



BFUG MEETING

Tartu (Estonia), 9th/10th November 2017

Minutes

0. List of Participants

| Delegation | Last name | First name |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Armenia | Harutyunyan | Gayane |
| Austria | Bacher | Gottfried |
| Austria | Dulmovits | Stephan |
| Azerbaijan | Bayramov | Shahin |
| Belarus | Rytov | Alexander |
| Belarus | Betenya | Elena |
| Belgium fl. | Soenen | Magalie |
| Belgium fl. | Vercruyssen | Noel |
| Belgium fr. | Hollela | Caroline |
| BFUG Secretariat | Proffit | Francoise |
| BFUG Secretariat | Saad | Mariana |
| BFUG Secretariat | Steinmann | Marina |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Duric | Aida |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Maric | Petar |
| Bulgaria | Radonova | Ivana |
| Business Europe | Seling | Irene |
| Council of Europe | Bergan | Sjur |
| Croatia | Ramljak | Branka |
| Croatia | Tecilazić Goršić | Ana |
| Czech Republic | Polakova | Zuzana |
| Czech Republic | Trojanová | Lucie |
| Denmark | Johannesen | Jonas |
| Denmark | Ulf-Møller | Maria |
| Education International | Keller | Andreas |
| Education International | Roman | Agnes |
| ENQA | Kelo | Maria |
| EQAR | Tück | Colin |
| Estonia | Co-chair Haidak | Margus |

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|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Estonia | Pukk | Janne |
| Estonia | Kurs | Kalmar |
| Estonia | Padar | Allan |
| Estonia | Raudmäe | Kristi |
| ESU | Gajek | Adam |
| ESU | Schwitters | Helge |
| ESU | Sundberg | Caroline |
| EUA | Gaebel | Michael |
| EUA | Wilson | Lesley |
| EURASHE | Karpíšek | Michal |
| EURASHE | Lauwick | Stéphane |
| Euridyce | Crosier | David |
| European Commission | Debiais Sainton | Vanessa |
| European Commission | Engels-Perenyi | Klara |
| European Commission | Tyson | Adam |
| EUROSTUDENT | Hauschildt | Kristina |
| Finland | Innola | Maija |
| France | Desprésaux | Denis |
| France | Lagier | Hélène |
| France | Vice-chair Ott | Marie-Odile |
| Georgia | Margvelashvili | Maia |
| Germany | Greisler | Peter |
| Germany | Lüddeke | Barbara |
| Germany | Petrikowski | Frank |
| Greece | Dionysopoulou | Panagiota |
| Greece | Skouras | Christos |
| Holy See | Bechina | Friedrich |
| Holy See | Rosenbaum | Melanie |
| Hungary | Keszei | Ernő |
| Iceland | Vidarsdottir | Una |
| Ireland | Gleeson | Joseph |
| Italy | Castellucci | Paola |
| Italy | Cinquepalmi | Federico |
| Italy | Lantero | Luca |
| Kazakhstan | Boiko | Yekaterina |
| Kazakhstan | Chikibayeva | Zarina |
| Kazakhstan | Mendaliyeva | Rauza |
| Kazakhstan | Nurmagambetov | Amantay |
| Latvia | Ivsina | Daiga |

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|--------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Latvia | Rauhvargers | Andrejs |
| Liechtenstein | Schädler | Eva-Maria |
| Lithuania | Viliūnas | Giedrius |
| Luxembourg | Kox | Corinne |
| Moldova | Velisco | Nadejda |
| Netherlands | Bijvank | Tessa |
| Norway | Johansson | Toril |
| Norway | Strøm | Tone Flood |
| Poland | Banaszak | Bartłomiej |
| Portugal | Dominginhos | Pedro |
| Portugal | Feyo de Azevedo | Sebastião |
| Portugal | Martins | Afonso |
| Portugal | Queiroz | João |
| Romania | Cezar | Haj |
| Romania | Toma | Antonela |
| Russian Federation | Co-chair Kamynina | Nadezda |
| Serbia | Jocic | Katarina |
| Serbia | Mandic | Vesna |
| Slovenia | Sedej | Jana |
| Spain | de Lezcano-Mújica | Margarita |
| Sweden | Persson | Martin |
| Switzerland | Meister-Gampert | Muriel |
| Switzerland | Studinger | Silvia |
| Ukraine | Zolotaryova | Iryna |
| United Kingdom | Thomson | Edward |
| United Kingdom | Wilkinson | Pamela |

