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Coordination Group 1 on Global Policy Dialogue
Second meeting, Bologna, 24 June 2019
Minutes

List of participants

Family name(s)	First name	Country / Institution
Diek	Anja	Germany
Fohmann	Katrin	Germany
Gaebel	Michael	EUA
Hollela	Caroline	Belgium French Community
Isaacs	Ann Katherine	Italy
Kassenov	Khanat	Kazakhstan
Kelo	Maria	ENQA
Lagier	Hélène	France
Lennan	Deirdre	European Commission
Lynch	Órla	Ireland
Ritchie	Ella	United Kingdom
Rosenbaum	Melanie	Holy See
Soenen	Magalie	Belgium Flemish Community
Finocchietti	Giovanni	BFUG Secretariat
Garner	Allan	BFUG Secretariat
Lantero	Luca	BFUG Secretariat
Lucke	Vera	BFUG Secretariat

Apologies from UNESCO and Bulgaria.

1. Welcome by the Co-chairs, Introduction to the meeting and its objectives, Adoption of the Agenda

The Co-chairs of Coordination Group 1 on Global Policy Dialogue CG1 on GPD welcomed the participants and introduced the 2nd meeting. A short appraisal of the previous CG1 meeting, held in Brussels on 8 February 2019 (<http://www.ehea.info/page-Coordination-Group-1>), was presented, and it was mentioned that although the time available was short, one important objective of the meeting was to continue the discussion on a possible status of countries interested in Bologna, but outside the EHEA. This can be considered under the final point on the agenda (“Other possible events and actions in view of organising a continuous dialogue with countries, associations, world regions and macro-regions”). The agenda was adopted.

2. Tour de Table: news from members of CG1 on GDP

Members introduced themselves, giving a short description of recent developments and ongoing contacts and projects with countries/regions outside the EHEA. Information shared was abundant and of considerable interest. Thus it was decided that the group members will send a written version of what they shared, in order to map activities, projects and contacts. The idea was also presented to utilize a restricted area for the CG1 to be opened in the EHEA website in order to share and map the various events and activities of which the members are aware, or which they are organizing. The input received after the meeting from the CG1 on GPD members is attached to this document in ANNEX I.

3. State of play on correspondence with ministries and organisations

In its previous meeting, CG1 decided to address the Ministers from non EHEA countries, who were invited and attended the Paris Bologna Policy Forum (BPF) in 2018, as well as those who did not attend. The task was carried out by the BFUG Secretariat, that gathered contact information from previous BFUG Secretariats, and sent invitation letters to 38 EHEA non-member countries (the text of which was developed by the CG1 on GPD Co-chairs with input from Ella Richie and Orla Lynch). Ministers were informed that the CG1 on GPD had started its work and that it will prepare the coming Global Policy Forum, to be held in Rome in June 2020. The Co-Chairs asked the Ministers to give suggestions on the key themes or topics, which would be of greatest interest for the coming GPF and to indicate any upcoming events related to Higher Education in their country/region that might provide an opportunity to promote GDP. So far, feedback from the countries has been limited, with two countries (Cambodia and Israel) making proposals and suggesting topics (see ANNEX II for details). Discussion raised the issue that response rates to similar initiatives are often very low (for various reasons), and that CG1 should carry out follow-up actions to achieve the expected results, convincing Ministers that they may have tangible benefits if they give a feedback. Suggested follow-up actions include, among others, enlarging the number of recipient countries and regions (e.g. Africa: Gambia, Mauritius, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo; Asia Pacific: New Zealand, South Korea; Latin America and Caribbean: countries signing the new UNESCO Regional Recognition Convention having signed the new UNESCO Regional Recognition Convention, i.e. Argentine, Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Granada, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela and making use of diplomatic channels for the circulation of messages.

The message that should come across is that Rome 2020 will be a Forum for setting the higher education policy agendas until 2030, and a place where countries can contribute to defining future priorities and topics, so it is important for them to come and join the Forum.

The discussion also addressed whether to privilege policy dialogue in general or to focus on practical issues. On the one hand it was observed that ministers are more accustomed to deal with policy issues; on the other hand, concrete themes were suggested, that can raise several countries' interest. Among others, the following themes were mentioned: student centred learning, quality assurance, qualification frameworks, globalization (ensuring and promoting trust in a globalized context), digitalization, internationalization, institutional autonomy, fundamental values. Favouring broad issues, flexibility, and avoiding focusing on single topics were also recommended.

