Bologna Process Implementation Report 2024:

on the road to Tirana…

BFUG meeting, 10 April 2024

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Final planning for report (reminder)

Last checking now closed

Final corrections being made

Paper copies will be sent to Tirana for Conference

Report will be launched online during the week of the Tirana Conference

Communiqué and BPIR findings: Key Data

- 11% increase in student numbers (2016 – 2021).

- COVID-19 pandemic led to increased higher education enrolment

- Public spending on tertiary education relative to GDP 1 % in 2020, down from 1.2 % in 2015.

- **Key point:** Policy challenges undertaken in a context of increasing student numbers and slightly decreasing public funding…

European Commission

Fundamental Values

- Definitions of academic freedom don't embrace all aspects outlined in the EHEA statement

- Analysis of values confirms interrelationship - infringement of one value may undermine all.

- Urgent need to adopt definitions for each fundamental value and further operationalise their protection and promotion.

Communiqué: We adopt the statements on the fundamental values…While each value is essential, all six of them need to implemented as a coherent whole…

European Commission

Key Commitments: 3 cycle degree structures:

Conformity with Bologna commitments, **but** significant differences between countries, eg

First cycle: 180 ECTS in 2/3 of countries; 240 ECTS in one-third; Second cycle: 120 ECTS most common, but variety of models

Integrated programmes: 0 - 10% in 2/3 of countries, 10 – 20% in most others, a few above 20%

Programmes outside the Bologna structure in 1/3 of systems (need further categorisation).

Short-cycle higher education far from being comparable

European Commission

Key Commitments: Recognition:

Lisbon Recognition Convention principles: increasing implementation (improvement in 8 countries since 2020 report)

Automatic Recognition advancing: 19 countries now operate system-level automatic recognition, compared to 10 in the 2020 report

Key Commitments: Quality Assurance

Progress: 33 systems now fully covered by EQAR registered agencies. 3 systems moved into this category since 2020 report, and 9 since the 2018 report…

Communiqué: we mandate the BFUG to initiate a discussion on the fitness-for-purpose of the key commitments and their possible further development, as well as of other commitments that we should consider key to ensuring the better functioning of the EHEA.

Social Dimension

- Variable degree of implementation on Principles and Guidelines: considerable progress to be made on lifelong learning, including RPL, & social inclusion policies

- there is a need for greater strategic commitment in almost all education systems to address the social dimension of higher education more holistically.

- **Communiqué:** we commit to fostering such flexible learning paths including by supporting both: academically focused and applied and professionally oriented programmes…

- On P&Gs, "more is needed to ensure adequate implementation"

European Commission

Learning and Teaching

Half of systems have an ongoing system-level strategy in place promoting learning and teaching

Other system-level policy measures to promote digitalisation of higher education, enhancement of higher education pedagogy

regulatory changes in some countries to boost learning and teaching innovation.

Student-centred learning - not always mentioned in national policy documents and rarely defined.

- **Communiqué:** Students need access to high-quality, learner-centred and innovative learning and teaching… We ask the BFUG to follow up on student centred learning

European Commission

Mobility and internationalisation

- Mobility impacted by pandemic, and progress was set back in 2020/21…

- Levels of mobility increase at each level – lowest in the short cycle and highest in second and third cycles

Communiqué: We will reinforce our efforts to identify and remove barriers and promote physical mobility, also in order to achieve the longstanding benchmark of 20% of mobile students.

European Commission

Support to Ukrainian higher education

- Most European systems (36) have developed large-scale support measures.

- The most widespread support is financial - grants to students and academic staff.

- Also language support, access to preparatory courses, plus guidance and counselling

- **Communiqué:** Particularly within our region, the unprovoked aggression in (sic) Ukraine has brought about the need for international support for Ukrainian higher education.

European Commission

Future monitoring: survey results

What were the « other » proposals?

- ESU: Monitoring a small set of key indicators for each theme - e.g. 1-2 'long term' (7-8 years) per topic plus 1-2 'short-term'. In combination, thematic report covering 1 or 2 themes in greater depth

- EUA: a continuous collection of data – or at least of some key data - in the normal rhythm of the Bologna Process, while publishing a comprehensive and thematic report in alternance.

Main pointers at this stage..

- BIPR is the main resource for data on EHEA policy developments, and so comprehensive data is needed..

- Data can/must be reduced

- Thematic reporting: only if in alternance (option 3) or combination with comprehensive reporting