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Ministry of Science, Innovation
and Higher Education



Doc. Code: BFUG_DK_AZ_29_3b

MEETING OF THE BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP
Copenhagen, 18-19 January 2012
Skt. Petri Hotel/ Krystalgade 22, DK-1172 Copenhagen

Draft outcome of proceedings

List of participants

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Andorra	Gallo Meritxell
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United Kingdom	Pamela Wilkinson
United Kingdom/Scotland	Alex Young

1. Information by the Chairs (Denmark & Azerbaijan)

Jens Peter Jacobsen, Director General of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education welcomed the participants. Jens Jacobsen thanked Poland and Armenia for their successful co-chairing of BFUG in the latter half of 2011 and briefly introduced the priorities of the Danish Presidency of the EU to the meeting participants, while stressing the importance of drafting a meaningful Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué.

Azad Akhundov, the Azeri BFUG Chair, welcomed the participants as well and introduced the priorities of Azerbaijan under the BFUG Chairship, underlining the achievements of the Bologna Process, but also the challenges ahead, as identified by the implementation report.

2. Adoption of the agenda

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_2a [draft agenda]
BFUG_DK_AZ_28_2b [draft annotated agenda]

The meeting agenda was adopted.

3. Minutes of the BFUG Board meeting, Copenhagen, 30 November 2011 and draft outcome of proceedings of the BFUG meeting, Krakow, 13-14 October 2011

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_3a [BFUG Board Copenhagen draft minutes]

The Cracow BFUG outcome of proceedings was adopted. The BFUG took note of the Copenhagen BFUG Board minutes, with some comments introduced in the meeting which will be taken into account for the final version to be adopted by the BFUG Board.

2009-2012 BFUG Work plan – reports of the BFUG WGs/networks

4.1 Social Dimension WG

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.1a [SD WG report and its annexes]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.1b [Proposal for a Social Dimension Observatory]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
1_SD WG.ppt

Rafael Bonete, the Spanish Co-Chair of the Social Dimension (SD) WG, introduced the draft report, with the main ideas below:

- from all sources consulted, the importance of allocating resources for social dimension emerged;
- the SD WG produced a collection of good practices, which is available online on the EHEA official Website;
- a lot needs to be done in the future on the topic of social dimension.

Brian Power, the Irish Co-Chair of the SD WG, introduced the proposal for a European Observatory for the Social Dimension of Higher Education, emphasising that:

- the Observatory would answer the political request of measuring the social dimension, as laid down in the Leuven Communiqué. Measuring the social dimension is not possible with the current data;
- Additionally, the Observatory will produce a catalogue of practices in SD that will support peer learning at national level;
- The project would be coordinated by the EUROSTUDENT team, overseen by a steering group, with a selected project manager;
- A pilot project could operate in 2012-2015 timeframe with financial assistance from the European Union. Later on, should the national reviews be considered sufficiently valuable to be supported by the countries requesting them, the project could be self-sustained financially.

Dominic Orr, on behalf of EUROSTUDENT, brought further clarifications:

- the project proposal will be submitted by 2 February under the EC Lifelong Programme "Multilateral projects". The four proposed consortium partners are the Institute for Advanced Studies (HIS - Austria), Higher Education Information System

(HIS - Germany), European Students' Union (ESU) and Institute for the Development of Education (Croatia);

- the observatory would allow closer cooperation with countries, in order to systematically collate and catalogue the developments in the field of SD at institutional level, in addition to statistical data collection.

In the discussions that followed, the main points in regard to the SD WG report are summarised below:

- the WG report has the merit of underlining the link between higher education and social dimension;
- the catalogue of good practices and peer learning activities are both good ideas and should be further explored and developed;
- the activity of the WG should continue after the ministerial meeting, with a focus on supporting the activities described in the observatory proposal and ensuring policy coordination for the achieving the EHEA social dimension goals.