Apologies: Albania, Cyprus, Montenegro, Turkey

1. Welcome and introduction to the meeting

Prof. Anneli Saro, Vice Rector for Academic Affairs at Tartu University, welcomed the participants on behalf of the Rector.

The outgoing BFUG Co-chair (Norway) thanked the current BFUG Co-chairs for the good co-operation.

The Russian BFUG Co-chair expressed her gratitude to the hosting organisation, the Bologna Secretariat, and all co-operation partners and wished the incoming BFUG Co-chairs full success. The BFUG Vice-chair reminded participants that the Drafting Committee for the Communiqué had started its work and that discussions of presentations from the groups should be focused on recommendations.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The European Commission proposed to change the order of presentations from AG2 and AG3. ENQA proposed to have the Communiqué point on the first day right after the discussion of the groups' results. Some delegations asked to discuss the Communiqué item on the first day.

On the basis of these proposals, the BFUG Co-chairs decided to swap AG 2 and AG 3, and to start the second day with the discussion of the draft Communiqué.

3. Feedback of the last meetings

The outgoing BFUG Co-chair (Norway) presented the main conclusions from the minutes of the BFUG meeting in Gozo in May 2017. Regarding these minutes, Hungary criticised the 5th cycle mentioned under point 5.2, and the Council of Europe explained that the reference should be to the first cycle instead.

About point 5.6, Italy questioned the reference to a 'majority' in favour of the proposal by AG3. Some delegations agreed with the comments by Italy, and other supported the minutes as they were. After the discussion, it was agreed to change the sentence referring to the cyclic procedure in paragraph 3, with "a number of BFUG members agreed and a number disagreed" instead of "a majority of BFUG members agreed".

At the meeting with all AG/WG Chairs in Paris in June 2017, they were reminded that reports for this meeting should be short, concise and accessible.

The BFUG Co-chair (Russia) reported that the Board meeting in St. Petersburg last September resulted in having the discussion on Fundamental Values on the agenda of this BFUG meeting and in recommending the BFUG to agree on a short document for the discussion of ministers. She also informed the BFUG that a proposal on the structure of the Communiqué and a first proposal for the agenda of the Ministerial Conference were presented in St. Petersburg.

4. Update and discussion concerning the AG/WG work: The Future of the EHEA

AG1 EHEA International Co-operation

The AG1 chair (Spain) underlined that in the beginning of its work the group had made a decision on countries for co-operation and identified common topics (e.g. recognition, internationalisation ...). The meetings revealed that all countries can learn from good practice, but in some cases they needed further support. The AG1 chair (Spain) referred to the report of the group and the recommendations underlining that having a meeting every 2-3 years is not the best way for co-operation between the EHEA and other countries. So, in order to keep building an international dialogue, AG1 recommended to have an international seminar every year. The AG1 chair (France) presented the draft agenda for the Bologna Policy Forum where the role of higher education in a changing society is proposed as the main topic under the overarching umbrella of inclusiveness. A keynote speaker is foreseen for the opening session, and the two suggested roundtables are focused on 'widening access and ensuring success for all in higher education' on the one hand, and on 'social responsibility of higher education' on the other hand. One recommendation of AG1 is about a new 'global working group' for an international agenda of the EHEA post 2020.

