



EHEA Tirana 2024

Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Pre-final draft [*as of 8 March 2024*]

Final Report

2021-2024

Contents

1. Executive summary	3
2. Introduction	5
3. Activities, findings, results	8
4. Conclusions and recommendations for the future	10
5. ToR 2021-2024	12
6. List of CG on GPD meetings and participants	14
7. Acronyms	22
8. Annex I Statement of the Bologna Global Policy Forum	23
9. Annex II Programme of the Global Policy Forum	26

pre-final draft March 8 2024

1. Executive summary

The Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG GPD) was first instituted by the Bologna Follow- Up Group (BFUG) at the Vienna meeting in fall 2018 on the basis of a [proposal](#) formulated by the BFUG Vice-Chair about how to follow the decisions and meet the **expectations expressed in the [Paris Ministerial Communiqué](#) and the [Statement](#) by the 2018 Paris Bologna Policy Forum**. It was proposed to create a small and agile ‘coordination’ group in order to work quickly, in view of the short time until the planned June 2020 Rome European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Ministerial Conference¹, and to further develop and put into practice the ideas proposed by the BFUG Advisory Group 1 on International Cooperation from the 2015-2018 work period. The Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue was **reconfirmed for the work period 2021-2024** to build on what had been accomplished, to explore **further cooperation with other world regions** and to **prepare the 2024 Tirana Global Policy Forum and Statement**.

The Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue is the result of the realisation by the EHEA Ministers and the BFUG that the higher education world, by the end of the 2010s, was changing: the Bologna Process was not the only such process where countries were working to bring their higher education systems into closer connection, to facilitate mobility, transparency, quality and trust. From 2009 Louvain-la-Neuve to the Paris Ministerial Conference in 2018, the ‘**Bologna Policy Fora**’, held in conjunction with the Bologna Ministerial Conferences, had provided regular platforms for discussion about possibilities of cooperation among ‘Bologna’ and other countries. The Fora were inspired originally not only by a desire to showcase Bologna achievement, but also by the interest of other countries for the Bologna experience, which was taken by many as a model.

On the basis of the work carried out by the BFUG Advisory Group 1 in the lead-up to the Paris Ministerial Conference in 2018, it was decided to change both the name and the substance of the EHEA’s attempts to build synergies and connection beyond its confines. The new orientation stressed dialogue, in which the EHEA is one of a number of interlocutors, in what it is hoped can become ‘global’ dialogue in view of the emerging challenges which require worldwide cooperation, from climate change to novel digital advances, to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (not only those regarding higher education). It stressed **dialogue, when possible, among higher education macro-regions**, rather than or not only with single countries and organisations.

The remit of the CG GPD is twofold: on the one hand to **organise the Global Policy Forum (GPF)**, including drafting the **Global Policy Statement**, and on the other hand to work to **strengthen the EHEA’s capacity for on-going dialogue with other higher education areas, countries and regional organizations (Global Policy Dialogue)**, attempting to overcome the intermittent character that has often characterised it until now.

The **composition of the CG GPD** in the work period 2021-2024 comprises 17 country members and six organisations. In order to accomplish its objectives, the CG GPD has held a number of meetings (in

¹ Postponed to 19 November 2020 and taking place in virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

physical, hybrid and online formats). It has formed **5 subgroups**, to focus on particular parts of its overall remit, while participating in and informing the entire group constantly.

These subgroups are:

- Two 'functional' subgroups:
 - The Global Policy Forum subgroup
 - The Global Policy Statement Drafting subgroup
- Three 'regional' subgroups:
 - The Africa subgroup
 - The Americas subgroup
 - The Asia subgroup

Other informal ad hoc groups have worked on specific issues.

The Global Policy Forum subgroup has successfully designed and proposed to the BFUG a plan for the Tirana Global Policy Forum, and how it can best interact with the EHEA Ministerial Conference. [**Work on the details of the plan is still in progress**]

The Global Policy Statement subgroup has created a number of drafts of the Tirana Global Policy Statement. These have been shared with the BFUG, with the CG GPD, and with international partners during joint meetings held with Asian and African participants. [**It is now in Draft 6, soon to be finalised and adopted by the Forum.**]

The regional subgroups have experimented with various modalities of interaction with their designated macro-areas. All of these proved valid, especially:

- Online 'Colloquia' or 'Conversations' with relevant actors in the HE world of the target regions
- Participation in events held in the target regions
- Joint CG GPD – macro-regional meetings on occasion of meetings in Europe funded by partner organisations
- Invitations to significant non-EHEA partners to speak at CG GPD meetings.

All events and activities are geared to 1) understanding better the approaches, needs and interests of countries and regions beyond the EHEA – to listening to their concerns, learning about their context and priorities, and exploring where appropriate areas for cooperation can be found, and 2) informing about the aims and activities of the EHEA, not only the plans for the Forum, but also about what the 'Bologna Process' represents today, exploring the multiple remits of the BFUG and its working structures.

A specific strand of activity has been gathering ideas and building interest in the Forum and consensus around the Statement as an expression of the interests and commitments of all the countries and macro-regions involved in the Global Policy Dialogue.

Recommendations:

At the end of the work period, the CG GPD sees that much progress has been made. Contacts with macro-regional organisations in all three of the targeted macro-areas have been extended and consolidated. Important exchanges of information have taken place and significant mutual learning

has been achieved. Bases for further interaction have been created. The CG GPD recommends that in the future 2024-2027 work period the CG GPD be asked to:

- Continue and strengthen its efforts to consolidate dialogue with appropriate countries and macro-regional organisations.
- Continue and strengthen its efforts to create contacts and links between the BFUG working structures and appropriate international dialogue partners.
- Organise a future Global Policy Forum in 2027.
- Prepare a future Global Policy Statement (to be presented and approved at the Global Policy Forum 2027).

The CG GPD also hopes that the future call by the European Commission for funding to support the BFUG working structures can be formulated in such a way as to permit inviting guests from and travelling to/contributing to events outside the EHEA.

[further recommendations are being discussed]

2. Introduction

a. Mandate and Aims

The overarching aim of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue is to develop regular 'dialogue' with 'other regions and international organisations' on matters of common concern and relevance for higher education with respect to which cooperation and sharing of ideas and policies can be beneficial. This was first mandated in the 2018 Paris Communiqué and then confirmed in the Rome Communiqué in 2020. Further indications, from the Paris Bologna Policy Forum Statement, pointed to the usefulness of developing 'interregional dialogue', proposing, promoting or participating in international and interregional events in order to participate in and promote Global Policy Dialogue. The CG GPD was supposed to plan, according to these parameters, the Global Policy Forum to be held in Rome, and the Statement to be adopted there.