On the topic of the SD Observatory, the main ideas expressed were:

- some countries declared hesitance on the proposal presented. Other countries questioned the added value of the proposal, in the context of the budget cuts;
- some members expressed support to the proposal, as it constitutes a mean to take a step forward the commitments to develop national targets and to evaluate SD strategies at the request of countries. The Observatory could strengthen and better emphasise the link between social dimension and other Bologna Process tools;
- alternatives were also put forward, such as countries setting up international evaluation committee for assessing their national SD strategies;
- other countries welcomed the initiative to monitor future developments in the field of SD, while putting forward questions on its short and long term financial sustainability;
- some members suggested that the initiative should be given a new name, as the term 'observatory' could imply a new structure or institution.

The WG Chairs clarified and concluded that:

- the SD Observatory is designed as a medium to long term process, not a structure, with the main aim of deepening the European knowledge on SD and of bringing credibility to the political commitments already made. The financial commitments in the future will be determined by its feasibility. A more suitable name could be found for this initiative;
- the three BFUG WGs on Social Dimension set up over the years encountered difficulties in their activity, due to the lack of concrete and comparable data, but the Observatory could address this challenge and the Bologna Process could make actual progress in the field of SD.

The BFUG Chair concluded that a clear statement about the importance of social dimension is necessary, but the BFUG does not support a new structure. Therefore, the SD WG is asked to reformulate the proposal on the SD Observatory, especially the issue of collecting data, so that a future initiative can be endorsed. A pilot project should be submitted within the 2 February deadline for European Union financial support. The revised report should be presented again in the March BFUG meeting.

4.2 Qualifications Frameworks WG and the Network of NQF correspondents

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.2 [QF WG draft report]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
2_QF WG.ppt

Sjur Bergan, the Chair of the Qualifications Frameworks (QF) WG, presented the main revisions of the WG report since the Cracow BFUG meeting:

- the aim was to clearly identify the main political recommendations to be included in the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué. This should also include the wording on learning outcomes;
- since the last meeting, the EU Directive for professional recognition has been adopted and ECTS is included as basis for recognition;
- the main conclusion of the report still stands: most countries are on their way to developing their national qualifications frameworks.

In the discussions that followed, the main ideas expressed were:

- some countries considered it may not be up to the BFUG to recommend that all countries should reference their NQF levels according to the same QF-EHEA levels. In response, it was argued the BFUG should have a position on the secondary school leaving qualifications, as it represents the entry level to HE and that without recommending the reference of the EHEA three cycles we risk to lose the comparability achieved by the set-up of NQFs;
- the Communiqué should emphasise that short-cycle qualifications are to be referenced to level 5 QF-EHEA;
- on the learning outcomes approach in the revision of the EU professional recognition Directive, the Communiqué should welcome the step taken forward - evaluation according to the number of ECTS – and ask the EU bodies to retain the reference to ECTS in the directive, while underlining that a future development in acknowledging the role of learning outcomes in professional recognition should still be made.

The QF WG Chair concluded on these two main issues. A different formulation, to connect the Directive with the ECTS at this point, could be elaborated by the WG. Also, since the leaving school qualification is very important, it should be made clear in the Communiqué that the Ministers commit to “EQF4 or **similar level**”.

The Chair concluded that BFUG endorsed the QF WG report, with the proposed two minor amendments: inserting language to support the EU efforts to include ECTS references in the EU Directive on professional recognition, while encouraging future references to learning outcomes, and emphasising the importance of referencing school leaving qualifications against QF-EHEA level 4.

4.3 International Openness WG and the Information and Promotion Network

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.3 [International Openness WG report, together with its annexes, including the IPN report]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
3_IO WG.ppt

The BFUG Secretariat, gave a brief overview of the main amendments to the International Openness (IO) WG report since its initial presentation in the Cracow BFUG meeting, on behalf of the IO WG Chair, Luminita Nicolescu:

- recommendations for the BFUG have been introduced: to address the progress on internationalisation according to the 2007 'EHEA in a global setting strategy' in the next reporting on the Bologna Process exercise, to encourage closer collaboration with the other BFUG WGs, to have a common approach in promoting the EHEA (taken from the IPN report), to make a decision on the future of IPN and the Bologna Policy Forum, based on the input from the National Contact Persons (NCPs);
- the current report also makes recommendations for the Ministers to focus on reinforcing their commitments from the 2007 "EHEA in a global setting" and to welcome the EAR Manual.