BFUG members welcomed the AG1 proposal for the Bologna Policy Forum and praised the effort to reach an audience outside the EHEA. Some delegations questioned the interest of such an event for ministers, though. The following proposals were made: linking inclusiveness with a case study, stressing the geopolitical role of the Bologna Process, paying attention to migrants/the refugee crisis, with a special focus on North-Africa and the Middle East, or enhancing further the role of higher education as underpinning democracy. Other members underlined the importance of revising the BFUG's operational model and linking the work from the current period to the work of the next period(s). Concerns were expressed about AG1 exchanges with intermediate non-European organisations only, and not with representatives of non-European ministries.

The AG1 chair (Spain) thanked the delegations for all remarks and announced that they would be integrated into AG1's further work. In response to other remarks, she pointed it would be politically difficult to choose one case study instead of offering several topics for discussion. She also underlined that the BPF was not meant to overlap with any other big events such as the UNESCO Global Conference.

WG3 Policy development for new EHEA goals

The WG3 chairs (Russia, EI and ESU) reported that the group had fulfilled the scheduled work and drafted recommendations. Particular challenges were addressed in the preamble of the recommendations, and were also reflected in the Draft 0 of the Communiqué. The recommendations should be taken as suggested responses to current challenges for European higher education. In addition to active citizenship, linking EHEA and ERA, digitalisation, addressing the issue of students from

non-traditional backgrounds, enhancing teacher support and improving professional recognition, the governance topic could be found in the report. The BFUG was invited to give feedback on WG3 recommendations for possible inclusion of some proposals into the draft Communiqué.

Some BFUG members suggested concrete changes which would be sent in writing to WG3 chairs. A number of BFUG members sought to identify the most important recommendations. However, it was agreed that this debate on recommendations was not meant to decide, at this stage, what would be included in the draft Communiqué. The identified challenges should be linked with what governments/ministers can do, and proposals should be more political. Goals of political value had to be translated for the new working period into concrete tasks.

Linking EHEA and ERA, and thus increasing the teaching & research nexus was supported by many delegations, they also proposed including concrete solutions to improve synergy and co-operation. The learning and teaching dimension got general support, and EUA recalled the EFFECT project with some of its 10 principles addressing teacher support. Other proposals regarded sharpening recommendations on teacher support and improving options for individual learning paths in line with an increasingly diverse student body. Some members underlined the importance of funding for higher education, with an unbalanced situation within the EHEA, while EUA pointed out that teacher support meant more funding for structural changes within higher education institutions. It was suggested that the BFUG could connect the European dimension to what the 'European universities' might be for the EHEA. The recommendation about professional recognition (before enrolling, students should know what labour market access possibilities and/or hurdles do exist across the EHEA for taking up a profession in another country) was challenged by some BFUG delegations and made other delegations hesitant: they argued that the issue of professional recognition goes beyond the scope of the EHEA, for which academic recognition should be the focus with further work required on automatic academic recognition. They also underlined that professional recognition dealt with regulated professions which are concerned by EU Directives as far as EU members were concerned.

The BFUG Co-chair (Estonia) concluded the discussion, pointing out that many issues would feed into the new version of the draft Communiqué.

AG4 Diploma Supplement revision

The AG4 chair (Romania) reported that since the Gozo meeting, a number of small changes had been made to both the recommended template and explanatory notes for a revised diploma supplement.

A number of BFUG members suggested concrete changes to the wording. The Council of Europe explained that a meeting of the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee planned in early summer 2019 would be the opportunity to adopt the revised Diploma Supplement under the Lisbon Recognition Convention and underlined the importance of adopting identical versions of the revised DS under the frameworks of the Council of Europe and UNESCO and the European Union; and that the decision by Ministers must be worded accordingly (i.e. recommend/ask for adoption under these frameworks). The European Commission suggested that digitalisation should be co-ordinated in some way. She also reminded the BFUG that Erasmus post 2020 regulations would make the Diploma Supplement a condition for higher education institutions to apply for funding.