4. Constitution of sub-groups to work on “lists”, consider “invitees” for Rome Conference: composition, tasks, timeline

The constitution of a sub-group was proposed, working on the list of countries to invite to the Rome 2020 Conference and Forum. It was mentioned that all countries, except under very specific political circumstances, can be invited to Rome, and furthermore that invitations should be extended to organisations and to regional networks, and in general that the approach should be very inclusive (“none excluded”). It was agreed that the Belgium Flemish Co-chair will co-ordinate the sub-group, composed of the representatives of Belgium - Flemish Community, Belgium - French Community, France, European Commission, and EUA.

5. Organization of “drafting committee” for Global Policy Statement: composition, tasks, timeline

The constitution of a “Drafting Committee” was also proposed, working on the Global Policy Forum Statement for the next Rome 2020 Forum. A clearer idea of what to do should emerge after the first meeting (Bologna, 26 June 2019) of the Drafting Committee that will work on the Rome 2020 Communiqué; in principle, the drafting of the Communiqué and the Statement should follow the same rhythm. The roadmap envisages the discussion of a first draft of the Statement during the next BFUG Board (Istanbul, 24 September 2019); it was suggested to have a more advanced draft ready for the event to be organized in Rome in October 2019 (see below). The Italian Co-chair will co-ordinate the Committee, composed of the representatives of Germany, Holy See, Ireland, Italy, United Kingdom, and ENQA.

5. Event in Rome, 22 October 2019: objectives, format, organization

The Meeting was joined by Mr. Vito Borrelli, Deputy Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Italy, in order to deal with this topic of the Agenda. The proposal was discussed to organise an event to introduce the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum to the ambassadors of non-EHEA countries based in Italy (diplomatic representations to Italy, to the Holy See, and to international organisations based in Rome), to invite Ministers to come to Rome and join the Forum. Mr Borrelli informed that event should be organised on the occasion of the X edition of “Diplomacy 2019, Festival della Diplomazia”, which will take place in Rome during 17-25 October 2019 (<http://festivaldelladiplomazia.eu/>) and should be a flagship event among the 80+ events under preparation. In order to avoid overlapping and competition with other events of the Festival, Mr. Borrelli will monitor the definition of the agenda to find the most suitable date. The diplomatic representatives of EHEA countries might also be invited to the event, that should be combined with a meeting of the CG1.

The Meeting will be hosted in the “Spazio Europa” on the ground floor of the Representation (about 120 seats) (https://ec.europa.eu/italy/services/eps_it). Format and contents of the event were discussed; consensus received the proposal of an event lasting up to two hours, consisting of an aperitif-cocktail to be held in a venue hosting also a poster (and/or video) session, and a ceremony with a limited number of high-level speakers introducing the Bologna Process, the Ministerial Conference, the Bologna Policy Forum/Global Policy Forum, followed by a limited number of short presentations focused on successful examples of cooperation among EHEA and non-EHEA countries, networks, trans-regional organizations. Invitations to the Meeting will be made jointly by Italy and the EU Representation. A sub-group to work on this topic has been agreed, consisting of the CG1 Co-chairs, the Representation of the European Commission in Italy and the BFUG Secretariat. CG1 members will have time until 1st July 2019 to send suggestions about speakers and themes for the poster exhibition. A preliminary tentative programme will be drafted by 15th July 2019. A first “Save the date” message will be sent after that date, while a Concept Note will be circulated among CG1 members. A more structured programme will be announced at a later stage, based on the agreements with the Festival organisation.

6. Other possible events and actions in view of organizing a continuous dialogue with countries, associations, world regions and ‘macro-areas’

In addition to the themes and actions discussed up to this point, the meeting also addressed once again the important topic of how to recognize the interest and attempts at building compatibility or dialogue with the EHEA. The future will entail building on-going dialogue with macro regions, ministries, student groups, accreditation and QA bodies, as well as non-governmental institutions, and HEIs themselves. The discussion underlined that a government-led process is in place at the moment, and thus it should be discussed how institutions, student associations, regional associations and stakeholders can be included. A brainstorming focused the possibility of granting a special status to particular countries, and how to deal with higher education institutions willing to cooperate with EHEA actors, despite their countries maybe not being available or ready to do the same. Pros and cons emerged (e.g. the proposal of a possible “Bologna global partner” status vs. the idea of considering “Bologna as a club”). The topic is sensitive and should be considered of vital importance, thus prepared carefully for further discussion which must involve all BFUG members.