The BFUG noted the following:

- the revised report has taken into consideration the suggestions made in the Cracow BFUG meeting;
- additional discussions on how to take forward the cooperation with other parts of the world are required. It is important to encourage dialogue on various topics also at the regional level, looking at initiatives such as the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and the Diploma Supplement project with Latin American countries. It may prove useful to look at existing organisations' in various regions, such as the Caribbean ERASMUS (EURASHE project), with the EHEA consultative members facilitating such a dialogue. There should be a mix of worldwide and regional events;
- the IO WG should add the proposal for a regional approach, with a more thematic focus, to the recommendations in the report, possibly in connection with the upcoming EC strategy for HE internationalisation. The representative of the BFUG Secretariat explained that from the consultations with the NCPs on the worldwide approach vs. regional approach, a completely regional approach for the BPF did not

seem entirely welcomed. More discussions on this issue will follow in the next IO WG meeting;

- better means of taking the international openness dimension forward should be identified, by discussing this issue in the next IO WG meeting and formulating it appropriately in the 2012-2015 BFUG work plan;
- no objection was openly expressed to the IPN proposal for a project on EHEA promotion.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the IO WG should submit a final report in the March 2012 BFUG meeting, while incorporating the suggestions for additions to the recommendations made.

4.4 Reporting on the Bologna Process implementation WG

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.4 [Report on the Bologna Process implementation]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.4b [Executive Summary of the report on BP implementation]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
4_Reporting WG.ppt

Andrejs Rauhvargers, the Reporting WG Co-Chair introduced the report and the next steps in terms of generating the scorecards, while emphasising the following:

- the report has been jointly prepared by EUROSTAT, EUROSTUDENT and Eurydice, under the coordination of the Reporting WG;
- the Reporting WG Co-Chair clarified that for indicator 4 (Development of QA system), research evaluation is not included in the current report; indicator 6 (International participation in QA) will not include HEIs capacity to be evaluated by a foreign agency;
- the country national reports and the scorecard will be sent soon for verification of factual errors, with a one week deadline, followed by a final revision before sending the report to printing;
- the BFUG is encouraged to put forward suggestions for a more suitable title of the report, to better address the international public.

Following the introduction by the WG Co-Chair, some general remarks on the report were made:

- the report was perceived as well written and useful, even beyond the 2012 Ministerial Conference;
- one of the merits of the report is that it mentions uncomfortable issues, such as the problems with access to HE or the uneven usage of ECTS and learning outcomes. The wording of the Executive Summary could be rephrased so that the conclusions of the report are more motivational, but the facts should remain as they are of concern for ministers and the EHEA community;

- the usage of BA / MA terms should be clarified;
- the report should include the list of quality assurance agencies listed in the EQAR;
- the report should include the reference years for the collected data. The change in the methodology concerning the scorecard should also be made very clear, explaining that the present reporting exercise focused on the actual implementation of Bologna tools, not at establishing the specific legislative framework;
- research should also be included in the scope of quality assurance and thus within the corresponding scorecard indicator in the future data collection exercises;
- a proposal for the title was received, "Bologna Process implementation report (2010-2011)".

For the Executive Summary, the following ideas were put forward:

- the success of the Bologna Process might be underplayed, as it results from the present draft of the Executive Summary (especially with the use of the verb 'stalling'), therefore the text could be re-written to better underline the positive changes taking place in the last years, as well as the need for increased implementation;
- there should be a clear distinction between the achievements so far and the work ahead required, with a focus on new challenges: difficulties of the graduates to enter the labour market, the effects of the crisis etc.;
- a number of BFUG members emphasised that on page 3, the reference to EQAR needs to be amended according to the conclusions of the EQAR debates, as the question on the *raison d'être* of EQAR is deemed as too narrow. The WG Co-Chair agreed that the wording should be changed, but the question regarding the EQAR *raison d'être* should still be addressed to the ministers;
- in the first paragraph of page 4, it is unclear whether there is a problem with a lack of application or a lack of implementation. The Reporting WG Co-Chair replied that 'in place' means 'on paper' or 'in the law', as the main aim of this reporting exercise was to move towards implementation on the ground;
- in the last paragraph of page 4, the reference to unemployment of graduates should be clarified, as the figures on graduate employment are a basis for policy making. If HE degrees provide higher chances for employment along graduates' lives, this should be emphasised. The WG Co-Chair agreed with providing a better explanation on this paragraph.
- the relevance of the first cycle for the labour market and its impact on social progression should be further explored;
- social dimension should also be observed from the perspective of the implementation of the Bologna tools and benefit from a separate chapter in the Executive Summary, delivering a strong message on its importance;
- HE financing in the EHEA countries also impacts on issues such as mobility and this aspect should be underlined in the Executive Summary and the report;
- more information provided in the Executive Summary should be included in the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué.

David Crosier (Eurydice) underlined that the report is not ready yet and that it needs the BFUG members' input to check the accuracy of the information provided. The data should be thoroughly verified for factual errors. After integrating all the comments received, the finalised report will be presented to the BFUG at the end of February 2012, with one week deadline for final feedback. The report would hopefully be endorsed at the March 2012 BFUG meeting.

The Latvian WG Co-Chair, while thanking the Reporting WG members and the data collectors, concluded:

- indicators 4 and 6 will not include the discussed adjustments in the current reporting exercise, but efforts will be made to integrate them in the future report;
- it should be highlighted that the Bologna Process is moving forward, but that there are challenges ahead;
- specific questions should be addressed to the ministers, in order for them to understand the key issues uncovered by the implementation report and to provide a basis for the political discussions that should follow.

The BFUG Chair concluded the BFUG members should send factual corrections, if needed, by 23 January 2012. The QA scorecard indicator will not include the items which were debated, namely research and QAA usage. The report should conclude that implementation is undergoing but more needs to be done. The report should address key questions to the ministers so that a political response is provided for steering the next stages of the implementation. The word 'stalling' should not be used in the Executive Summary, as it might send a negative message and it will be immediately picked-up and over-simplified by the press. The overall report will be endorsed at the March 2012 BFUG meeting.

4.5 Transparency Tools WG

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.5 [Summary and recommendations of the Transparency Tools WG report]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
5_TT WG.ppt

Noël Vercruysse, Chair of the Transparency Tools (TT) WG, introduced the summary and main recommendations of the TT WG report, noting that the draft report itself would soon be available:

- the main topic for discussion in the WG was transparency within the EHEA;
- there is a link between diversity and transparency. Diversity can only be maintained if it is made more transparent;
- in the last few years, there have been international developments on this topic, such as the AHELO project, the U-Multirank, European Tertiary Education Register;

- the TT WG report is still work in progress, but its final version will be presented in the March BFUG meeting;
- the WG put forward a number of recommendations for the Ministerial Communiqué.

The discussions outlined the following:

- the report was welcomed but the difficulty of making pertinent comments on a document circulated very close to the BFUG meeting was also pointed out;
- diversity of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is a challenge, as it has to be not only understood, but also promoted. The issue of how students and other users deal with diversity should be explored more by the BFUG and it should be an item for further reflection;
- further use of the Bologna tools for transparency purposes is welcomed, the Executive Summary seems to focus too much on rankings and classifications. The tools should also be analysed in the broader context of quality;
- on paragraph 1 of page 3, the term “controversial” may be more suitable than “popular” when talking about rankings;
- some important questions emerge connected to rankings. It should be determined if they are reliable (measure adequately) and meaningful and how should the public authorities make use of both rankings and classifications. There is a positive development with the inclusion of other criteria such as teaching and the third mission of universities, which includes other functions of HEIs that are relevant for the region or the community, in major rankings. U-Multirank is also a step in the right direction, but this may not be yet enough for its usage in policy making;
- some BFUG members supported the recommendations for the Ministerial Communiqué, but with the proposal to replace the word “democratisation” with “user-friendliness”, since global rankings cannot be considered democratised, having elitist criteria and methodology. Other participants expressed their hesitation in inserting a specific reference rankings in the Communiqué;
- cooperation in the definition of indicators and methodology of data collection in other areas than research should be emphasised as essential to increase transparency of the EHEA;
- HEIs have understood the need for better transparency and accurate data and some volunteered for U-Multirank or similar projects;
- the report could spell out the concerns on rankings and classifications, as well as their negative effects.