Because there could be no Global Policy Forum in Rome, due to the pandemic, the Global Policy Statement prepared could not be approved. With regard to the continuation and expansion of the efforts of the CG GPD the text proposed was: "We commit to interregional dialogue and confirm the need to further strengthen and better structure our cooperation in the coming decade, taking our good existing progress to the policy level."

In the Rome Communiqué, the mandate is thus described: "***We recommit to international dialogue on higher education values, policies, and reforms, drawing on the experiences of the EHEA as well as those of other areas of the world, and ask the BFUG to further develop and strengthen Global Dialogue in the coming work period.***"

b. Objectives

The objectives of the group are broad. First, the group must build on what had already been accomplished in the past, by BFUG Advisory Group 1 in the preparation of the 2018 Paris Ministerial Conference, and by the CG GPD itself from 2018-2020.

After the Rome Ministerial Conference, it was responsible for continuing and strengthening the efforts to develop dialogue with other regions and organisations on matters relevant for Higher

Education. It was to devise ways of achieving more constant and meaningful “interregional dialogue” and to propose and promote the organisation of international and interregional events or, when appropriate, the designation of events already planned, as contributing to ‘Global Policy Dialogue (GPD)’.

The CG GPD was also charged with preparing and supporting the organisation of a successful ‘Global Policy Forum (GPF)’, to be held on the occasion of the 2024 Ministerial Conference in Tirana, laying the foundations for continuation in the post 2024 period.

c. Context

Ultimately the CG GPD’s mandate is linked to the references in the Paris Communiqué:

“We commit to developing the role of higher education in securing a sustainable future for our planet and our societies and to finding ways in which we, as EHEA Ministers, can contribute to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at global, European and national levels.”

“As a follow-up to the Bologna Policy Forum, we mandate the BFUG to enter into a global policy dialogue to improve regular cooperation with other regions and international organisations. This dialogue should focus on promoting mutual learning and joint initiatives on issues of common interest, such as social inclusion and the wider role of higher education.”

The CG GPD is also linked to references in the Bologna Policy Forum Statement adopted during the Paris meeting:

“We, the Ministers, commit to supporting this ongoing, successful inter-regional dialogue on issues of common concern amongst policy makers, stakeholder organisations, students, staff and higher education institutions. We propose the establishment of a Global Working Group in the next 2018 - 2020 Bologna work programme to take this agenda forward and we invite countries to express their interest to hold high level workshops on a yearly basis to continue the dialogue on social inclusion and the wider role of higher education.”

These texts formed the foundation for the CG’s work during the 2018-2020 period, which was both very brief and interrupted by the restrictions of the pandemic. The work, while it was cut short, was valuable, and formed the background for the continuation of the CG, as decided in Rome 2020. The inspiration for the CG GPD comes from the realisation that today the EHEA is not the only higher education macro-region to have attempted to coordinate its national systems more closely. It can now be seen as a component, albeit a large, well-established and well known one, as in the global higher education world. The idea of a ‘Coordination Group’ which seeks constant dialogue with other world regions signals a positive evolution, in which ‘Bologna’ is not the only model, or interlocutor, for countries wishing to cooperate to enhance the quality and relevance of their higher education systems.

The work of the CG GPD, as mandated by Paris and Rome, resonates with and can contribute to worldwide cooperation in order to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the UNESCO regional and global conventions, which have gained momentum with the entry into force of the latter.

Unfortunately, while a more closely cooperating higher education world is necessary for reaching shared goals, difficulties due to armed conflict and sometimes to internal political change introduce new obstacles. While we are convinced that global cooperation and particularly the facilitation of the

mobility of students and staff is an important key for building better understanding and preserving world peace, this ideal is far from achieved. The international context during this work period has not facilitated our task, but rather made ever more evident how necessary it is.

d. Methodology and organisation

The Coordination Group (CG on GPD) according to the plan prepared in 2018 was intended to be a small operational group, not a broad 'advisory group'. Already, however, in the 2018-2020 working period 16 members expressed interest in joining. In the present 2020-2024 working period, the official members have continued to be 15 (or 16, as the Flemish and French communities of Belgium are considered separately; in addition, Montenegro has recently asked to join, bringing the total number to 17). The various substructures have required and achieved the active participation of many individuals, to the extent that the current list of persons participating in the various activities of the CG GPD is 39.

The work period began with four Co-chairs: the two Co-chairs from the previous work period, Belgium Flemish Community represented by Magalie Soenen (2021-2023) replaced by Liesbeth Hens (2023-2024) and Italy, represented by Ann Katherine Isaacs, to which were added Albania, represented by Linda Pustina, Vice-chair of the BFUG and the European Commission, represented by Fiorella Perotto (until 2023).

To carry out its activities, a number of smaller groups formed. First there are the two so-called 'functional subgroups':

- **the subgroup on the Global Policy Forum**
- **the subgroup on the Global Policy Statement**

Then there are three 'regional subgroups', charged with developing dialogue with three main macro-regions:

- **the subgroup on Africa**
- **the subgroup on the Americas**
- **the subgroup on Asia.**

In addition to these, a small ad hoc group, known as the 'Friends of the Friends', explored the feasibility of developing some form of acknowledgement for countries who cannot become members of the EHEA, but which attempt to 'align with Bologna'.

The subgroup the Global Policy Forum was chaired by Linda Pustina (Albania) with the Netherlands, United Kingdom, France and EUA (Colucci).

The subgroup on the Global Policy Statement was chaired by Ann Katherine Isaacs (Italy), and the members were Holy See, Ireland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, European Commission and ETUCE

The subgroup on Africa was chaired by Fiorella Perotto (European Commission) until 2023 and by Elizabeth Colucci (EUA) in 2023-2024, and its members were Austria, Belgium French Community, France, Germany, Holy See, Romania, Netherlands, ENQA, EUA and UNESCO.

The subgroup on the Americas was chaired by Ann Katherine Isaacs (Italy), and participants were Austria, Holy See, Ireland, Malta, Netherlands, European Commission and UNESCO.