7. Any other business, Closing of the Meeting

It was suggested to open a restricted area for the CG1 in the EHEA website (similar areas have been already opened for other groups), to be used as a shared work area for Group members and as an archive of information and documents. The CG1 Restricted Area should host a mapping of global higher education events and of country events, projects, initiatives. The next meeting is scheduled on 22 October 2019 in Rome. Closing the Meeting, the Co-chairs thanked the Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna and the BFUG Secretariat for hosting and organisation. They also thanked the participants for the very active contribution to the discussions.

ANNEX I News from members of CG1 on GPD

During the 2nd meeting of the CG1 on GPD, in Bologna, on 24 June 2019, countries were asked to share with the BFUG Secretariat news and updates for the recent developments and ongoing contacts with countries outside the EHEA. As agreed, the BFUG Secretariat sent the request to the CG1 on GPD members, giving the deadline on 28 June 2019. Four CG1 on GPD member countries forwarded their input to the BFUG Secretariat: Belgium Flemish Community, European Commission, France and Germany. Kindly note that it is quoted verbatim what the countries sent.

BELGIUM FLEMISH COMMUNITY

Please refer to the ASEM education secretariat, hosted by Belgium (Flemish and French Community together) from November 2017 for a period of 4 years.

There was also the ministerial conference 15th May in Bucharest with ministers from Europe and Asia. Please see: <https://www.asem-education.org/events/general/asemme7>

The conclusions by the chair and the Bucharest statement can be found on: <https://www.asem-education.org/documents/senior-official-meetings-and-ministerial-meetings/asemme7-bucharest>

In the conclusions by the chair there is reference to the Bologna Policy Forum in point 14.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- The role of education in EU external relations is growing and our programmes, Erasmus+ and MSCA are internationally well-known, recognised and cost effective. They allow European stakeholders (universities, students, young people) to have access to new partners, and develop new projects and partnerships that are mutually beneficial – socially, economically and in addressing the global challenges.
- The current geographic priorities of the programmes as set out by the current Commission are the neighborhood (East and South) and the Western Balkans, with Africa becoming a key priority for the EU. This focus is expected to remain with the next generation of programmes. We have identified areas where we want to improve in the future to simplify management and improve inclusiveness and outreach.
- International cooperation will be extended beyond Higher Education and youth to VET, if there are sufficient funds from the external instruments.
- In the future, international actions will be funded by a mix of external funding^[1], (NDICI and IPA III) and the Erasmus internal budget line. The NDICI negotiations are not quite as advanced at the moment.
- The next phase of the programme needs to introduce more flexibility to be able to address emerging challenges in a more rational, structured and simplified manner whilst ensuring overall coherence with the EU's strategic priorities for external action. It should allow smaller, more agile projects to improve inclusion and attract newcomers; more blended learning and virtual exchanges.

Africa

- A lot is already underway through **Erasmus+** and the higher education initiatives since the adoption of the Joint Communication for a renewed impetus of the Africa-EU Partnership^[2].
- The objectives of this Partnership have been reiterated under the new Africa - Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs^[3]. Investing in people by investing in education and skills is particularly highlighted.