Based on the discussions, the TT WG Chair underlined that:

- the main part of the report will focus on the transparency tools within the EHEA; there will also be a chapter on influential global rankings and references potential misuses of the rankings for transparency purposes. The meaningfulness and public use of rankings will also be included in the report;
- transparency should be used to promote diversity, while in turn diversity should be used to promote transparency;

- transparency tools should be used on evidence and on reliable, robust indicators;
- the conclusions about other transparency tools will include the need for more diversity and user-friendliness.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the report will be discussed with the aim of endorsement when available at the March BFUG meeting.

4.6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Network

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.6 [RPL network report]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
6_RPL.ppt

Alex Young gave a brief presentation of the RPL Network, underlining:

- the RPL Network is still at an early stage of development;
- a table of expertise was set up, so countries could explore opportunities to share and learn from the best practice through bilateral discussions;
- the BFUG should identify the best ways in which the Network could fit into the BFUG structures within the 2012-2015 work plan;
- more countries were invited to join the Network, in order to increase the exchange of good practices.

The following comments followed the presentation:

- it should be made clearer whether the RPL Network envisages a more systematic cooperation with the ENIC-NARIC network. This issue will be discussed in the next RPL meeting;
- in the context of ageing population and pressures for more HE attainment, RPL policies should start developing in areas where they do not really exist at present, such as Central and Eastern Europe. RPL seems to develop more in countries with lower percentages of secondary school leaving;
- a conference on RPL will be organised by EURASHE in September 2012, focusing on the relation between RPL and the world of work.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the RPL Network report is endorsed by the BFUG.

4.7 Network of Experts on Student Support in Europe (NESSIE)

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.7 [NESSIE report]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.
7_NESSIE.ppt

Brian Power, as former Co-Chair of the network underlined the additions made to the NESSIE report in the Addendum, following the comments received from the BFUG in the Cracow meeting. The Chair also underlined the future activities envisaged by the Network, under the co-chairing of Germany, Norway and Romania.

- there are two Websites that the Network uses to provide information: the Backoffice restricted area, providing numerous information and contact details, and the public EHEA official Website, where the same information is available but without the contact details;
- the Network will provide support and information to the specific BFUG structures on mobility and other topics;
- the Addendum re-emphasises the main purpose of the Network: promoting the portability of grants and loans in order to facilitate greater mobility of students;
- specific data on the quality assessment criteria of courses attended by students should be collected and disseminated.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the NESSIE report is endorsed by the BFUG.

4.8 Mobility WG

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_4.8 [Mobility WG report]

5. EHEA Mobility Strategy

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_5 [EHEA Mobility Strategy – Mobility for better learning]



BFUG_DK_AZ_28_EH
EA Mobility Strategy.

Point 4.8 and point 5 of the agenda were presented and discussed together.

Peter Greisler, the Mobility WG Chair introduced the report and the EHEA Mobility Strategy, while underlining the main changes based on the feedback received in the Cracow BFUG meeting and in accordance with the parallel EU discussions. Since the strategy is a political document, the technical items have been removed. In its Copenhagen meeting (30 November 2011), the BFUG Board agreed to advise the BFUG to decide that the EHEA Ministers will endorse the EHEA Mobility Strategy as an annex to the Ministerial Communiqué. As such, it should be endorsed by the BFUG, but left open for comments in the following weeks that could be included in a revised version, which should evolve along the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué.

