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## BICG

### Bologna Implementation Coordination Group

#### Report to the BFUG, Vienna, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2018

The BICG has held 3 meetings since the Ministerial Conference. The main objective in this period was to launch the peer support approach, which was one of the principal commitments made by the Ministers.

#### 1. May 25<sup>th</sup> 2018, Paris: Informal meeting

Present: representatives from Italy, Croatia, Bulgaria, Austria, the European Commission, WG1 (Eurydice), EURASHE, EUA, the French and the Italian BFUG Secretariats, as well as WG II (Implementation) and AG 3 (Non-Implementation).

**Outcome:** the participants agreed on the date, place and main objectives of the first official meeting.

#### 2. June 5<sup>th</sup> 2018, Brussels: first formal meeting, hosted by EUA

Present: Austria (Helga Posset), Bulgaria (Ivana Radonova), Croatia (Ana Tezilazic-Gorsic), Italy (Ann Katherine Isaacs, Luca Lantero), WG1 (David Crosier), European Commission (Klara Engels-Perenyi), WG II (Noel Vercruysse, outgoing), EUA (Tia Loukkola), EURASHE (Michal Karpisek), French Secretariat (Marina Steinmann, Mariana Saad), Italian Secretariat (Luca Lantero, Vera Lucke).

The group discussed the mandate and deliverables of the BICG, on the basis of the Terms of Reference adopted at the Ministerial Conference. The BICG further discussed the concept of peer support and agreed on its next concrete steps.

**Outcome:**

- The Co-chairs of the BICG were chosen: Austria, Bulgaria and Croatia.
- The BICG decided to send a letter to all BFUG members to ask them to complete a questionnaire to survey their planned involvement in the Peer Groups based on the three key commitments. The letter was sent and the survey carried out.

#### 3. August 30<sup>th</sup> 2018, Brussels: second formal meeting, hosted by EURASHE

Present: Ana Tezilazic-Gorsic (Croatia), Helga Posset (Austria), Ann Katherine Isaacs (Italy), David Crosier (WG1), Klara Engels-Perenyi (EC), Tia Loukkola (EUA), Michal Karpisek (EURASHE), Vera Lucke (Secretariat). Ivana Radonova (Bulgaria) sent her apologies and Bulgaria was represented by Mr. Yassen Gyurov (First Secretary at the Permanent Representation of Republic of Bulgaria to the EU in Brussels, Education Committee Chair in the first half of 2018).

Ana Tezilazic-Gorsic presented the result of the survey, which was answered by almost all member countries. Some countries indicated their willingness to take part not only in one but even in two or in all three Peer Groups. The BICG discussed the next steps: how to inform the BFUG countries about

the results of the survey and how best to group and cluster countries in the Peer Groups. The BICG also decided how to contact countries that had not yet replied to the survey.

Klara Engels-Perenyi gave an update on the restricted call of the European Commission which was launched on August 24<sup>th</sup> in order to support implementation of the 3 Key Commitments. The BICG agreed that the Peer Groups should start working as soon as possible on project proposals. The BICG is aware of the short time available between the confirmation of Peer Groups and the application deadline for the call. Therefore the BICG decided to circulate selected information from the survey results to facilitate contacts between partners in view of the peer support activities.

The BICG proposes **3 Peer Groups**, one on each of the three Key Commitments. Member countries and organisations in the Peer Groups are encouraged to form smaller thematic groups (3-6 members) within the larger Peer Group, to work on specific themes which contribute to the outcomes of the entire Peer Group. The BICG indicated also **possible thematic orientations** according to the replies given in the survey (but eliminating the suggestions not specifically relevant for the Key Commitments).

#### The BICG decided to:

- **Send a letter** to the BFUG members with information about the results of the survey and the next steps by **September 10<sup>th</sup>** at the latest
  - **Annex** an overview of the responses, including the contact details of representatives;
  - **Annex** the Erasmus+ Policy Support Action Call and include an explanation of it in the letter;
- Prepare guidelines for the Peer Groups to guide their work while leaving each group to choose their specific working methods.
- Organise informal networking opportunity so to prepare project proposals during the BFUG meeting.

Originally, the BICG did not intend to circulate to all BFUG members the full collection of responses received for the survey, but several countries emphasized their need for more detailed information, in order to identify potential partners for peer support activities. Therefore, the BICG decided to make this document available (in the week of 17 September), with the comment that the information is provisional and likely incomplete, but offered now to facilitate thinking and preliminary contacts. It does not limit the ideas for work and projects which can be further specified within the Peer Groups once they are established.

The role of the Co-chairs in each Peer Group will be crucial in facilitating exchange of information about participation of the members in the different peer support activities and projects. All Peer Group members should be involved in at least one project for targeted peer support. In the preparatory stage of such projects the Co-chairs will need to be aware of which themes and topics need to be considered and which Peer Group members should be involved. The Peer Group Co-chairs should try to ensure that all members and all topics are sufficiently covered. **Appropriate grouping of all the participants so as to cover all needs is crucial for the success of the entire peer support**

**approach.** To achieve this, the Co-chairs of the Peer Groups must act as facilitators and pay special attention to ensuring fair and effective coverage of the themes and participation by the all members in the peer support activities.

The BICG reflected on the fact that the time available until the next Ministerial Conference is short. . However, the BICG agreed that progress will be made, awareness and networking will be enhanced, and this short time-span will be sufficient to reach tangible results in a good number of cases and to verify whether the peer support approach is an effective way of working to implement these and other EHEA commitments in the future.

**Peer Group Co-chairs** (official designation by the BFUG in Vienna):

A number of countries volunteered to Co-chair Peer Groups. The BICG tried to ensure that all Peer Groups are Co-chaired by at least one EU country and a non-EU country and that – as far as possible – the nominated Co-chairs have adequate experience and knowledge of the topic covered by the Peer Group. In order to accommodate as many requests for Co-chairing as possible, the BICG suggests electing up to three Co-chairs per Peer Group.

The BICG will present its proposal for Co-Chairs for the Peer Groups to the BFUG for decision in Vienna

**The BICG will meet again on Friday, 28 September at 13:30 in Vienna. It is recommended that potential Co-chairs of the Peer Groups attend this meeting.** If they are not present, the Co-chairs may be represented by the BFUG members of their countries.

**Points for approval by the BFUG:**

- **Composition of Peer Groups (see in annex)**
- **Co-chairs of the Peer Groups (see above)**

**Next steps:**

- **BFUG meeting in Vienna: adoption of members and Co-chairs of the group**
- **Networking time to discuss partnership and content of peer support projects**
- **27 September at 13.30; BICG meeting (the current BICG with newly appointed Co-chairs)**
- **October: First meeting of the full BICG to agree on the common features of work to be carried out in the Peer Groups and to clarify eventual questions of Co-chairs related to the key commitments**
- **23 October: project submission deadline for the above-mentioned Commission call**
- **November - December 2018: first meeting of each Peer Group**

## Annexes:

- Letter to BFUG members with the survey results dated 10 September 2018
  - **Updated Annex 01 Table of the expression of interest by the countries and organisations to participate in the peer groups with updated Contact lists** (General contact person and contact persons for Group A, Group B and Group C)
  - Annex 02 Invitation to submit a proposal - EACEA/35/2018 - Support to the implementation of European Higher Education Area (EHEA) reforms
- **Guidelines for the Peer Groups**
- **Overview of the survey results mapping the topics within the Bologna peer support groups** – unedited version, purely informative and non-binding, to enable the forming of peer support projects