- Internationalisation and harmonisation of Higher Education in Africa are essential to develop a culture of mobility with a view to increasing quality of education and comparability. They are also drivers of socio-economic development and regional integration.
- Mobilities of students and staff are a key priority of the new Africa - Europe Alliance as they help to equip young people with relevant skills to build their future. The commitment taken in the framework of the Alliance and by President Juncker in his 2018 State of the Union speech is that by 2020 the EU will have supported 35,000 African students and academics with the Erasmus programme. By 2027, this figure should reach 105,000.
- A number of additional initiatives for higher education and vocational education and training (VET) are also contributing to the implementation of actions set out in the new Africa – Europe Alliance:
- DG EAC is launching **phase 3 of the Tuning Africa project**, which is a collaborative process reviewing and modernising the competences and skills that are required by the labour market for a given discipline. 107 universities across 41 African countries are involved. They are making their teaching curricula more relevant to the needs of African societies and markets and have retrained more than 750 academic staff over the past three years. Phase 3 foresees also the development of the African Credit Transfer System.
- Similarly, Phase 2 of the **Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation initiative** (HAQAA) is being launched and will enhance quality assurance in higher education and build mutual trust, supporting mobility and the recognition of qualifications, thereby contributing to the continental integration agenda. The African Standards and Guidelines for QA in HE were developed under HAQAA 1. The establishment of the African Continental Agency for QA and Accreditation will be supported through the next phase of HAQAA.
- A **pilot VET mobility project** will be implemented over the next three years with Africa (5 m Euro). Technical skills are of utmost importance for the continent and the sector urgently needs to be revitalised. From September 2019, this pilot project will offer an Erasmus-type cooperation between VET colleges in the EU Member States and Africa combining capacity building and mobilities.
- The Commission also funds an **Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme**^[4] to improve the skills and competences of African students and staff through enhanced mobility between universities in the continent and contribute to the portability of qualifications. In 2016 and 2017, **14 projects** were selected for a total budget of 20m EUR, which will finance around **800 mobilities**. One call has just closed and a further call is foreseen for late 2019.
- Research and innovation capacity and professional development opportunities for researchers still need to be strengthened, including through the **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions**. For the latter scheme, it is hoped that increased promotion of funding opportunities for African stakeholders will increase participation in the Action. Since 2014, **798 researchers from Africa** (1/3 of them female), have been granted funding for their PhD, postdoctoral fellowships and research staff exchanges.

FRANCE

FR update for CG1 mapping

Along the lines with the spirit & goals of the GPD - political dialogue & cooperation between EHEA & other macro-regions -, together with the current negotiations about the **UNESCO Draft Global Recognition Convention**, France is also currently involved in the following HE multilateral affairs :

-ASEM process : beyond the ASEM Declaration adopted in Bucharest (may 15-16th 2019):

<https://www.asem-education.org/documents/senior-official-meetings-and-ministerial-meetings/asemme7-bucharest/559-bucharest-statement-final/file>, France will be hosting the next meeting of the Expert group on International credit transfer mechanisms & LO systems (Lyon, November 4-5th 2019)

-5+5 Dialogue : within the framework of the 5+5 Dialogue, the 4th Ministerial Conference on Research, Innovation and Higher education led to the “Rome Ministerial Declaration” (June 10th 2019), adopted by - (in alphabetical order) -Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia on the one hand, and by France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain on the other hand. This Declaration is aiming at “Strengthening cooperation in research, innovation and HE for promoting sustainable economic growth, social inclusion and creating new opportunities for youth in the Western Mediterranean region”, and it provides a workplan for 2019-2020 based on concrete actions involving “lead country (or countries)” and setting expected outcomes for each of these actions.

For HE, while 4 strands are taken on board, - with 3 of them dealing with : Creation of a network of HEIs (Portugal & Tunisia as leaders) ; Blended learning for increasing youth opportunities (Spain & Morocco as leaders), Building capacities and developing skills on blue economy (Italy as leader) -, France is taking the lead with Mauritania for “Quality assurance, governance and accreditation”. In this field, expected outcomes are as follows :

-increasing exchange of knowledge between QA agencies and ministries on both sides of the Mediterranean, with the aim of creating a network ;

-promoting common tools for the evaluation of HE & Research institutions, Guidelines for governance

-identifying case studies, and experts, about QA & Governance

-facilitating the mutual recognition of diplomas between the 5+5 countries based on common evaluation references

-and improving the mobility of researchers and student at the regional level and between the countries beyond the Mediterranean basin.

<http://www.fiveplusfiveihe.org/post/rome-declaration-signed-june-10-2019>

Along the political 5+5 Dialogue, and in order to further encourage concrete projects in the region in a wide range of key topics (youth empowerment, education, environment, water, energy, economic integration ...), to be fostered from a large range of stakeholders (in particular young people, entrepreneurs, academics, artists, intellectuals, associations ..), a “Summit of the 2 shores” (or *“Sommet des 2 rives”* which was proposed by French President Macron) was held in Marseille, June 24th 2019.

This summit was both a meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and a regional dialogue with civil society representatives and it also involved, on top of the ten 5+5 countries mentioned above, the European Union, Germany, together with Mediterranean organizations (U for the Mediterranean (Ufm), Anna Lindh Foundation), and international institutions (World Bank (WB) European Investment Bank (EIB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and OECD) which are active in the Mediterranean region.

