

**Budapest Vienna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area
Comments on draft 2 of 29/01/2010**

Received from: Austria, Belgium/French Community, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Holy See, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, UK/EWNI, UK/Scotland, Education International, ESU

GENERAL REMARKS

Denmark: We very much welcome the draft declaration and DK supports the tone and the broad focus of the declaration. We have included a sentence regarding the interaction between research and education as track changes in the document. DK would very much like to see this sentence added to the declaration as it points to an area, which could benefit from a stronger focus from the EHEA and the BFUG in the years to come.

France: Thank you for this improved second version (of 29/01/2010), after the first round of comments made on Draft 1. We welcome this revised Draft with a clearer structure and easy flow, which is more straightforward, where Ministers have a more pro-active role based on commitments and strong political will to go further and deeper in the 'Bologna reforms', in line with their full potential, and for a better understanding of the whole 'Bologna' modernizing scheme. The particular stress (through a new point 7) made on '*student-centred learning as a way to empowering the learner in all forms of education and providing the best solution (...)*', together with the reaffirmed commitment to increase efforts '*to provide equal opportunities to quality education*', are key issues to France for higher education and are therefore welcome.

Holy See: Thank you very much for the nice text with which we can agree. We would like to mark just one detail that strictly speaking "Holy See" is not a "country" therefore it is not exactly correct to speak about "46" "countries" of the Bologna Process (mentioned in 1 and 3 articles of the Declaration). Probably you can find a better formulation.

Netherlands:

- the 'mood' of the declaration is perceived as rather negative, success should also be mentioned. After all, we are celebrating a party so we should mention the successful results, apart from the work that still needs to be done
- the declaration should not repeat the Leuven-communiqé

Norway: Please find enclosed the Norwegian comments to the draft Budapest/Vienna declaration in track changes. The underlying principles and values of the Bologna Process could in our opinion have been highlighted and elaborated a bit further throughout the text.

UK/Scotland: We would agree with the comments from Peter (albeit that I have suggested another alternative wording for paragraph 9!). In addition we feel that the document could be a bit more upbeat overall - I have included one minor change at paragraph one but maybe more positive language is needed overall.

Education International:

I am herein attaching the EI's comments to the 2nd Draft of the Declaration, in track changes. I would just like to shortly elaborate our suggestions:

- Addition of the terminology learners is important due to the shifting paradigm, especially related to LLL, and the fact that the term "students" is often connected to the young generation of learners, who have entered HE (almost) immediately after high school education
- We felt it is needed to emphasize the inclusion of staff at all decision-making levels (institutional, national and European) in order to make a stronger point on the low inclusion of staff in policy and decision making processes as, unfortunately, is the current situation.
- Staff and student mobility needs to be given a central role as a key to success of the Bologna Process and we felt it has not been emphasized enough, even though mobility has been the underlying force of the Process.
- It is important to include the working conditions of staff, which are under many threats and increasing workload but not increased support from neither institutions themselves neither the governments.

Draft 2 of 29/01/2010	Comments received by 12/02/2010
<p style="text-align: center;">Budapest Vienna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area March 12, 2010</p>	
<p>1. We, the Ministers responsible for higher education in 46 European countries, met in Budapest and Vienna on March 11 and 12, 2010 to launch the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). We have assessed the progress made in implementing the objectives agreed in the Bologna Process since 1999 and recognize that much remains to be done. We will work to overcome the identified shortcomings, and do so with confidence on the basis of the achievements of the first decade.</p>	<p>Slovenia: <i>This part [starting with "We have assessed..."] should be moved further down - it would be better to first emphasise the achievements and then make a commitemenet to overcome the shortcomings. The shortcomings and problems are already mentioned in later paragraphs as well.</i></p> <p>UK/Scotland: ... We have assessed the progress made in implementing the objectives agreed in the Bologna Process since 1999 and recognize <u>that significant progress has been made and that much remains to be done</u></p>
<p>2. The Bologna Declaration in 1999 set out a vision for 2010 of an internationally competitive and attractive European Higher Education Area where higher education institutions, supported by strongly committed staff and students, can fulfil their diverse missions in the knowledge society; and where learners, benefiting from mobility with smooth and fair recognition of their qualifications, can find the best suited educational pathways.</p>	<p>EI: ...European Higher Education Area where higher education institutions, supported by strongly committed staff and students/learners, can fulfil their diverse missions...</p> <p>ESU: ...European Higher Education Area where higher education institutions, supported by strongly committed staff and students, can fulfil their diverse missions in the knowledge society; <u>academic communities support the diverse higher education institutional missions within the knowledge society;</u> and where learners, benefiting</p>