The subgroup on Asia was chaired by Magalie Soenen until 2023 and Liesbeth Hens (both Belgium Flemish Community) in 2023-2024. The members were France, Germany, Holy See, Romania, Netherlands, European Commission, EUA, ESU and UNESCO.

An informal 'Friends of the Friends' subgroup was chaired by Ann Katherine Isaacs (Italy), with the participation of the Holy See, Ireland, Netherlands, United Kingdom and EUA. This subgroup had the task of investigating whether it was advisable and possible to devise forms of acknowledgement of the efforts countries outside the EHEA that attempt to align their Higher education systems with the 'Bologna Process'.

The CG GPD has always underlined that the regional subgroups are not 'detached' from the CG GPD as a whole, but that they are delegated to take the initiative in conducting and strengthening dialogue with countries and organisations in their area of reference. De facto, they have also carried out such functions as formulating proposals of lists of countries and organisations from their region of reference to be invited to the Global Policy Forum, identifying possible occasions for joint meetings, and updating contact lists. Nonetheless, all CG members are invited to the activities proposed and organised by each subgroup. The 'functional' subgroups also shared their proposals with the rest of the CG when possible.

Minutes of the Coordination Group meetings and updates on its activities have been made available online by the BFUG Secretariat [on the EHEA website](#). The CG on GPD's Co-chairs have also regularly reported to the BFUG Board and the BFUG at each meeting, and their reports are publicly available from the eha.info website.

3. Activities, findings, results

In general, the remit of the Coordination Group is to promote more constant dialogue with other parts of the world (countries, macro-regions, organizations) on matters of common interest and concern relating to higher education, while gathering from and providing information and support to its dialogue partners, while leading up to and organising the Global Policy Forum.

To do this, the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue meets regularly. Its subgroups meet more often, according to their own schedule, but share their work and findings with the other Co-chairs and CG members.

In the first part of the work period, the regional subgroups took the lead in updating contact lists, reconnecting with the partners engaged in dialogue in the previous work period, and identifying possible ways of interacting directly. Because of the continuing pandemic, meetings were on-line. The Coordination Group as a whole met frequently and was informed about the ideas and plans of the subgroups. While the regular CG GPD meetings have been supported by the IN-GLOBAL Project and by the BFUG Secretariat, which has prepared the minutes (publicly available on the [eha.info website](http://eha.info)), the subgroups have organised their activities autonomously.

The CG GPD has been able, as the restrictions due to the pandemic were removed, to organise some in person events with the support of the IN-GLOBAL project.

The 'functional' subgroups, tasked with the organisation of the Global Policy Forum (GPF) in Tirana 2024 and the Drafting of the Global Policy Statement (GPS) to be shared with other world partners, modified appropriately, and hopefully agreed by the Forum, began their activities in the final two years of the working period. The Drafting subgroup met frequently in the spring of 2023, and prepared its first drafts of the Global Policy Statement by late spring; and continued to work on further drafts, gathering input from the CG itself and from consultations with global partners, throughout the year. It shared drafts with the BFUG in Madrid in November 2023, and the subsequent Board and BFUG meetings, gathering comments and suggestions, in order to arrive at the final draft.

The Forum subgroup has held some meetings in strategic phases of the organization of the Tirana Global Forum, inviting all Co-chairs to take part.

The 'regional' subgroups all mapped their areas, expanded and updated their contact lists with regard to the previous work period, and experimented with different modalities for establishing and strengthening dialogue.

The Africa subgroup decided to launch an event series for continuous dialogue with stakeholders from Africa and the Near East. This was deemed a strategic way to gain visibility for new developments in the EHEA, generate an understanding on higher education integration dynamics in Africa and the Near East, and also provide a value-add on existing dialogue processes and initiatives with the region. A review was done of priority topics, and sub-group members subsequently felt that it would be highly relevant to look at different angles of recognition, and its relationship to themes like mobility, life-long learning, upskilling and micro-credentials, and also quality assurance. While the series initially targeted Sub-Saharan Africa exclusively, it then opened-up to the Middle East/Near East, targeting specific stakeholder organisations in the invitation process². The so-called "EHEA – Africa Conversations on Recognition" were hosted on three occasions (two virtual and one hybrid), with each event dedicated to a key topic:

- Conversation 1 on Academic Recognition, titled "How do we do academic recognition? Instruments, tools and practices at regional and national level", on 12 December 2022 (online): Targeting policy makers.
- Conversation 2 on Recognition for Lifelong Learning, titled "Recognition for Lifelong Learning. Perspectives in the European Higher Education Area, Africa and the Near East", on 6 June 2023 (online): Targeting policy makers and representative HE associations and stakeholders.
- Conversation 3 on Recognition and Quality Assurance, titled "Recognition and quality assurance: Successes, challenges and perspectives for cooperation", hosted from 17 to 19 January 2024 in Barcelona (hybrid), in the context of a joint CG GPD and HAQAA3³ meeting: Targeting policy makers and representative HE associations and stakeholders.

The series of Conversations turned out to be very successful, with some [to be added] (Conversation 1), 120 (Conversation 2) and 105 participants (Conversation 3) participants, respectively, allowing the subgroup to gather substantial input from key stakeholders, repeatedly reflect on ideas and identify areas for future exploration and dialogue. It also allowed to showcase specific African developments regarding recognition and quality assurance, and debate implications for internal African higher

² The group decided it did not have the resources to form another sub-group specifically on the Middle East, but it felt it was important to engage Middle East countries in dialogue.

³ HAQAA (Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation) is an initiative funded by the EU Commission in partnership with the African Union, led by a consortium of OBREAL Global (Lead), the AAU, ENQA and the DAAD. The initiative is currently in its third phase, HAQAA3, covering the period of 2022-2027.

education harmonisation and Africa-EHEA collaboration. Each of the three Conversations has given rise to a publication ('articles')⁴, made available on the ehea.info and IN-GLOBAL websites.

In terms of the programming and organisation of the events, the European Commission DG EAC has taken the lead in the programme development and invitation process for the first two virtual events, while EUA and ENQA, with support of the coordination of the HAQAA initiative (OBREAL), has driven the organisation of the hybrid dialogue hosted in Barcelona in January 2024. IN-GLOBAL has supported the dissemination of the outcome 'articles' that were produced and also provided for interpretation into French and Portuguese (from English) for the second and third dialogues, as per the request of the subgroup and in the interest of facilitating participation of African Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone countries.