<https://ufmsecretariat.org/summit-of-the-two-shores-ufm/>

<https://ufmsecretariat.org/sommet-des-deux-rives/>

-HE & FR-speaking countries:

In June 2019, for 4 days, under the auspices of Romania, OIF and AUF, Bucharest featured 3 major events concerning French-speaking countries and geared to further boost up digitalization for HE in French-speaking HE countries (called “IDNEUF initiative – meaning : *“Initiative pour le Développement du Numérique dans l’Espace Universitaire Francophone”*) : after the 1ST Forum for digitalization in the French-speaking HE area (June 18-19th) and the 2nd Forum for funding digitalization in the French-speaking HE area (June 20th), the 4th Ministerial Conference of HE

Ministers (June 21st 2019) – organized after Paris (2015), Bamako (2017) and Marrakech (2018) – was concluded by the approval of the Bucharest Ministerial Statement, after the so-called “IDNEUF4” events in Bucharest.

FR-speaking HE Ministers agreed to further analyze first proposals made about a strategic framework for 2030 on how to concretely go forward. To do so, a specific committee (involving FR-speaking countries on a voluntary basis) will be set up in July 2019 with a mandate to come up with a concrete roadmap with expected outcomes by January 2020.

Next IDNEUF events will be held in June 2020 in Québec (IDNEUF5), and in June 2021 in Tunis (IDNEUF6).

https://idneuf4-bucarest2019.auf.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/Declaration_finale_des_ministres.pdf

<https://idneuf4-bucarest2019.auf.org/pays-participants/>

<https://idneuf.auf.org/>

GERMANY

Within the context of the Global Policy Dialogue, DAAD will organise a conference on “Virtual exchange – borderless mobility between EHEA and regions beyond”. The format is a one-day-conference, scheduled for **December 11th in Berlin**. The focus is on study programmes which are based on (interactive) exchange approaches using collaborative online formats. The conference will be preceded by a **Call for Papers** inviting contributions from Higher Education practitioners and researchers. The Call for Papers will be published within the next weeks and we would be happy for support of the WG members to disseminate it through their channels. The same applies to the Conference programme which is still in the planning phase. Any recommendations for speakers, projects or other are welcome.

ANNEX II Action taken with respect to the countries invited to the Paris 2018 Bologna Policy Forum

In its 1st meeting on 8 February 2019, the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG1 on GPD) decided to address the Ministers from non EHEA countries, who were invited and attended (letter in ANNEX I), as well as those who did not attend (letter in ANNEX II) the Paris Bologna Policy Forum (BPF) in 2018. The task was carried out by the BFUG Secretariat who, after gathering contact information from previous BFUG Secretariats, sent the invitation to the EHEA non-member countries to inform Ministers that the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue started its work and that it will prepare the coming Global Policy Forum, to be held in Rome in June 2020. The Co-Chairs of the CG1 on GPD asked the recipients to give their feedback on the key themes or topics and any upcoming events related to Higher Education in their country/region that might provide an opportunity to promote the Global Policy Dialogue.

The BFUG Secretariat, on behalf of the Co-Chairs of the BFUG Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG on GPD), send a message to **38 Countries** on 17th May 2019.

Messages were sent to:

Countries attending the BPF in Paris:

Algeria, Argentina, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, India, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Nigeria, Qatar, Thailand, Tunisia, Uzbekistan,

Countries not attending the BPF in Paris:

Afghanistan, Australia, Cambodia, Djibouti, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Mongolia, Philippines, Pakistan, Panama, South Africa, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uruguay, Vietnam.

Annex III contains the list of 38 countries divided into UNESCO regions:

State of Art as of 18 June 2019:

Cambodia and Israel replied by stating the following suggestion for topics to be discussed in the frame of the Global Policy Dialogue:

Cambodia

- Higher Education Internationalization
- Higher Education Governance and Autonomy

Israel

- Challenges in accreditation and quality assurance of digital courses/study programs
- Risk-based approach in accreditation and quality assurance
- Ensuring and promoting trust in a globalized context

South Africa replied that the communication will be brought to the attention of the Minister.

Iran replied suggesting to contact their Academic Representative to Europe (in Paris).

Two email addresses are not working: **Dominican Republic** (one of two contacts) and **Philippines** (one of three contacts).