee that they remain the cornerstone of the Area.

The EHEA/ EEA have mutually supported each other over time, with varying degrees of ambition (e.g. structural reforms, the mobility benchmark, SCL, European Universities). There is definite value in setting ambitious political goals, even though not all technical discussions are finalized (e.g. the mobility 20% by 2020 benchmark). There is also a need for working on policy framing – promote the benefits of some key areas of the EHEA (e.g. social dimension – in light of the demographic situation and political developments).

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_9\_5\_Concluding\_Remarks\_Presentation.pdf*

#### 9.6 Twentieth Anniversary of the Bologna Declaration

The BFUG Secretariat presented the event to the BFUG Members. The Conference is foreseen to be divided in two parts: one celebratory and one scientific, in which there will be key speakers and other presenters, as selected by the scientific committee. Five parallel sessions are foreseen. Abstracts related to the parallel sessions were received (over 140 abstracts). The scientific committee will select the best abstracts and invite the authors to give their papers for each of the sessions.

The BFUG representation in the event, as requested by the Board in the Skopje meeting in February 2019, will be in a form of a speech delivered by the Romanian BFUG Co-chair. The event organisers have given to the BFUG members a parallel opportunity to submit abstracts of papers to the BFUG Secretariat for each of the topics of the parallel sessions. The selection procedure is done anonymously by the selection committee, and in case of non-selection, the BFUG Secretariat will select them in conjunction to the papers and topics. All related information to the event is on the designated [web site](#). There is a strong recommendation to the BFUG members to participate, presenting their abstracts. BFUG participation is also foreseen with the meetings of some of the WGs, back to back with the conference.

In the discussion most of the participants required practical information about the event. ESU, as one of the organizers of the event mentioned the fact that many students already registered to attend it, and expressed the need of knowing ahead of time who will be involved and what are the selection procedures as well as key speakers to the conference.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_9\_6\_Anniversary\_Bologna\_Presentation.pdf*

#### 9.7 Roadmap

The document contains topics and events, with their timeline, starting from April 2019. The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the drafting committee is proposed to take place back to back with the XX



Bologna Declaration event in June 2019. The timeline also indicates meetings of the Board and BFUG for the coming semester in Istanbul and Helsinki respectively. The Bologna Researchers Conference date should be changed as it will be held in January 2020. The time line will become more precise with time. The discussion of the events mentioned in the roadmap raised also the question of other Bologna process events which could be presented by the BFUG members. All relevant information will be uploaded to the [EHEA website](#). Besides giving the information on the event, the BFUG members will be asked also to report on it, in an e-version and to be made available on the web site. BFUG Secretariat will send next week a message to all BFUG members in regard to the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the drafting committee.

Then the BFUG members discussed the roadmap. The questions raised regarded the timeframe for the WGs report preparation, the need to add different activities of the WGs to the Roadmap .

For an event to be published on the EHEA website, the organisers are reminded that they should fill out the online template: <https://goo.gl/forms/6DwLvPXRfhX6H8xi1>. Information on the publishing of an event would be sent out to all BFUG Members

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_9\_7\_Roadmap.pdf*

## **10. Update from the Consultative members**

Updates from the BFUG Consultative Members were sent to the BFUG Members ahead of the BFUG Meeting and are uploaded on the [EHEA](#) web site.

10.1 Update from BUSINESSEUROPE

10.2 Update from the Council of Europe

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_2\_CoE.pdf*

10.3 Update from Education International / ETUCE

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_3\_ETUCE.pdf*

10.4 Update from ENQA

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_4\_ENQA.pdf*

10.5 Update from EQAR

10.6 Update from ESU

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_6\_ESU.pdf*

10.7 Update from EUA

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_7\_EUA.pdf*

10.8 Update from EURASHE

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_8\_EURASHE.pdf*

10.9 Update from UNESCO

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_10\_9\_UNESCO.pdf*

## 11. Discussion on EHEA–ERAC coordination process

The EC presented the state of play with establishing links between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area. The Finnish EU Presidency is organising a joint seminar for the participants of the Directors General for Higher Education meeting (for EU member states) and the European Research Area Committee, on 30 September 2019. The Finnish BFUG representatives will keep the BFUG informed about the event. The seminar will enable discussion of topics of mutual interest. In the next BFUG meeting in Helsinki, the Finnish Co-Chair of the BFUG will report to the BFUG on the outcome of the seminar. The BFUG Co-Chairs and Vice-Chair will be invited to attend the event.

## 12. Information by the incoming Co-chairs

### BFUG Board Meeting LXVI in Istanbul, Turkey (23 – 24 September 2019)

The incoming Turkish Co-chair informed the BFUG about the coming Board meeting in Istanbul in 23-24 September 2019. They will work closely with the Finnish Co-chair to draft the agenda and make it available to the Board members. Then BFUG members were given an overview of Turkish HE, followed by practical information on Istanbul.

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_12\_Board\_MeetingLXVI\_Presentation.pdf*

### BFUG Meeting LXVII in Helsinki, Finland (12-13 November 2019)

The incoming Finnish Co-chair gave information about the coming BFUG meeting. Finland will hold the EU Presidency for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time. From the political point of view, the Finnish government will be a new one, and the European Parliament elections will have taken place as well. The priorities already identified are sustainable growth and security, while the government will decide about the priorities of the Finnish EU Presidency. There is the need to rethink about the providers of education, and to ensure more openness to society. During the Finnish EU Presidency there will be a joint meeting of Ministers of Education and Ministers of Finance to discuss the issue of the future of education in the EU. (The incoming Finnish Co-chair gave detailed information on the events planned to take place during the Finnish EU Presidency which are linked to education).

*Attachment: BFUG\_RO\_MK\_65\_12\_BFUG\_MeetingLXVII\_Presentation.pdf*

## 13. AOB

- Albania has announced that after the Rome 2020 Ministerial meeting, it intends to host the next/coming EHEA Ministerial conference in Albania. An official letter will be sent to the BFUG in the near future.
- Croatia informed about the tentative dates of the BFUG meetings during their BFUG Co-chairing semester. This has to be discussed within the Board and with the Ukrainian Co-chairs and will then be published.
- The Swiss outgoing Co-chair is leaving the BFUG and thanked everyone for their cooperation and hard work.

- Adam Gajek (ESU) is leaving and made a personal thank you to every member of BFUG.
- The Austrian outgoing Co-chair thanked everyone for their work and cooperation during the semester of Co-chairing the BFUG.

The Romanian Co-chair wrapped up the meeting by thanking all participants as well as local support team for the fruitful two days of meeting, with the hope that everyone would take away an even more ambitious vision of the future of the EHEA.