In terms of identifying stakeholders, an invitation list was compiled of key African stakeholder organisations and authorities, ranging from national quality assurance bodies, national qualifications authorities, ministries of education, national higher education councils, regional university networks, student bodies and associations and regional economic communities. By a direct invitation to this stakeholder list, the virtual events were promoted through dissemination channels of the subgroup members, such as those of UNESCO, but also the HAQAA initiative.

A member of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue has presented the European Higher Education Area, the Bologna Process, the CG on GPD and discussed with the participants the question how to strengthen collaboration in education and research with the EHEA and other regions through digital student data at the Groningen Declaration Network Annual Meeting on 16-19 October 2023 in Amman, Jordan.

For the third hybrid dialogue, 17 African stakeholders were funded to attend the meeting in person through the HAQAA initiative, which included regional continental organisations such as the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat and the UbuntuNet Alliance for Research and Education Networking. In terms of European attendance, members of the CG GPD as well as the Thematic Peer Groups on Recognition and Quality Assurance were all invited. 75 physical attendees in total participated with an additional 30 registering to attend online. The programme delved deeper into topics explored by the virtual Conversations and also offered a space to provide feedback on the GPF Statement. Of note was the focus placed on student involvement in recognition and quality assurance processes, and also on synergies between capacity building projects and initiatives (many EU funded) for stronger QA systems and harmonisation in African higher education.

Meetings:

⁴ As of March 2024, the third conversation is still under progress, its publication being planned for early May 2024.

The sub-group convened 15 virtual meetings between February 2022 and January 2024. These were dedicated to planning the Conversations series, assessing results, approving the resulting articles and providing further input for the 2024 GPF in terms of suggesting countries and stakeholders to be invited:

1. 21 February 2022
2. 22 March 2022
3. 13 June 2022
4. 9 September 2022
5. 14 October 2022
6. November 2022
7. December 2022
8. 9 February 2023
9. 20 March 2023
10. 19 April 2023
11. 24 May 2023
12. 7 July 2023
13. 19 September 2023
14. 6 November 2023
15. 11 December 2023

The **Americas subgroup** held a “Colloquium on ‘Strengthening Higher Education Dialogue in a Global Perspective’” on 5 December 2022, with HE authorities from MERCOSUR and the Andean Community countries, hosted by Uruguay as pro tempore president of MERCOSUR. It yielded very interesting results, and a second Colloquium was planned during the first semester of 2023, which was to be hosted by Argentina. In the event, the Secretary of Higher Education of Argentina was unable to organize a similar Colloquium during Argentina’s pro tempore presidency, although the subgroup Co-chair attended online an international event, organized by Argentina, involving speakers from Argentina, and she conducted follow-up interviews with some of the participants.

Members of the subgroup (Ireland, Italy and ENQA) organized and held an in presence session at the Annual Conference of the CHEA-CIQG Conference in Washington DC on 25 January 2023. The title was “Let’s Talk!” *Fostering Global Dialogue about Diversity in a Common Framework*”. This session also yielded a number of useful contacts and insights. For the 2024 CHEA Conference, the Americas subgroup Co-chair, with the Co-chair of the Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing, held a hybrid session titled “The role of Quality Assurance and Enhancement in the progress of the ‘Bologna Process’ and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)”, in Washington DC on 30 January 2024.

On occasion of the first Intergovernmental Conference of the States Parties to the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education , held in Paris on 3-5 July 2023, Katherine Isaacs (Italy) was able to organize a side meeting with the UNESCO representatives responsible for IESALC and for the regional convention, where mutual interest in transparency tools to make the conventions operable was explored, and plans were made for future collaboration. In May 2023, the subgroup Co-chair was invited to give a presentation at the EU-LAC summit, hosted

by the University of Santiago de Compostela, which saw the participation of the persons responsible for higher Education in numerous LAC countries. This led to useful contacts and interaction, and potential for organizing future dialogue.

A pilot event was a meeting organized between the Co-chair of the BFUG Social Dimension working group and the CEO of the US based Institute on Evidence Based Change. This, it is hoped, can show the usefulness of stimulating global contacts of the BFUG working structures, as further discussed below in connection with the Joint CG GPD/HAQAA conference.

Recognition in the European Higher Education Area, the Bologna Process and cooperation within the ENIC-NARIC Networks were presented at the First Regional Network of National Recognition Structures meeting and further dialogue was held at the Second Meeting of the Committee of the Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees that took place in Havana, Cuba, on 8-9 February 2024.

The Americas subgroup successfully submitted a [Policy Brief to the UNESCO WHEC22 Conference](#), held in Barcelona in May 2022 ‘Promoting Policy Dialogue among the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the other world higher education regions’.

The **Asia subgroup** has organized participation in:

- Conference of Central Asian Ministers of Education «Central Asian Higher Educational Area: regional cooperation, national reforms», 18 June 2022; 2 Co-chairs participated (K. Isaacs & L. Pustina),
- EU-SHARE conference on micro-credentials, 20-21 July 2022, Bangkok; 1 Co-chair and 2 group members joined (M. Soenen, EUA and Germany)
- Presentation of Global Policy Dialogue at the ISOM meeting in the ASEM Process, 24-25 November 2022, Malta
- ASEM Education Expert Group on Recognition and Balanced Mobility meeting, 13 February 2023, Online
- APAIE 2023 (Asia-Pacific Association for International Education) on 13-17 March 2023
- ASEM Education Ministers’ Meeting (ASEMME9) on 25-26 January 2024

It has also arranged for invited speakers to the CG meetings from the CAHEA (Central Asian Higher Education Area) and from ASEAN Secretariat (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

It was possible to organize an important in person [Joint meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue and participants invited by the Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#) “Higher Education Policies Working Towards the SDGs in Asia and the EHEA” in Rome on 27-29 September 2023. This meeting allowed both groups to engage in meaningful dialogue, as the CG GPD presented its Draft Statement, in preparation for the Tirana Global Policy Forum, and gathered input from the Asian representatives from Brunei, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines and SEAMEO RIHED.