Following the WG Chair presentation, the main ideas underlined were:

- the strategy was welcomed and considered timely in elaboration, as it will help better promote mobility, one of the key issues of the Bologna Process;

- most of the current formulations are much clearer for the ministers, emphasising the political nature of the document; however, the tone could be made even more political;
- the body of the strategy does not underline the purpose of mobility for better learning, which is the title of the document. Additionally, since mobility is related to knowledge production and employment, the strategy could link learning mobility with these two items;
- more emphasis should be placed on the quality of education, quality and balance of mobility, also at institutional level;
- more work on improving the data collection on mobility is needed, both in terms of content and means to achieve that;
- a clear definition of inward mobility is needed before the ministers are asked to make any commitment for the 5% target proposed by the EHEA Mobility. The strategy should also include a commitment to fund mobility to reach the 20% target;
- some countries announced that the EHEA Mobility Strategy will constitute the starting point for national internationalisation or mobility strategies;
- since recommendation 4¹ is connected to the non-EHEA collaboration, it could be moved to the BPF Statement;
- on recommendation 5, point (2)², an additional reference to the benefit for intercultural and linguistic skills could be added;
- on recommendation 5, point (3)³, it should be made clearer to whom it is addressed;
- on recommendation 8, the information on admission systems could be inserted in the country pages on the EHEA official Website. However, it should be also made clear that not all countries are moving towards implementing internet based admission;
- Some countries have expressed their intention to send written comments.

The Mobility WG Chair underlined the importance of a clear definition of the 5 % target, which should be understood as students coming exclusively from outside the EHEA, not also the inward mobile students from other EHEA countries.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the Mobility WG report is endorsed. The BFUG also endorsed the EHEA Mobility Strategy in principle, while keeping it open for discussion in order to take into consideration additional feedback that will be received. The document will also be on the agenda of the next BFUG meeting, so as to ensure that the final version of the document is aligned with an agreed final draft of the Bucharest Communiqué.

¹ "We encourage the member countries to strive for more and better balanced mobility of the EHEA with countries outside the EHEA", BFUG_DK_AZ_28_5_EHEA Mobility Strategy, page 2

² "To work with higher education institutions to increase the quality and relevance of mobility periods, ensuring that they contribute to high academic standards and to the employability of graduates and the excellence of academic staff", BFUG_DK_AZ_28_5_EHEA Mobility Strategy, page 3

³ "We request that the European Union secures adequate mobility funding with appropriate funding through its education programmes. Co-funding by national and regional sources is strongly encouraged", BFUG_DK_AZ_28_5_EHEA Mobility Strategy, page 3

6. Information on the Future of Higher Education – Bologna Process Researchers’ Conference (FOHE-BPRC) – provided by Romania and on the meeting between the BFUG Board and researchers’ networks – provided by the Flemish Community of Belgium

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_6a [Information on FOHE-BPRC]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_6b [BFUG Board – HE researchers meeting conclusions]

Romania informed the BFUG about the Future of Higher Education – Bologna Process Researchers’ Conference (FOHE-BPRC), pointing out the main ideas:

- FOHE-BPRC was the first event in the current BFUG workplan where the researchers were invited to present their perspective on the Bologna Process and to engage in dialogue with policy makers, providing input in the policy making process;
- the conference encouraged networking between researchers themselves;
- the participants emphasized that the Bologna Process should be regarded not solely as a structural process, at HE level, but also as an intellectual and cultural project bringing a new dimension to Europe. The BP promotes European values, which are essential in HE and beyond;
- amongst others, the researchers concluded that various Bologna tools require an integrated approach and a holistic or systemic perspective;
- new action lines could be considered in the future, such as governance, management and funding of HE, all addressed in a intertwined way. Knowledge transfer through trans-disciplinary projects or relevance of HE for regional development could also be explored;
- there were two major conclusions for FOHE-BPRC: considering the organization of similar meetings between HE researchers and policy makers every 2 years, prior to high-level political meetings and exploring how to “go beyond Bologna”, by adding new issues on the agenda, without affecting the implementation of the current action lines.

