

## **STOCKTAKING WORKING GROUP: NOTES OF MEETING OF 27 FEBRUARY 2006, BRUSSELS**

### **Present**

Prof Andrejs Rauhvargers, Latvia (Chair)  
Ms Marie-Anne Persoons, Belgium (Flemish Community)  
Dr Heli Aru, Estonia  
Dr Uta Grund, Germany  
Ms Foteini Asderaki, Greece  
Mr Sverre Rustad, Norway  
Prof Vasile Isan, Romania  
Ms Darinka Vrecko, Slovenia  
Prof Aybar Ertepinar, Turkey  
Mr David Crosier, EUA  
Cynthia Deane, Options Consulting  
Patricia Wastiau Schlüter, Eurydice  
Stephanie Oberheidt, Eurydice  
Jurgen Rienks, EC  
Ms Ann McVie, Secretariat (notes)

### **1. Adoption of the agenda.**

Andrejs Rauhvargers welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended his thanks to Marie Ann Persoons for hosting it.

The agenda was adopted.

### **2. Introduction by Chair & Secretariat on the BFUG Board 25 January 2006**

Andrejs Rauhvargers gave a brief report on the update given to the Bologna Board. The working groups progress report had been welcomed by the Board. The main point arising from the discussion was that all working groups were to circulate written progress reports to BFUG two weeks prior to the April meeting. This would allow countries to consult internally if necessary before the BFUG meeting.

From the point of view of the Stocktaking Working Group, this meant that the aim would be to secure BFUG sign off to the scorecard indicators at the April meeting. It had also been agreed at the Board that the same deadline would be set for completion of National Reports, irrespective of the length of time countries had been taking part in the Bologna Process.

### **3. Input of Eurydice into stocktaking exercise**

Patricia Wastiau Schlüter outlined the approach Eurydice would take to producing the focus report prior to the London 2007 summit. All 45 countries would be included in the survey. The intention was to work with the Secretariat to avoid double work at national level. Input provided via National Reports had allowed cross checking against info provided via Eurydice contact points for the last exercise, and the intention was to continue to share information between Eurydice and the Secretariat.

The focus report would concentrate on three main pillars: quality assurance; 3 cycles; and ECTS and Diploma supplements. Eurydice would also be writing a report on key data on higher education. This would include data on participation rates, loans and grants systems. This report would also be produced in collaboration with BFUG, through Germain Dondelinger in his role as chair of the technical sub group gathering comparable data on the social and economic situation of students and staff and student mobility. It would, however, only cover 31 countries, not all 45.

The questionnaire for the focus report would be issued in March with replies expected in June. A preliminary analysis of the data collected would be available in October. Countries would have the opportunity to update data between July 2006 and March 2007, where new laws were introduced.

Patricia Wastiau Schlüter then outlined in some detail the areas which would be covered in the Eurydice questionnaire.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- In countries which did not use legislation to implement reforms, Eurydice drew on other official sources and the knowledge and experience developed within the network over a number of years.
- There was considerable scope for overlap between the topics covered in the National Reports and the Eurydice questionnaires. Efforts should be made to avoid any duplication or mismatches between the areas explored.

It was agreed that:

- Eurydice would circulate the questionnaire to working group members for comment.
- Eurydice would share their raw data with the working group via a password protected shared area on the Bologna website.
- The Secretariat would issue the Eurydice questionnaire to the non Socrates countries, issuing reminders if necessary.
- The Secretariat would liaise with Eurydice over the areas to be covered within the National Reports.
- Eurydice would attend all future meetings of the working group.

#### **4. Trends V**

David Crosier gave an update on Trends V. There had been a good response to the survey and initial analysis of the results was under way. There had however been a greater response from the university rather than the non university sector. This was an area EUA wanted to follow up. Response rates had also been lower in south east Europe and EUA was considering alternative ways of gathering data from these

countries. Consideration was now being given to methods of sampling for the HEI visits.

The questionnaire used was available on the EUA website, but would be circulated to working group members for information. The survey focussed on what had changed at institutional level over the last 4 years. Early signs were that there had been significant changes.

