

STOCKTAKING WORKING GROUP: NOTES OF MEETING OF 11 OCTOBER 2006, HELSINKI

Present

Andrejs Rauhvargers, Latvia (Chair)
Marie-Anne Persoons, Belgium (Flemish Community)
Heli Aru, Estonia
Uta Grund, Germany
Foteini Asderaki, Greece
Sverre Rustad, Norway
Darinka Vrecko, Slovenia
Aybar Ertepinar, Turkey
David Crosier, EUA
Cynthia Deane, Options Consulting
Stephanie Oberheidt, Eurydice
Cornelia Racke (observer)
Ann McVie, Secretariat (notes)

1. Welcome

Andrejs Rauhvargers welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised that he had contacted the new Romanian BFUG representative but had not received a reply. He also advised that Cornelia Racke would be observing the meeting.

Cornelia Racke gave a brief introduction to her research on the Bologna Process. She confirmed that she would treat the discussion at the meeting as being in confidence and would check any reference to it with the appropriate person before publication.

2. Agenda

The agenda was adopted. It was agreed that the future timetable for the group's work would be discussed under AOB.

3. Information from the Board

Andrejs Rauhvargers gave a brief report from the September Board meeting. He had confirmed to the Board that the Working Group would take forward the action points from the April BFUG. He had advised that Eurydice was progressing their Focus report, but was having some difficulties gathering the information required, particularly from the newer country members. Looking ahead to the Working Group's discussion of the outline stocktaking report, the Board had asked for the report to be analytical, and for there to be greater emphasis on the textual element of the report. The desire to place less emphasis than previously on the 'traffic lights' should therefore be borne in mind while discussing the outline report.

4. Discussion of Report Outline

Cynthia Deane introduced the draft report outline. She indicated that the basis of the report would be drawn from National Reports and the Eurydice Focus report, with information from Trends V, 'Bologna Through Student Eyes' and ENQA being used to validate the stocktaking data. The analysis would elaborate the stocktaking exercise, with the process benefiting this time from the fact that the indicators had been developed in advance of the data gathering task. Referring to the suggested chapter headings, she highlighted the need to make clear that the indicators had changed since the last stocktaking. There could not therefore be any direct read across to the previous exercise. The report would give an overview of the progress made since the previous exercise without referring to any individual countries. Where appropriate, there would be references to the reports from other working groups. The conclusions and recommendations would derive from the analysis, to inform the London Communiqué and future work. Given that there was more time to prepare the report, it would be helpful to discuss how best to present the scorecard data, to ensure they were useful to both the process as a whole and to individual countries.

In discussion the following points were made:

- There should be a clear link from the analysis to the recommendations.
- There was a need to bear in mind that progress was being assessed against the goals for 2010, as well as 2007.
- The individual country scorecards should be retained, augmented by a short text to put the results in context and allow explanation of steps being taken to make further progress.
- It might be appropriate to refer to individual countries in the text of the report if they provided an example of good practice.
- There was a need to emphasise the progressive nature of the indicators, explaining that they had been set against targets for 2007, not those of the previous exercise. Ultimately, the expectation was for all countries to complete all the Action Lines by 2010.
- Peer pressure was an important element of the Bologna Process.
- There should not be any repetition in the report. All references to the methodology would be in Chapter 2. The introduction and the summary should be kept separate.
- Chapter 3 should reflect the intergovernmental nature of the Bologna Process and differentiate clearly between the national and European Levels.
- There would need to be a comment on stocktaking on the social dimension, given the reference to the future stocktaking on this element in the Bergen Communiqué.

- There might be a need to refer to 2010 in Chapter 4.

It was agreed that:

The current scorecard format would be retained, but might not include any summative scores. There would be some explanatory text to put each country scorecard in context. Table 3.1 would be retained.

Further consideration would be given to the presentation of the data. The first draft report would be prepared to reflect the comments raised on the draft outline.

Cynthia Deane would produce the first draft of Chapter 3 for discussion at the February meeting of the working group. The arrangements for drafting the conclusions and recommendations would be agreed following discussion of the first draft report.

The National Reports would be on the public sections of the Bologna website. All other documents would be on the password protected section of the website.

5. Information from Eurydice

Stephané Oberheidt gave an update on the preparation of the Focus report. While around 3 contributions were still required, overall, good progress was being made. Pre-final descriptions by country were expected to be available for circulation around mid-November, together with the first draft summary.

Work on student support stats had been delayed and was only being started now. Early indications were that it would not be possible to produce comparative data, and that the report would describe the situation in each country.

Work on the governance report had been deferred, due to the heavy workload being placed on the Eurydice network.

6. AOB

Timetable

The timetable for the group's future work was reviewed and a number of amendments made. The updated timetable would be circulated to all group members for info.

Trends V

David Crosier gave an update on Trends V. The analysis of the questionnaire was well underway, the results of which could be made available to the group.

Site visits had started, to augment the data from questionnaires. In particular, site visits would be used to gather more information about the situation in the newer member committees.

The results from the questionnaires and the site visits would be available for input to the group's discussion at the February meeting.

7. Date of next meeting

Sverre Rustad invited all group members to Lillehammer for the February meeting. It was agreed that the meeting would start early on Monday 12/02/07.

Ann McVie
Bologna Secretariat
6 December 2006