On the approach chosen towards the extra-curricular activities, the group suggested to mention in the additional information all the types of activities it considered that can be validated and certified by the universities. The idea of a digitalisation platform could be indeed suggested in the report. He insisted on the first recommendation of AG4 to be added to the draft Communiqué, in order to ensure that the revised diploma supplement template and guidelines are adopted along the same format by the Council of Europe, the European Commission and UNESCO.

4. Update and discussion concerning the AG/WG work: Implementation and Non-Implementation

WG1 Monitoring

The WG1 chairs (Eurydice, Norway) reported that all countries but one had completed the data collection. Several countries had only partially completed one or two of the questionnaires. The quality of statistical data (Eurostat) was very good. A survey from EQAR would also be taken into account in addition to Eurostudent, ESU and EUA data. A first draft report for data checking would be sent to countries in December; the next preliminary draft for the 2018 Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR) was planned to be presented at the February BFUG meeting. The chairs underlined that the 2018 BPIR would see a first attempt to include Fundamental Values, with academic freedom, institutional

autonomy as well as student and staff participation as main areas. The WG1 chairs explained that reference would be made to specific examples where Fundamental Values have been under pressure.

Regarding the scorecard indicators, the WG1 chairs explained that no major changes were proposed. They said that one new scorecard indicator on automatic recognition was proposed, and the WG also suggested splitting one of the indicators into two indicators, so as to better reflect both access and completion for underrepresented groups.

A proposal for a 2018-2020 report would be presented to the BFUG in February 2018.

Comments and suggestions were made from BFUG members on several of the indicators such as the indicator on ECTS, on external quality assurance systems, international participation in quality assurance, cross border quality assurance, automatic recognition and underrepresented groups. The WG1 chairs responded that most of the proposed changes could be taken on board.

WG2 Fostering Implementation of agreed key commitments

The WG2 chair (Belgium fl.) presented the report of the group in context with the WG2 Terms of Reference. As a preliminary note, he recalled that implementation was a complex, multi-level and multi-sided issue, which must be looked at from different perspectives, and that implementation was not a linear process. He explained the strengths and weaknesses of WG2 working methods: Nine "capita selecta" suggestions could be considered, while the different recommendations on various levels might be difficult to integrate in the draft Communiqué.

Some BFUG members suggested concrete changes which would be sent in writing to WG2 chairs, in particular about reversed peer reviews and the recognition of refugees' qualifications. Learning outcomes should be the basis for recognition as the Lisbon Recognition Convention (art. 7) foresees to recognise refugees' qualifications, even if not fully documented. Some BFUG members were in favour of the recommendation about the short cycle as an autonomous cycle with the proposed deletion of "within the first cycle" in the short cycle descriptors; others were reluctant. Germany pointed out that in countries which do not offer short cycle programmes, national requirements regarding access and admission to higher education programmes had to be fulfilled. About short cycles which allow more permeability within systems, EURASHE pointed out the need to take lifelong learning on board.

The WG2 chair (Belgium fl.) commented on the short cycle issue, underlining that access to the first cycle should be made possible for persons with a short cycle qualification, even without any secondary school leaving certificate or wish to continue in the first cycle in systems where short cycle does not exist. Other remarks could be accommodated into the text.

The European Commission asked for a short analysis of the reversed peer review method, to complement the current information included in the report.

AG3 Dealing with non-implementation

The AG3 chair (Iceland) reminded participants of previous Implementation Reports demonstrating uneven implementation, and of the Yerevan Conference where the BFUG was asked to address the issue. As a consequence, AG3 was set up and given the task of developing proposals. In Amsterdam, the BFUG agreed on the three key commitments as indicators for implementation. In Gozo, for the AG3 chair, the presented cyclic procedure itself was approved, but AG3 was asked to elaborate further about the suggested body.