The sessions chaired by ASEF focused on discussion of the ARC9 Study on Asia-Europe Higher Education Mapping: Working Towards the SDGs, in view of the recommendations to be made to the 9th ASEM Education Ministers’ Meeting (ASEMME9) held on 25-26 January 2024. The recommendations were added to the ASEMME9 Chair’s Conclusions and Stocktaking Report and the Chair’s Conclusions adopted by the ASEM Ministers at the ASEM Education Ministers’ Meeting

(ASEMME9) mention that “the initiatives taken to advance multilateral cooperation in education between the ASEM Education Process and the Bologna Process / European Higher Education Area, especially with the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue which organises the EHEA Global Policy Forum” are appreciated.

Further observations

The CG GPD considers that the modalities developed by the regional subgroups for engaging with other macro-regions are proving to be successful, and the subgroups are planning to utilize the solutions trialled by their colleagues.

In the IN-GLOBAL project, it was foreseen that there could be four ‘in presence’ events, one for each of the macro-regions: Africa, South America and Caribbean, Asia, and North Africa/Middle East. In practice, because of the funding rules, it has proved awkward and inappropriate to rely on such events, since only the EHEA participants could be funded. As a result, the on-line conversations and Colloquia and the Joint meetings, when these could support the participation of the non-EHEA participants, have taken the place of the ‘in-presence’ events.

The CG has realised the importance of organising ‘dialogue’ between the BFUG WGs and TFs, in cases where there is a common interest: for example, non-EHEA interlocutors interested particularly in ‘Inclusion’ or ‘Recognition’ could be asked/allowed to participate in the WG on the Social Dimension (a pilot meeting was carried out with the IEBC and the SD working group, or the TPG B of the BICG; the TGB B and C Co-chairs participated in the Joint CG GPD HAQAA event in Barcelona, also taking chairing roles). Such links prove useful and stimulating for both, our non-EHEA contacts and for the BFUG’s WGs. Establishing such links was not foreseen in the CG’s ToRs. But it now seems to be a logical and useful step to implement, in agreement, naturally, with the specific Working Groups.

4. Conclusions and recommendations for the future

Completing the work-plan, laying foundations for the future

The CG GPD, through its regional subgroups and their interactions, has been successful in building on the connections established during the previous work period, in consolidating existing links and building new ones. The subgroups have identified successful formulas for interacting with other macro-regions, and have created favourable conditions for developing these formulas and links in the coming work period. They have now become habitual interlocutors of a number of international organisations, and their ability to interact fully with all these partners is now limited only by lack of time and lack of funds.

In order to carry out its tasks, given the practical limits on what is possible, the regional subgroups have focused on:

- ‘Colloquia’ and ‘Conversations’: these are large-scale online meetings with significant higher education representatives from the target macro area.

- Participation in international HE events held outside the EHEA, presenting information about the EHEA, and engaging in discussion on topics of common interest. This has been online when necessary and in person when possible.

The entire CG GPD has participated in:

- Joint meetings of the CG GPD with macro-regional organisations that have organised and funded meetings of their members in the EHEA: this is the case of the Joint Meetings with ASEF and with HAQAA, carried out in 2023 and 2024.

Exponents of higher education macro-regional organisations have been invited to be key-note speakers in CG GPD meetings, and, thanks to the IN-GLOBAL Project it has been possible to conduct a consultation with HE stakeholders in countries not belonging to the EHEA, on their perceptions of Bologna and the EHEA, and the degree and sector of their interest, if any, in collaboration.

The ‘functional subgroup’ on drafting the Global Policy Statement has worked effectively, producing a series of drafts which take up suggestions and comments of CG members and non-EHEA stakeholders to produce what is hoped to be a coherent and effective whole, which identifies the reasons for global dialogue and key sectors in which it can usefully take place.

The ‘functional subgroup’ on the Tirana Global Policy Forum has produced and presented to the BFUG a proposal for the organisation of the sessions and how it can interact with the EHEA Ministerial Conference *[details still to be defined]*

Contribution of the IN-GLOBAL project

When the work period began, there were still many restrictions on travel due to the pandemic. This forced the CG GPD to rely on virtual meetings. Nonetheless, the work gained momentum and it was eventually possible to plan and hold in person meetings, which greatly facilitated the development and enrichment of the group’s common understanding of its potential and the sharing of the results obtained.

Although the early meetings were held on-line, from spring 2023 on most of them have been held in presence, with a limited hybrid option where necessary.

The IN-GLOBAL project has made it possible to fund these in person meetings, and also to carry out several activities which otherwise would have been impossible. These include the organisation, streaming and provision of simultaneous interpretation (English-French-Portuguese) of the Africa “Conversations”, vital for their success in involving key actors from the African Union countries and regional organisations.

It has allowed some travel to non-EHEA destinations to share information about the Bologna Process and the CG GPD’s hopes for more constant dialogue and more structured cooperation. It has also funded the large-scale consultation on knowledge about and perceptions of the Bologna Process and the EHEA in non-EHEA countries, as well as the study and presentation of the data. It has made possible the production of dissemination materials (handouts during information sessions and conferences; news on social medial; a filmed EHEA-ASEF interview, etc.)

The CG GPD is grateful to the coordinators of the IN-GLOBAL project for its support, and to the European Commission for funding it.

Recommendations for the future working period:

The CG GPD recommends that in the future 2024-2027 work period the CG GPD be asked to:

- Continue and strengthen its efforts to consolidate dialogue with appropriate countries and macro-regional organisations.
- Continue and strengthen its efforts to create contacts and links between the BFUG working structures and appropriate international dialogue partners.
- Organise a future Global Policy Forum in 2027.
- Prepare a future Global Policy Statement (to be presented and approved at the Global Policy Forum 2027).

The CG GPD also hopes that the future call by the European Commission for funding to support the BFUG working structures can be formulated in such a way as to permit inviting guests from and travelling to/contributing to events outside the EHEA.

[The CG GPD's recommendations are still being discussed]

5. ToR 2021-2024

Terms of Reference of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue 2021-2024

Name of the Coordination Group Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue
Contact persons / Co-chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Albania: Linda Pustina● Belgium Flemish Community: Magalie Soenen (2021-2023) and Liesbeth Hens (2023-2024)● European Commission: Fiorella Perotto (2021-2023)● Italy: Ann Katherine Isaacs
Composition Albania; Austria; Belgium Flemish Community; European Commission; France; Germany; Holy See; Ireland; Italy; Kazakhstan; Malta; Montenegro; The Netherlands; Romania; Spain; United Kingdom; EI - ETUCE; ENQA; ESU - European Students' Union; EUA – European University Association; UNESCO.