	<p>from mobility with smooth and fair recognition of their qualifications, can find the best suited educational pathways. <i>The formulation is not adequate since staff and students are not supporting their Higher Education Institution in fulfilling its mission but are rather equally important and individually necessary communities within HEIs as is the HEI leadership.</i></p> <p>Slovenia: <i>In the previous version of the declaration this paragraph had a message that a lot of this vision came to reality. Now in this version it does not say that we actually achieved anything. It is true that the next paragraph (3) one can taste a bit of the success saying that „we have engaged in a series of reforms...“, however, the general feeling in this version seems more negative.</i></p>
<p>3. Since 1999, 46 countries, all party to the European Cultural Convention, have signed up to this vision. In a unique partnership between public authorities, higher education institutions, students and staff, together with employers, quality assurance agencies, international organisations and European institutions, we have engaged in a series of reforms to build a European Higher Education Area based on trust, cooperation and respect for the diversity of cultures, languages, and higher education systems.</p>	<p>EI: ...In a unique partnership between public authorities, higher education institutions, students/<u>learners</u> and staff, together with employers, quality assurance agencies...</p>
<p>4. The Bologna Process and the resulting European Higher Education Area, being unprecedented examples of regional, cross-border cooperation in higher education, have raised considerable interest in other parts of the world and put European higher education on the global map. We welcome this interest and look forward to intensifying our policy dialogue and cooperation with partners across the world.</p>	<p>Slovenia: <i>The transition from paragraph 4 to 5 seems a bit forced. Thus we suggest that this paragraph moves further down which would enable us to first stress the European values (academic freedom etc), roles of stakeholders and other issues and then the external dimension.</i></p>
<p>5. We, the Ministers, recommit to academic freedom as well as autonomy and accountability of higher education institutions as core values of the European Higher Education Area and appreciate the role the higher education institutions play in fostering peaceful democratic societies and strengthening social cohesion.</p>	<p>EI: We, the Ministers, recommit to <u>individual</u> academic freedom as well as autonomy and accountability of higher education institutions...</p> <p>Belgium/French Community: We, the Ministers, recommit to academic freedom as well as autonomy and accountability of higher education institutions as core values of the European Higher Education Area and appreciate <u>underline/recognise</u> the role the higher education institutions play in fostering peaceful democratic societies and strengthening social cohesion.</p>
<p>6. We acknowledge the key role of teachers, researchers and</p>	<p>Czech Republic: We acknowledge the key role of <u>all actors of</u></p>

<p>administrative staff in making the European Higher Education Area a reality, where learners are enabled to acquire knowledge, skills and competence for their careers and lives as democratic citizens as well as providing opportunities for their personal development. We commit ourselves to working towards the better inclusion of higher education staff in the implementation and further development of the EHEA.</p>	<p><u>academic community</u> - teachers, researchers, <u>students</u> and administrative staff in making the European Higher Education Area a reality, where learners are enabled to acquire knowledge, skills and competence for their careers and lives as democratic citizens as well as providing opportunities for their personal development. We commit ourselves to working towards the better inclusion of higher education staff <u>and students</u> in the implementation and further development of the EHEA.</p> <p><i>We believe that students and academic as well as administrative staff belong to the entity called "academic community". We feel that the involvement of students might be expressed in this paragraph.</i></p> <p>France: ... where learners are enabled to acquire knowledge, skills and competences for their careers and lives...</p> <p>Germany: ... where learners are enabled to acquire knowledge, skills and competences for their careers and lives... <i>we should speak about "competences" (plural) because the QFs and study programs are aiming at several competences, not just one. And the draft is rightly addressing "skills" (also plural).</i></p> <p>Belgium/French Community: ...We commit ourselves to working towards the better inclusion of higher education staff <u>and students</u> in the implementation and further development of the EHEA.</p> <p>EI: ...We commit ourselves to working towards the better inclusion of higher education staff in the implementation and further development of the EHEA <u>at all levels</u>. <u>We also commit ourselves to the improvement of the working conditions of higher education staff and creating a supportive environment for the staff to fulfil their multiplying tasks in the times of demanding reforms. We recognize that for both staff and students/learners, enhanced mobility within the EHEA is a key measure of the ultimate success of the Bologna Process.</u></p>
<p>7. We call upon all actors involved to foster student-centred learning as a way of empowering the learner in all forms of education and providing the best solution for a sustainable and flexible academic, professional and personal path. We also support student participation in decision-making structures.</p>	<p>EI: We call upon all actors involved to foster student/<u>learner</u>-centred learning as a way of empowering the learner... We also support student/<u>learners'</u> participation in decision-making structures.</p> <p>Czech Republic: We also support student participation in decision-</p>