It was agreed that:

- Working group members would encourage institutions who had not already done so to respond to the EUA questionnaire.

## **5. Discussion of the stocktaking 2007 revised scorecard criteria**

Andrejs Rauhvargers lead a discussion about the latest version of the indicators. He thanked everyone for the comments made on the first draft. It had been difficult to take all comments into account, as there were differing views on a number of points.

In discussion the following points were made:

- In response to comments made, to reference to the third cycle had been dropped from the first indicator. BFUG might however question this, as the Bergen Communiqué did state that the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle should be addressed within stocktaking.
- It was considered important to capture the progress made from the previous stocktaking. This would be addressed in the textual element of the stocktaking report.
- There were concerns about the measurability of the proposed indicator on access. It might be necessary to base evaluations against the information in the Eurydice report. National reports could however ask if there were any first or second cycle programmes that did not articulate to the next cycle.
- It was reiterated that 'access' would be as defined in the Lisbon Recognition Connection.
- The access indicator should focus on structural obstacles to access, rather than on student numbers. This suggested the indicator should focus on access between programmes or qualifications.
- Changes were suggested to indicators 4 & 6, to reduce the overlap between the two.
- While the references to learning outcomes had been removed from the indicator, it was clear from Communiqués and the ECTS user guide that the use of learning outcomes was implicit.
- A number of minor amendments to the indicators were discussed and agreed.

It was agreed that:

- Cynthia Deane would redraft the access indicator.
- The quality assurance indicators would be amended, as suggested by the Chair at the meeting.
- The indicators would be amended to reflect the discussion

## **6. Discussion of the stocktaking list of questions.**

Cynthia Deane explained that the purpose of the list of questions was to act as a checklist to ensure stocktaking considered all the relevant aspects of the Bergen Communiqué. It would be particularly important when identifying the points to address in the textual part of the stocktaking report. She invited group members to review the list to identify any significant omissions.

In discussion, the following points were raised:

- It was important not to underestimate the significance of the scorecard element of stocktaking.
- The stocktaking group had the advantage over the previous group of having more time to prepare and an opportunity to align the indicators and questions with the national report template. This had not been the case during the first stocktaking exercise.
- Some elements included in the list of questions might more appropriately be included in the general BFUG progress report rather than in the stocktaking report.
- The focus of the stocktaking report should be in line with the areas of stocktaking identified in the Bergen Communiqué.

It was agreed that:

- Working group members would advise Cynthia Deane of any omissions or suggested changes to the list of questions.
- The list of questions would be reviewed regularly, as the work of the group progressed.

## **7. Discussion of the template for National Reports**

Ann McVie explained the approach being taken to develop the National Report template. To ensure the stocktaking process was as open and transparent as possible, the questions in the National Report template would be closely aligned with the elements in the indicators

It was agreed that:

- The template would be revised, to reflect the draft indicators.
- If time permitted, the template would be circulated to group members before issue to BFUG.

## **8. Discussion of the ENIC/NARIC Action Plan**

Andrejs Rauhvargers reported on the work being undertaken by ENIC/NARIC network to draw up a template for the action plans on the recognition of foreign qualifications. These action plans would be attached to National Reports. A copy was circulated for information only. This would not be part of stocktaking.

## **9. Further work until April BFUG and date and place of next meeting**

Andrejs Rauhvargers thanked everyone for taking part in what had been a very constructive meeting. He summarised the next steps as follows:

- The indicators would be revised as discussed and issued to the working group and BFUG in mid March.
- The list of questions would be reviewed at a future working group meeting.
- The National Report template would be revised and issued to the working group/BFUG for comment.
- The Eurydice questionnaire would be circulated via the Secretariat for comment.
- The next meeting would take place on 12 June, in Vienna. The focus of the meeting would be to consider the format of the stocktaking report.
- The next again meeting would take place in Helsinki on 11 Oct.
- Norway would explore the possibility of hosting the following meeting.

Ann McVie  
Bologna Secretariat  
26 April 2006