The Coordination Group can invite, when useful, relevant experts to collaborate in its work, from the EHEA or other parts of the world, and/or from international or global organisations (e.g. UNESCO regional experts, members of IAU, etc.)

Purpose and/or outcome

To foster dialogue and build trust between the EHEA and other countries and macro-regions through exchange of knowledge and cooperation, with the aim of addressing overarching issues more effectively, such as achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The coordination group is also tasked with the organisation of the 2024 Global Policy Forum and Statement, and where possible other appropriate events during the work period.

General objectives

- Reinforce ongoing dialogue at the global level;
- Achieve greater awareness of the various vital roles of HE in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and find paths for global collaboration to do so effectively;
- Propose how to enhance the EHEA's ability to foster, participate in and benefit from this dialogue.

Thematic objectives in the context of global cooperation

- Intensify focus on the societal role of higher education to foster effective inclusion of learners not only at the time of access to HE but also with respect to retention, success and employability;
- Promote inclusive mobility as one of the most important keys to global understanding and excellence in higher education;
- Promote further development and use in the practice of the transparency and quality tools necessary for advancing mobility and facilitating recognition;
- Create contacts and support reciprocal referencing of the several overarching Qualifications Frameworks and Qualifications Reference frameworks now functioning or being prepared in the EHEA and other macro-regions;
- Promote student-centred learning and understanding of credit systems or credit reference systems based on Learning Outcomes and student time;
- Develop dialogue about the challenges and opportunities offered by the shift towards digital learning environments, in part triggered by the pandemic;
- Ensure connection with the other BFUG Advisory, Working or Coordination Groups that address the above issues in the EHEA context.

<p>Specific Tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Suggest plans to the BFUG for the organisation of the Global Policy Forum to be held along with the Ministerial Conference to be hosted by Albania in 2024; ➤ Organise and implement events, meetings or other initiatives (including virtual events) to build awareness and dialogue with respect to the CG’s overarching aims, the general or/and thematic objectives; ➤ Explore ways of initiating or consolidating contacts with other countries, macro-regions and organisations in order to develop and strengthen dialogue.
<p>Reference to the Rome Communiqué</p> <p><i>“While the COVID-19 pandemic has made it impossible to hold the Global Policy Forum as intended, we are pleased that our Conference includes a global session. We recommit to international dialogue on higher education values, policies, and reforms, drawing on the experiences of the EHEA as well as those of other areas of the world, and ask the BFUG to further develop and strengthen Global Dialogue in the coming work period.”</i></p>
<p>Reporting</p> <p>Minutes of coordination group meetings and updates on activities will be made available online to the BFUG by the BFUG Secretariat. The BFUG Secretariat, at the request of the CG Chairs, may circulate relevant updates to the CG members. The BFUG shall also receive regular reports and updates from the group. To ensure good communication with the BFUG as a whole and for the necessary consultations, progress reports shall be submitted two weeks before each BFUG meeting.</p>
<p>Meeting schedule</p> <p>Meetings can be electronic or in presence, according to what will be possible and appropriate in the post COVID era. Smaller ad hoc groups or task forces may be delegated for specific tasks. The exact programming will be discussed by the Co-chairs and the members of the Coordination Group.</p>
<p>Liaison with other WG’s activities</p> <p>TBD</p>

6. List of CG on GPD meetings and participants

1. First Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Online, hosted by Belgium Flemish Community

Date: 7 June 2021

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Oltion Rrumbullaku
Austria	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish Community (Co-chair)	Magalie Soenen
EI – ETUCE	Hanna Tanskanen
ENQA	Maria Kelo
ESU	Martin Hammerbauer
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
EUA	Michael Gaebel
European Commission (Co-chair)	Fiorella Perotto
France	Helene Lagier
Germany	Tim Maschuw
Holy See	Melanie Rosenbaum
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Malta	Valerie Attard
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Netherlands	Marianne van Exel
Romania	Madalina Matei
Spain	Margarita de Lezcano-Mújica
UNESCO	Leticia Sakai
UNESCO	Peter Wells
United Kingdom	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat (Head)	Aida Myrto
BFUG Secretariat	Enida Bezhani
BFUG Secretariat	Kristina Metallari

2. Second Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Online

Date: 13 January 2022

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
Austria	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish Community (Co-chair)	Magalie Soenen
EI – ETUCE	Hanna Tanskanen
ESU	Martin Hammerbauer
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
European Commission (Co-chair)	Fiorella Perotto
France	Mathieu Musquin

Germany
Holy See
Ireland
Italy (Co-chair)
Malta
Netherlands
Romania
UNESCO
United Kingdom
BFUG Secretariat (Head)
BFUG Secretariat
BFUG Secretariat

Tim Maschuw
Melanie Rosenbaum
Orla Lynch
Ann Katherine Isaacs
Valerie Attard
Jenneke Lokhoff
Madalina Matei
Vanja Gutovic
Ella Ritchie
Oltion Rrumbullaku
Enis Fita
Patrik Bardhi

3. Third Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Online

Date: 1 June 2022

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meetings Minutes](#)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
Austria	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish community (Co-chair)	Magalie Soenen
Belgium French Community	Caroline Hollela
ENQA	Elena Cîrlan
EUA	Michael Gaebel
European Commission (Co-chair)	Fiorella Perotto
European Commission	Robin Clemence
Germany	Tim Maschuw
Holy See	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Kazakhstan	Rauza Mendaliyeva
Malta	Valerie Attard
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Romania	Madalina Matei
UNESCO	Vanja Gutovic
United Kingdom	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat	Kristina Metallari
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik Bardhi
BFUG Secretariat	Vahidije Kadiu

4. Fourth Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Online

Date: 24 October 2022

[Meeting Agenda](#)
[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
Austria	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish community (Co-chair)	Magalie Soenen
Belgium French Community	Caroline Hollela
Cyprus	Kyriacos Charalambous
EAC	Anna Cragt
EI – ETUCE	Hanna Tanskanen
ENQA	Elena Cîrlan
ESU	Tor Marni Weihe
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
European Commission (Co-chair)	Fiorella Perotto
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Tim Maschuw
Holy See	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy	Luca Lantero
Italy	Vera Lucke
Kazakhstan	Aitzhan Kulumzhanova
Kazakhstan	Indira Abilmazhinova
Malta	Valerie Attard
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Netherlands	Jenneke Lokhoff
Romania	Madalina Matei
UNESCO	Andreas Snildal
United Kingdom	Ella Ritchie
Vice Minister of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Guest)	Kuanysh Yergaliyev
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik Bardhi
BFUG Secretariat	Klodiana Thartori

5. Fifth Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Online

Date: 16 January 2023

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
ASEC (Guest speaker)	Roger Chao Jr.