	<p>making structures. <i>We do not think this is a right sentence at a right place. It does not match to the first part of the paragraph– student-centred learning is methodology, organization of studies etc. we suggest to delete it in this paragraph. It is also not clear to us what it means in reality?</i></p> <p>Finland: ...professional and personal path. We also <u>fully</u> support student participation in decision-making structures.</p> <p>Norway: ...professional and personal path. We also support student participation in <u>all</u> decision-making structures. <i>It is in our opinion important to acknowledge the important role the students play in the governance of higher education, i.e we suggest that the ministers support student participation in all decision-making structures.</i></p> <p>Netherlands: ...professional and personal path. We also support <u>consider</u> student participation <u>as a key</u> in decision-making structures.</p> <p>ESU: ...professional and personal path. We also <u>value and</u> support <u>full</u> student participation in <u>all</u> decision-making structures <u>at European, national and institutional level.</u> <i>Student participation has to become a reality on all levels. If students as the largest part of the community in Higher Education Institutions are not involved they will react with further distance and protests against the EHEA goals which makes it impossible to realize them.</i></p>
<p>8. We, the Ministers, reaffirm that higher education is a public responsibility and commit ourselves, in these difficult economic times, to ensuring that higher education institutions have the necessary resources within a framework established and overseen by public authorities. We are convinced that higher education is a major driver for economic and social development and for innovation in an increasingly knowledge-driven world. We shall therefore increase our efforts to provide equal opportunities to quality education, paying particular attention to underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>France: We, the Ministers, reaffirm that higher education <u>as a public good</u> is a public responsibility and commit ourselves, in these difficult economic times, to ensuring that higher education institutions have the necessary <u>appropriate</u> resources within a framework established and overseen by public authorities. <i>In line with the final Communiqué from the UNESCO World Conference held in Paris last July 2009, we suggest to refer to 'higher education as a public good'. Besides, the mention of 'appropriate resources' (instead of 'necessary resources'), which implies fitness for purpose and not necessarily some kind of absolute threshold as a must, would be more appropriate to us.</i></p>

	<p>Netherlands: We, the Ministers, reaffirm that higher education is a public responsibility and <u>We</u> commit ourselves...</p> <p>Slovenia: We, the Ministers, reaffirm that higher education is a public responsibility and commit ourselves, <u>including</u> in these difficult economic times, to ensuring that higher education institutions have the necessary resources</p> <p>ESU: We, the Ministers, reaffirm that higher education is a public responsibility and commit ourselves, in these difficult economic times, to ensuring that higher education institutions have the necessary resources within a framework established and overseen by public authorities <u>and whilst guaranteeing that no obstacles are created to access higher education in Europe.</u> We are convinced that higher education is a major driver for economic and social development and for innovation in an increasingly knowledge-driven world. We shall therefore increase our efforts to provide equal opportunities to quality education, paying particular attention to underrepresented groups <u>and commit to the necessary work on the social dimension of higher education.</u></p> <p><i>In a time where ESU has reports of students dropping out due to not affording the cost of studies, we cannot take a real commitment on higher education being a public responsibility without mentioning that no access barriers mustn't be created.</i></p> <p><i>Furthermore, the protesting students in many countries are exactly suspicious to the Bologna Process's relation to financing and individual costs of education. To underline that work on the social dimension is needed is very important to respond adequately to the critique voiced.</i></p> <p>Norway: ... in an increasingly knowledge-driven world. <u>In line with the social dimension of the process, we</u> We shall therefore increase our efforts to provide equal opportunities... <i>We believe it is important to mention the social dimension „by name“ in this paragraph.</i></p>
	<p>ESU: <i>new paragraph 9:</i> <u>We fully support that our higher education systems will enable social mobility through the social dimension of higher education and by supporting 20% of the EHEA graduates to become mobile by 2020. Diversity of the mobile student population and balancing mobility</u></p>