Some BFUG members (France, Italy, Belgium (fl.), Portugal, Russia, Greece, Belgium (fr.) and Spain) agreed on the need to improve implementation across the EHEA but voiced concerns about the AG3 proposal as it stands. They did not see the current AG3 proposal as compatible with the positive Bologna spirit and the voluntary intergovernmental nature of the Bologna Process. In their view, a procedure like this would raise governance issues. Instead, countries facing implementation challenges should be further supported with trust and assistance to implement the necessary reforms. In particular, the 'reversed peer reviews' which WG2 recommended, was regarded as interesting to consider. Therefore, they proposed asking AG3 and WG2 to work together on a new proposal for the next BFUG, trying to incorporate the reversed peer group mechanism suggested by WG2.

Other BFUG members who took the floor (Germany, Denmark, The Netherlands, ESU, Sweden, Finland, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Croatia, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, Luxembourg, the Council of Europe, EQAR, Estonia, EUA, Austria, Romania, EURASHE, Iceland and the European Commission) were in favour of the proposal although they remained open for improvements, in order to find the

procedure to help solve problems, based on open dialogue and peer learning. These delegations underlined that the Yerevan Communiqué explicitly asked the BFUG to put forward procedures for addressing non-implementation and that the current proposal is in line with the mandate given to AG3. They perceived it as a well-balanced way of addressing the tasks given and of going forward together. Starting over would be a waste of time and energy. However, further improvements and a co-existence with other tools like peer-reviews would be possible to consider.

The AG3 chair (Iceland) explained that AG3 saw the functioning of the work, based on peer support, precisely the way the Flemish delegation was describing. Delegates were asked to send concrete written proposals before the next meeting of AG3, which will involve WG2 and WG1 chairs and where further development of the proposal will be discussed.

The BFUG Co-chair (Estonia) underlined the need for both integrating proposals regarding implementation, and for peer-learning starting soon, and asked AG3 and WG2 to jointly work on a renewed approach. He invited participants to send written comments to AG 3 which will meet in December for rephrasing the procedure. The group should come up with a revised proposal on this topic for the BFUG meeting in February 2018. In the end, it will be up to the ministers to make their own judgments on the results of the 2018 Bologna Process Implementation Report, and on AG3 proposals, and to decide on how to provide support to all EHEA members.

The draft of the Terms of Reference of the KIG has not been discussed.

AG2 Belarus roadmap

The AG2 chair (Germany) in his introduction contextualised the situation in Belarus. So far, the roadmap cannot be considered as fulfilled, even if implementation has been moving forward in certain areas. At the 2018 Paris conference, ministers have to decide whether to go on with a renewed roadmap or to find another option for aiding implementation (e.g. with a focus group). He reported from divergent perceptions of implementation within Belarus.

Belarus clarified that the ministry of education wrote that it considers itself to have fulfilled most of its own part of commitments of the roadmap but the Parliament has to adapt the new legislation and new education code. Belarus described the progress made since May 2015, and stated considerable progress. The country has benefited immensely from peer learning. As for the Implementation Report, it is currently measured on the same principles as all EHEA countries, and in the future it should be supported in the same way as others.

BFUG members were aware that implementation needs time and that further support could be offered in the future, and underlined that things often took longer than expected and that some follow-up on particular issues would be necessary. They stated that membership in the EHEA has been beneficial for Belarusian higher education even if implementation progress could have been better. Several delegations expressed their concerns about the challenge of fulfilling the whole roadmap in only 2.5 years' time. Implementing Bologna reforms is not only an issue of legislation, but it means ownership and changing mind-sets at the grassroots' level. ESU was especially worried about common values and principles of the Bologna Process, including quality and democracy.

The AG2 chair (Holy See) underlined that this group was a unique exercise which should not be repeated within the cyclic procedure. He highlighted positive aspects like the good personal relations within the group, and called for a strategic plan to be put forward from Belarus itself and not from outside the country. The message to ministers for Paris cannot be that the roadmap is fulfilled.