Belgium Flemish community (Co-chair)	Magalie Soenen
Belgium French Community	Caroline Hollela
Cyprus	Kyriacos Charalambous
EAC	Anna Cragt
EI – ETUCE	Agnes Roman
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
European Commission (Co-chair)	Fiorella Perotto
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Tim Maschuw
Holy See	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy	Vera Lucke
Italy	Teresa Morales de la Fuente
Malta	Valerie Attard
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Spain	Manuela Luque Espadas
UNESCO	Andreas Snildal
United Kingdom	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat (Head)	Oltion Rrumbullaku
BFUG Secretariat	Edlira Subashi
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik Bardhi

6. Sixth Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Online

Date: 6 March 2023

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
Austria	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish community (Co-chair)	Magalie Soenen
Belgium Flemish community	Liesbeth Hens
Belgium French Community	Caroline Hollela
EI – ETUCE	Agnes Roman
ENQA	Elena Cîrlan
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
European Commission (Co-chair)	Fiorella Perotto
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Tim Maschuw
Holy See	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy	Vera Lucke

Italy	Teresa Morales de la Fuente
Malta	Valerie Attard
Netherlands	Jenneke Lokhoff
Romania	Madalina Matei
Spain	Manuela Luqie Espadas
United Kingdom	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat	Edlira Subashi
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik Bardhi

7. Seventh Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Rome, Italy and hybrid

Date: 26 May 2023

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants (online participants marked with *):

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
Belgium Flemish community (Co-chair)	Liesbeth Hens
Belgium French Community*	Caroline Hollela
Belgium French Community*	Adriana Gonfroid
Belgium French Community*	Justyna Nerkowska
Cyprus	Cleo Savvidou
EI – ETUCE*	Hanna Tanskanen
ENQA*	Anna Gover
EUA*	Elizabeth Colucci
EUA	Michael Gaebel
European Commission (Co-chair)*	Fiorella Perotto
European Commission*	El Moufid El Mehdi
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Tim Maschuw
Holy See*	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy	Vera Lucke
Italy	Teresa Morales de la Fuente
Malta	Valerie Attard
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Netherlands	Jenneke Lokhoff
Romania*	Madalina Matei
UNESCO*	Andreas Snildal
United Kingdom*	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat (Head)*	Edlira Subashi
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik Bardhi

8. Eighth Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Rome, Italy and hybrid

Date: 27 September 2023

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants (online participants marked with *):

Belgium Flemish Community (Co-chair)	Liesbeth Hens
Belgium French Community	Caroline Hollela
Belgium French Community	Adriana Gonfroid
EI – ETUCE*	Hanna Tanskanen
ESU	Andrej Pirjevec
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Stefanie Engert
Holy See*	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy	Vera Lucke
Italy	Teresa Morales de la Fuente
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Romania*	Madalina Matei
United Kingdom*	Ella Ritchie
IN-GLOBAL Expert*	Colin Tück
BFUG Secretariat	Patrik Bardhi

9. Ninth Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: The Hague, Netherlands and hybrid

Date: 30 November 2023

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes](#)

Meeting participants (online participants marked with *):

Albania (Co-chair)*	Linda Pustina
Austria*	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish Community (Co-chair)	Liesbeth Hens
Belgium French Community	Adriana Gonfroid
EI – ETUCE*	Hanna Tanskanen
ENQA	Anna Gover
European Commission	Bianca Busuioc
European Commission*	Adrian Veale
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Nils Tensi
Holy See*	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs

Italy	Vera Lucke
Italy*	Teresa Morales de la Fuente
Kazakhstan*	Asset Darimbek
Malta	Jon Vercellono
Montenegro	Dunja Bulajic
Netherlands	Jenneke Lokhoff
Romania	Madalina Matei
United Kingdom	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Edlira Subashi (online)

10. Tenth Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: Barcelona, Spain and hybrid

Date: 17 January 2024

[Meeting Agenda](#)

Meeting Minutes (link to be added when available)

Meeting participants (online participants marked with *):

Albania (Co-chair)*	Linda Pustina
Belgium French Community*	Caroline Hollela
Belgium French Community*	Adriana Gonfroid
EI – ETUCE*	Hanna Tanskanen
ENQA	Anna Gover
European Commission*	Bianca Busuioc
EUA	Elizabeth Colucci
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Nils Tensi
Holy See*	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy*	Vera Lucke
Italy	Teresa Morales de la Fuente
Kazakhstan	Rauza Mendaliyeva
Malta*	Jon Vercellono
Montenegro*	Dunja Bulajic
Netherlands	Jenneke Lokhoff
Romania	Madalina Matei
UNESCO	Vanja Gutović
United Kingdom*	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat	Edlira Adi Kahani
BFUG Secretariat	Enis Fita
BFUG Secretariat	Manjola Hasa

In addition, there have been numerous subgroup meetings to prepare the interregional activities, to formulate the Forum Statement, Programme and invitation lists.

11. Eleventh Meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

Place: online

Date: 1 March 2024

Meeting Agenda (link to be added when available)

Meeting Minutes (link to be added when available)

Meeting participants:

Albania (Co-chair)	Linda Pustina
Austria	Michael Roither
Belgium Flemish Community	Liesbeth Hens
Belgium French Community	Caroline Hollela
EI – ETUCE	Hanna Tanskanen
ENQA	Anna Gover
European Commission	Bianca Busuioc
EUA	Gohar Hovhannisyann
France	Mathieu Musquin
Germany	Nils Tensi
Holy See	Melanie Rosenbaum
Ireland	Orla Lynch
Italy (Co-chair)	Ann Katherine Isaacs
Italy	Vera Lucke
Italy	Emanuela Gitto
Italy	Elisa Petrucci
Montenegro	Milica Kavedzic
Netherlands	Jenneke Lokhoff
Romania	Madalina Matei
UNESCO	Vanja Gutović
United Kingdom*	Ella Ritchie
BFUG Secretariat	Blerina Caslli
BFUG Secretariat	Jora Vaso