	<p><u>flows are deemed as key elements for the consolidation of the EHEA.</u> <i>As a core goal of the bologna process since it's very beginning it is necessary to underline the importance of mobility in an anniversary declaration.</i></p>
<p>9. We have taken note of the outcomes of the independent assessment and the stakeholders' reports. We welcome their affirmation that institutions of higher education, staff and students increasingly identify with the goals of the Bologna Process. The reports, however, also illustrate that the EHEA action lines such as degree and curriculum reform, quality assurance, recognition, mobility and the social dimension are implemented and appreciated to varying degrees. Recent initiatives and protests in a number of countries have also shown that there is dissatisfaction with respect to the way some of the Bologna reforms have been implemented. We acknowledge that adjustments and continuous work are necessary at European, national, and especially institutional level.</p>	<p>Slovenia: <i>Direct reference to the student protests is not appropriate for such a declaration. It would be better to use a general term referring to different views of different stakeholders or HE actors on the way HIGHER EDUCATION REFORMS (including Bologna reform) were implemented in individual countries. Maybe a paragraph like this:</i> 9. We have taken note of the outcomes of the independent assessment and the stakeholders' reports. We welcome their affirmation that institutions of higher education, staff and students increasingly identify with the goals of the Bologna Process. <u>We realise, however, there are still different views among different Higher Education actors on the state of the Higher Education reforms including the Bologna Process.</u> The reports, however, also illustrate that the EHEA action lines such as degree and curriculum reform, quality assurance, recognition, mobility and the social dimension are implemented and appreciated to varying degrees. We acknowledge that adjustments and continuous work are necessary at European, national, and especially institutional level."</p> <p>Finland: ...Recent initiatives and protests reactions have shown that in a number of countries have also shown that there is also dissatisfaction with respect to the way some of the Bologna reforms have been implemented. We acknowledge... <i>It is important to acknowledge that besides positive impacts there has been dissatisfaction in some countries. However the initiatives (?) referred in text might not been widely known in all Bologna countries. So we tried to slightly rephrase it.</i></p> <p>France: Recent initiatives and protests in a number of countries have also shown that there is dissatisfaction with respect to the way some of a need to explain better the Bologna reforms have been implemented <u>and ensure a more appropriate implementation where needed.</u> We acknowledge... <i>Instead of the reference to 'dissatisfaction' – which makes all the protests legitimate, whatever their reasons behind them, while on the other hand shedding a negative light on the overall reforms triggered</i></p>

	<p><i>off by Ministers -, we suggest to turn it into a more positive twist, showing that Ministers are not within their own 'ivory towers' indeed, and are ready for a further action ensuring a better understanding of Bologna reforms and encouraging a full implementation along the 'Bologna lines'.</i></p> <p>Netherlands: ...Recent initiatives and protests in a number of countries have also shown that there is dissatisfaction with respect to the way some of the Bologna <u>education</u> reforms have been implemented. We acknowledge... <i>Point 9 should mention the recent protests and misunderstanding among students and the intention to remove these misunderstanding about Bologna. It should underline that national implementation of the Bologna proces varies and that the system is developing.</i></p> <p>UK/EWNI: ...Recent initiatives and protests in a number of countries have also shown that there is dissatisfaction with respect to the way some of the Bologna <u>national or institutional level</u> reforms have been implemented. We acknowledge... <i>students have been protesting about a number of reforms not all of which are soley attributal to the Bologna Process, so suggest removing the reference to Bologna here.</i></p> <p>UK/Scotland: ...appreciated to varying degrees. Recent initiatives and protests in a number of countries have also shown that there is dissatisfaction with respect to the way some of the Bologna reforms have been implemented. We acknowledge that adjustments and continuous work are necessary at European, national, and especially institutional level, <u>in particular to address potential dissatisfcation with the way some national or institutional level reforms have been implemented.</u></p>
<p>10. We, the Ministers, recognise that there are still many challenges ahead on the way towards the European Higher Education Area we envisage. In close cooperation with higher education institutions, staff, students and other stakeholders, we will step up our efforts to accomplish the reforms already underway across the continent to enable students and staff to be mobile, to improve teaching and learning in higher education institutions, to enhance graduate employability, and to provide quality higher education for all. At</p>	<p>Slovenia: We, the Ministers, recognise that there are still many challenges ahead on the way towards <u>in the future development of</u> the European Higher Education Area we envisage. In close cooperation with higher education institutions... <i>If we said before that we have already reached the EHEA, this now seems a bit contradictory.</i></p> <p>Norway: ... to accomplish the reforms already underway across the</p>