The BFUG Co-chair (Russia) highlighted the challenges of the roadmap and underlined ESU's concerns. Positive developments might be the reason for the BFUG to recommend some form of continuation. AG2 will submit a revised report, including recommendations, for the BFUG meeting in February 2018.

5. Draft programme for the Ministerial Conference 2018

The BFUG Vice-chair [presented](#) a draft programme for the Ministerial Conference to be held in Paris on 24/25 May 2018. Each round table will address a part of the Communiqué. As the Communiqué discussions are actually planned on both days, it is foreseen to validate each part of the Communiqué after each corresponding round table session.

Some BFUG members pointed that there was a possibility to have the same topic examined twice during the Conference, as the Bologna Policy Forum might propose to discuss subjects that are also treated in the Communiqué. For some delegations opening all parts of the meeting on 24th May to Bologna Policy

Forum members might not be easy for the discussion of the Communiqué's provisions. The proposal of a round table "Towards European universities" raised positive interest from several delegations. Stakeholders wish to have a possibility to present their own statements, and participation of ministers who are not part of a panel should be ensured in some way to enable open discussion among all countries represented. It was pointed that ministers have to be able to influence discussions on the Communiqué during these sessions.

Asked about the status of the event on 23rd of May, the BFUG Vice-chair explained that it will be a celebration session, and therefore will not be a part of the conference as such.

6. Draft Communiqué for the 2018 Ministerial Conference

The BFUG Vice-chair, who chairs the Drafting Committee, presented the first draft of the Communiqué built upon a preamble and three thematic parts. Further work will have to consider recommendations from the groups for possible inclusion into the draft, and later, when available, findings of the 2018 Bologna Process Implementation Report as well.

BFUG members underlined the importance of making the Communiqué political, readable and concise. It should contain a limited number of concrete recommendations/commitments connected to existing challenges and specifically to the EHEA. The participants pointed that the Communiqué should highlight the importance of Fundamental Values, the EHEA geopolitical vision, the European dimension, active citizenship, migrants' and refugees' integration, and linking higher education and research. They indicated that the text should explain why and how the EHEA has a key role to play to provide solutions for existing and emerging challenges of society, and why and how EHEA must go further beyond 2020. They also referred to the fact that the text should focus on those things that can or have to be achieved together, underlining the shared responsibility for what happens in individual countries, especially in the field of Fundamental Values. It was mentioned that an answer to the Yerevan Communiqué could be added as an appendix with a few key elements from AG/WGs, and that some space might be reserved for outcomes from Researchers' Conference.

The BFUG Co-chair (Russia) summarised the discussions as having raised the following points: the Bologna Process has been experimenting a "stagnation" in the last period and it was acknowledged that it needed to address its lack of implementation; a clearly targeted Communiqué is needed, addressing regional aspects of higher education, gender balance as well as responsibility for social and personal development. Fundamental Values must be explained in a more concrete way, while teaching and learning must include lifelong learning with recognition of prior learning in particular; collaboration of EHEA and ERA need to be further considered with concrete outputs, and connections with the labour market must be enhanced.

The BFUG Vice-chair made a short conclusion to welcome these comments; she underlined that some further inputs from the Working and Advisory Groups were still pending and might be taken into account in the process of drafting the Communiqué.

The Bologna Secretariat explained that written comments on version 0 of the Draft Communiqué could be sent until 27 November.

7. Update on the BFUG Secretariat 2018 – 2020

Italy affirmed that linking higher education and research, following the third mission of higher education and addressing the societal challenges promoting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals were at the centre of its attention. It was indicated that the Italian Bologna Secretariat would provide maximum support to issues linked to challenges such as the integration of migrants and refugees, and to sharing models of higher education. A roadmap for the future of the Bologna process beyond 2020 would be prepared, and include a possible midterm celebration event for the 20th anniversary of the Bologna Declaration in 2019, if the budget allows.