12- Probable Twelfth meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue

To be added

7. Acronyms

AAU = Association of African Universities

ADEA = Association for the Development of Education in Africa

ASEAN = Association of Southeast Asian Nations

ASEF = Asia-Europe Foundation

ASEM = Asia-Europe Meeting

BFUG = Bologna Follow-Up Group

CAHEA = Central Asian Higher Education Area

CG = Coordination Group

CHEA = Council for Higher Education Accreditation

CRES+5 = Regional Conference on Higher Education

EAC = European Commission - Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

EC = European Commission

EHEA = European Higher Education Area

ENQA = European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

ESU = European Students' Union

ETUCE = European Trade Union Committee for Education

EU SHARE = European Union Support for Higher Education in the ASEAN Region

EUA = European University Association

EU-LAC = European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean Summit

GPD = Global Policy Dialogue

GPF = Global Policy Forum

GPS = Global Policy Statement

HAQAA = Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation

IAU = International Association of Universities

IESALC = UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean

LRC = Lisbon Recognition Convention

MCU = Magna Charta Universitatum

MERCOSUR = Southern (American) Common Market

SADC = Southern African Development Community

SDG = Sustainable Development Goals

SEAMEO RIHED = Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization - Regional Centre specialising in higher education and development

UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

8. Annex I Statement of the Bologna Global Policy Forum

[Tirana May 2024] *[what follows is Draft 6, which may be updated in the coming months]*

Draft Statement of the Global Policy Forum as of 8 March 2024

As Ministers responsible for higher education, heads of delegation, representatives of students, organisations and institutions participating in the EHEA Global Policy Forum, we reaffirm our conviction that higher education must expand its ability to address present and future challenges to global peace, development, wellbeing, and democracy.

In their 2020 Rome Communiqué, the EHEA Ministers for Higher Education committed to “developing a more innovative, inclusive and interconnected European Higher Education Area (EHEA)”. Higher Education is a foundation for inclusive, equitable and democratic societies. We all aspire to a world that recognizes that quality education for all is a basic human right and where, for all human beings, the global target to “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” becomes a reality, in line with the United Nation Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4).

In the lead up to the Forum, the EHEA Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue has exchanged information and views with partners in different world regions, on topics of common interest. Conversations, colloquia, seminars and conferences have provided multiple opportunities to share information about similarities and differences between our higher education systems, and to explore together the challenges we face.

We aim, through multilateral cooperation, to foster mobility, to strengthen respect for fundamental values of higher education (such as academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and student and staff participation in higher education governance)⁵, to improve the quality, relevance and inclusiveness of higher education; and to contribute to lasting peace. Our shared objectives, and the ever greater connectedness of our higher education institutions, provide a strong foundation for dialogue and inter-regional and global cooperation.

International mobility, of both students and staff, fosters intercultural and international understanding. Physical mobility remains a powerful tool, while innovative blended mobility experiences and virtual international learning environments are increasingly important, and open up new opportunities. We commit to working to align tools for mobility and recognition of foreign qualifications and learning periods abroad in ways that consolidate trust, and improve compatibility, cooperation and transparency between macro regions.

We aim to improve our institutions’ capacity to retain learners and equip them with the competences they will need for employment and for their personal and civic lives, including awareness of and commitment to the principles of sustainability. We also commit to supporting higher education institutions in deepening their engagement with their communities, stakeholders and the labour market.

Moving forward

⁵ Possible note referring to the definitions adopted in the Tirana Communiqué

We see positive potential for all our countries, institutions and organisations in continuing to work together to:

- Foster innovation in learning and teaching, including digitally supported learning and teaching, and opening up to new skills, including transversal skills, and ensuring their link to employability, while addressing the ongoing issues of unequal access and retention.
- Promote student-centred learning that takes place in a research-rich learning and teaching environment, and the implications of this for the flexibility of study programmes and lifelong learning pathways, including forms of non-formal and informal education.
- Further facilitate access to higher education by underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, including refugees and migrants, and strengthen the links between higher education and other systems such as VET to reach untapped talent.
- Further develop all forms of reciprocal mobility of people and knowledge, both in and across regions, as one of the most important keys to global understanding and to excellence in higher education, balancing incoming and outgoing mobility.
- Make learning credits comparable and transferable according to compatible standards and overarching frameworks, building transparency and understanding at global level, and providing secure and interoperable modes of digitalization of data on qualifications and learning achievement.
- Reach a common understanding of the ethical principles and values of international academic cooperation by sharing, on an equal footing, our experiences, practices and lessons learned on global issues such as equity, inclusion and access to quality education, effective quality assurance practices and principles, and attractive academic careers.
- Develop joint approaches to the handling of, adaptation to and, as much as possible, shaping of technological developments, most notably artificial intelligence and, along with this, deal with the challenge of disinformation.
- Promote the development of training and education in environmental and climate change.

We consider the entry into force of the UNESCO *Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education*, a landmark achievement, and call for its ratification. Building on pre-existing regional conventions, it is an important step towards reaching SDG 4. To benefit fully from this achievement, we commit to working towards a shared understanding and, where possible, comparability between national and regional qualifications frameworks, qualifications reference frameworks, and quality assurance systems and mechanisms developed in different world regions.

Continuing Dialogue

We take up our responsibilities towards our countries and peoples, in order to realise the potential of higher education to find shared solutions to the world's challenges. We want to support present and future generations in learning to think and act ethically, creatively and critically, enabling them to address and resolve the challenges of the future. Key to this is that higher education plays its pivotal role in the realization of all the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Increased cooperation within and among regions will strengthen our ability to elaborate and implement innovative and inclusive solutions, respecting the resource limitations of our planet.

We invite all participants of the EHEA Global Policy Forum to continue to promote global policy dialogue and to identify, region by region, the themes where synergies can be found between the EHEA and with global organizations such as UNESCO and OECD, and with intergovernmental

processes as well as with ongoing transnational projects regarding recognition, quality assurance and qualification frameworks.

We recognize that each region has its own priorities and see that such diversity enriches our dialogue. We are committed to continuing to build bridges between EHEA working structures and all parties interested in deepening dialogue on (but not limited to) the above mentioned topics.

The next EHEA Global Policy Forum will be held in 2027 in *[to be decided]*.

pre-final draft March 8 2024

pre-final draft March 8 2024