

*Italian Presidency of  
the Bologna Follow-up*

BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP

WORKING PAPER OF THE CHAIR  
IN VIEW OF THE MEETING OF 14 NOVEMBER 2003 IN ROME

***Work programme 2003-2005: from Berlin to Bergen  
Responsibilities of the Board - Tasks of the Secretariat***

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*"Ministers entrust the implementation of all the issues covered in the Communiqué, the overall steering of the Bologna Process and the preparation of the next ministerial meeting to a Follow-up Group... A Board...shall oversee the work between the meetings of the Follow-up Group... The overall follow-up work will be supported by a Secretariat which the country hosting the next ministerial Conference will provide. In its first meeting after the Berlin Conference, the Follow-up Group is asked to further define the responsibilities of the Board and the tasks of the Secretariat." (Berlin Communiqué, 19 September 2003).*

**Preamble**

The main purpose of the Bologna Follow-up Group consists in raising the general awareness of the Bologna principles and in promoting the widest participation in the Bologna Process of all actors in Higher Education.

In order to achieve this, the process must be open, participatory and inclusive, while at the same time, generating debate and awareness. The full involvement of member countries must be encouraged at all stages, as each decides on the most appropriate means - legislative or otherwise - for implementing the objectives of the Bologna Process. Equally, the support of all of the partners in Higher Education is central to the realisation of these objectives. However, the genuine commitment to the process can only be maintained through a bottom-up approach, which will also preserve the progress achieved to date and improve it furthermore.

In the last few years, the Bologna Process has gained momentum and enlarged its boundaries in a way, which could not have been foreseen by its "founding fathers". The scale of involvement is such that this process can no longer function on a voluntary basis - it needs a more permanent support structure. However, such a structure needs not be large or excessively bureaucratic. On the other hand, it must be capable of dealing with complex or multifaceted issues, while allowing for flexibility of procedures and approach.

Against this background, the Presidency of BFUG submits the following proposals for agreement by the BFUG:

### **Responsibilities of the Board**

The Board supports the Bologna Follow-up Group in its activities and has the mandate to provide efficiency to the management of the Bologna Process, assuring at the same time its continuity. As such, the responsibilities of the Board consist of co-ordinating and monitoring the effective implementation of the work programme.

The following list, which is not exhaustive, illustrates the scope of this responsibility:

- overseeing the preparation of the next Ministerial Conference;
- supporting the realisation of the Bologna events;
- providing support and assistance to new members as they seek to meet the objectives of the Bologna Process;
- looking after the effective participation of representatives of the candidate countries in the Bologna events;
- organising the preparatory work for the nomination of the General Rapporteur;
- maintaining contacts with ENQA as it undertakes the work defined in the Berlin Communiqué;
- co-ordinating actions for the preparation of the stocktaking exercise for 2005 (a division of work between the stocktaking project, the national reports and a possible Trends IV has to be defined);
- preparing agreements for possible financial support of the European Commission to the Bologna initiatives;
- organising Working Groups composed by BFUG members and /or experts on special issues decided by the BFUG.

The BFUG may also delegate to the Board tasks it deems appropriate and necessary to achieve the objectives of the Bologna Process.

In line with these responsibilities, the Board shall:

- prepare issues for the BFUG;
- make decisions on urgent matters, in line with established policies and guidelines. In such cases, the Board will inform immediately the BFUG of the decisions taken and will submit them for formal ratification at the next BFUG meeting.

### **Composition of the Board**

Efficiency and effectiveness must be key principles in the new structure. Its composition must reflect its function as an "operative task force", as it seeks to discharge the responsibilities assigned to it by the BFUG. It must therefore remain a slim body, with the capacity to respond promptly and flexibly to the many challenges of the Bologna Process. Consequently, the Presidency of BFUG proposes that the participation in the Board of the Bologna Follow-up Group be limited to one person per delegation, including the delegations of the consultative members.

### **Tasks of the Secretariat**

The tasks of the Secretariat can be summarised as follows:

- the administrative and organisational aspects associated with the next Ministerial Conference (e.g. distribution and circulation of documents, setting up of a web site);

- the classic secretarial function of assistance, as directed by the BFUG and the Board;
- the execution under specific mandate of the BFUG, of special tasks concerning the implementation of the work programme, acting as a technical assistance body of the BFUG.

The Secretariat is made up by persons of the Country hosting the next Ministerial Conference. It is under the authority of the Chair of the BFUG while, as to the administrative aspects, it is responsible to the 'host' Country.

### **Work programme 2003-2005: from Berlin to Bergen**

In principle the work programme could cover all the actions indicated in the Berlin Communiqué. However, recognising the limited time available, the Presidency recommends focussing on few intermediate priorities as the best way to guarantee effective results for the implementation of the work programme 2003-2005. Accordingly, it proposes the following:

#### **Priority issues**

The activities of the work programme 2003-2005 will be focussed on the following areas:

- Quality Assurance
- Recognition
- Qualifications frameworks
- Links between EHEA-ERA and doctoral studies
- Promotion of mobility

#### **Working methods**

All the "official Bologna events" will be organised after a call launched by the Chair of the BFUG and will be focussed on issues agreed by the BFUG. Any member of the Bologna Process, including consultative members, can submit a proposal for the organisation of a "Bologna event", and the BFUG will agree upon the events which will be considered "official Bologna events". All the other initiatives will be considered "Bologna related events".

The possible range of these working methods comprehends:

- **Seminars**. To be organised following the same procedure of the past two years. Maximum number envisaged: 8.
- **Workshops**. Informal workshops could also be organised with stakeholders, experts, "insiders", for the verification of the state of the art of the implementation of Bologna (e.g. success stories, critical points, suggestions etc.) or on the stocktaking about the implementation of the priorities, as preparatory exercise to the general stocktaking of 2005. Maximum number envisaged: 4.
- **Conferences** could also be organised for information on the Bologna Process (external dimension). Maximum number envisaged: 2.

The Bologna Follow-up Group can also organise, as an additional working method, **Working Groups** on special issues.