8. Fundamental Values of the EHEA

On the basis of the background paper provided by Estonia for guiding discussions between ministers in Paris, the BFUG Co-chair (Estonia) proposed to look at the future of the EHEA (the period 2018-2020) and at what could be taken into consideration for the potential discussion of ministers.

BFUG members discussed how to focus on the questions that could be put forward for the panel discussion. The first question could be how to implement the shared responsibility for Fundamental Values and make them happen in practice. It was underlined that Fundamental Values had to be seen as

the prerequisite for democratic societies. How to deal with obvious violation of academic freedom, how to stimulate commitment to Fundamental Values, or how to support each other in respecting the values might be relevant approaches. The question on the responsibility of higher education institutions could be linked with how to create safe spaces for students. How to stimulate the participation of students and staff in governance of higher education was proposed as another aspect for consideration. Bringing in other factors such as the diversity of funding sources and its impact on Fundamental Values in practice, together with a non-European perspective, into the panel discussions was also suggested from the Council of Europe.

France supported the idea and explained that one of the panels could start with a definition of what is meant by values and be followed by a discussion about practical issues.

The BFUG Co-chair (Estonia) announced that proposals on how to develop the questions for the discussion will be taken into account.

9. Update on the Ministerial Conference 2018

The Bologna Secretariat gave an update on several logistic aspects of the organisation of the conference. The BFUG members were informed that invitations had been sent to EHEA ministers, consultative members and partners of the BFUG by e-mail; BFUG members received copies by e-mail. It was indicated that the BFUG delegates were asked to provide a first list of their national delegation (name, function and e-mail address) to the Bologna Secretariat by 12 January 2018, with details to be sent by e-mail. In February, the registration platform would be opened and on 12 February registrations would start. Hotels were being identified.

Official information about keynote speakers and ministers would be published on the conference website.

10. Information by the incoming Co-chairs

[Serbia](#) announced two upcoming meetings planned in Belgrade next January 2018: the Board meeting on 24 January, and a meeting of the Drafting Committee on 23 January. The Serbian representatives informed the BFUG members that if another Board meeting would be needed, it could take place on the 15th March. The Serbian delegates presented their country and its higher education system.

[Bulgaria](#) presented its own country with two videos and announced that the two BFUG meetings would be held in Sofia on 5-6 February and 24-25 April.

11. Invitation to all Bologna countries to participate in the next round (2018-2021) of EUROSTUDENT

EUROSTUDENT briefly [presented](#) the current EUROSTUDENT project on social and economic conditions of students and invited all BFUG member countries to take part in the next round starting in 2018. The invitation and other documents are available on the meeting's [website](#).

12. Update from the Consultative Members

EURASHE drew the attention of delegates to activities on research of universities of applied sciences, and announced its annual conference in Tallinn next April 2018, to be focused on "Partnerships for a digital future".

13. AOB

Austria presented a proposal for a thematic slot on Erasmus KA3 within the Vienna BFUG meeting, 26-27 September 2018. It was announced that countries would be invited to present KA3 projects for peer learning purposes.

Romania informed the BFUG that invitations had been distributed for the Bologna Process Researchers' Conference to be held in Bucharest on 27-29 November 2018, and that about 40 papers will be presented.

The Netherlands reported from a peer learning event, organised together with NUFFIC and with support from the Dutch QAA (NVAO), regarding the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes in The Hague, in October 2017. The report would be distributed by the Bologna Secretariat. This European approach could be mentioned in the draft Communiqué.

The BFUG Co-chair (Russia) thanked the participants and the host country, expressed her gratitude to the Bologna Secretariat and the teamwork with outgoing and incoming BFUG Co-chairs.

The BFUG Vice-chair thanked the BFUG Co-chairs, the Bologna Secretariat and the BFUG members, together with the hosting country for the quality of the organisation and the event itself.

The BFUG Co-chair (Estonia) referred to the work of the organising team, complimented participants on the good atmosphere, and closed the meeting.