<p>national level, we also strive to improve communication on and understanding of the Bologna Process among all stakeholders and society as a whole.</p>	<p>continent to enable students and staff to be mobile ... <i>[This does, in our opinion not give any added value to the sentence.]</i></p> <p>Hungary: ...and to provide quality higher education for all. <u>The European Higher Education and Research Areas will (only) be strong and efficient if the higher education values and results of the member states are integrated into network development based on international cooperations.</u> At national level...</p> <p>Netherlands: <i>transparency should be mentioned in the text</i></p>
<p>11. We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to develop additional working methods, such as peer learning, study visits and other information activities, to facilitate the proper and full implementation of the agreed Bologna values and action lines across the European Higher Education Area. By continuously developing, enhancing and strengthening the European Higher Education Area and its synergies with the European Research Area, Europe will be able to successfully face the challenges of the next decade.</p>	<p>Austria: We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to develop additional <u>include in the work plan 2009-12</u> working methods, such as peer learning, study visits and other information activities, to facilitate <u>and support</u> the proper and full implementation of the agreed Bologna values and action lines across the European Higher Education Area, <u>especially at national and institutional level.</u> By continuously developing, enhancing and strengthening...</p> <p><i>It should be clear that BFUG suggests and supports, and that implementation is up to the national and institutional level s</i></p> <p>Slovenia: We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to <u>facilitate the proper and full implementation of the agreed Bologna values and action lines across the European Higher Education Area including developing</u> additional working methods, such as peer learning, study visits and other information activities, to facilitate the proper and full implementation of the agreed Bologna values and action lines across the European Higher Education Area. By continuously developing, enhancing and strengthening the European Higher Education Area and its synergies with the European Research Area, Europe will be able to successfully face the challenges of the next decade.</p> <p>UK/EWNI: We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to develop additional working methods, such as peer learning, study visits and other information activities, to facilitate the proper and full implementation of the agreed Bologna values and action lines across the European Higher Education Area <u>and to consider developing additional working methods to facilitate peer learning and information sharing between signatory countries where appropriate.</u> By continuously developing, enhancing and strengthening...</p>

	<p><i>Would suggest reordering this paragraph to make it clear that BFUG's first priority is the implementation of agreed Bologna action lines rather than the development of new working methods.</i></p> <p>Norway: We ask the Bologna Follow-up Group to develop additional working methods, such as peer learning, study visits and other information activities, to facilitate . <u>We, the Ministers, recommit ourselves to the full and proper and full implementation of the agreed Bologna values and action lines across the European Higher Education Area, also within a national context.</u> By continuously developing... <i>We believe a strong recommitment by the Ministers to fully implement the goals and values of the Bologna Process also within a national context should be stressed in this declaration.</i></p> <p>Denmark: ...across the European Higher Education Area. <u>Especially closer interaction between higher education and research should be in focus.</u> By continuously developing, enhancing and strengthening the European Higher Education Area and its synergies with the European Research Area, Europe will be able to successfully face the challenges of the next decade.</p> <p>ESU: By continuously developing, enhancing and strengthening the European Higher Education Area and <u>its making use of potential synergies with the European Research Area,</u> Europe will be able to successfully face the challenges of the next decade. <i>The processes to create the EHEA and the ERA have different scopes and different governance structures and it can not be taken for granted that they'll harmonize.</i></p>
<p>12. Our next Ministerial Meeting to take stock of progress and to drive the agenda forward, will be hosted by Romania in Bucharest on 26-27 April 2012.</p>	<p>Netherlands: Our next Ministerial Meeting to take stock of progress and to drive the <u>Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve</u> agenda forward, will be hosted by Romania in Bucharest on 26-27 April 2012.</p>