The Flemish Community of Belgium gave a brief presentation of the main outcomes of the Brussels meeting between HE researchers and the BFUG Board members:

- the idea of the meeting emerged in the Alden Biesen BFUG, when looking for additional working methods to strengthen the links between education and research;
- researchers are very interested in the Bologna Process and they can provide valuable input into the process;
- one of the issues frequently addressed in the Brussels meeting was the link between trust, quality assurance, recognition and transparency;
- the proposal to organise regular meetings of researchers was welcomed. The Flemish Community of Belgium will organise a meeting to follow-up on the discussions held in Brussels, most likely in November 2012 on the link between trust, quality assurance, recognition and transparency.

The BFUG Chair thanked Romania and the Flemish Community of Belgium for the presentations and the BFUG took note of the results coming from the two events.

7. 2012 Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué – Draft 2

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_7a [Centralised feedback to draft 1 of the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_7b [Draft 2 of the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué]

The BFUG Chair introduced the concept behind the Draft 2 of the Ministerial Communiqué, the main points and the work ahead, while emphasising the need to reach a balance between the political and content related issues.

The European Higher Education Area today

On the introductory section of the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué, the following comments and suggestions were put forward:

- some countries were in favour of a shorter and more concise Communiqué. A 2-3 pages of political document with a clear message, keeping all the current headings would be useful. This short version of the Communiqué should be accompanied by a supplementary document with the more technical proposals on how to implement measures at BFUG level, particularly since more clarifications are required on who is asked to do some tasks mentioned in the text;
- other countries considered the current structure as appropriate. The Communiqué is a commitment made by the ministers which needs to stimulate the process and it should reflect the needs of the next EHEA timeframe. Since there are numerous topics to be included in the document, it cannot be too short, as a press release. Draft 2 can be seen as a wise statement, since it adequately reflects the current situation, though it lacks the societal impacts. The Communiqué also focuses on systemic issues: incoherence of implementation, lack of coordination between main action lines, etc. The text clarifies some topics that required clarification.
- a preamble reaffirming the achievements of the Bologna Process, setting the limits, making a reference to the economic crisis and stating the reasons to invest in HE and in the Bologna Process should be introduced. This preamble should be followed by listing the priorities: SD, mobility, attractiveness of the EHEA and QFs to reinforce languages and partnerships in institutions. The last part of the Communiqué should point out to the means to achieve these goals;
- emphasis should be placed on ministers' belief in a better world, aiming to provide new skills for new jobs, with more mobile and employable students. The focus should be on 2-3 concrete priorities: mobility, employability and new skills.
- in the "EHEA today" section, the ministers need to also address the financial crisis, resulting in severe HEIs budget and salaries cuts. A sentence in this sense should be added, as the general public could see that the ministers are taking stock of the

current situation. It should be made clear that HE is part of the solution, not part of the problem;

- it should be clearly stated that the Bologna Process has been to a large extent an inter-governmental process, but now it has to become a reality for students and staff, by actual implementation on the ground. Achievements have taken place, but parts of the agenda still require implementation; in terms of language used, the EHEA will not become a reality for students unless they feel they actually study in the EHEA and not in a particular country. The phrasing should focus on that direction. The ministers should reassure on the proper and smart funding and support of HE;
- the introduction should focus on the major future objectives and not on the past achievements. Each of the four paragraphs could be made more pungent;
- in some lines, the language seems too negative, possibly giving the impression that nothing has been achieved so far. It should be emphasised that the Bologna Process changed the face of HE, putting it in a positive formulation, using punchier, shorter paragraphs;
- from HEIs' perspective, it is not clear how the current draft addresses their specific needs. The Communiqué should respond to the present concerns of the HEIs, such as cuts in HE budgets, salaries etc. Specific text mentioning institutional differentiation, incentives for staff and for HEI diversification and excellence in their mission should be included;
- the Bologna tools should be explained clearly and, if there is a different understanding of what they mean, maybe there should be no reference to them;
- it was acknowledged that drafting the Communiqué it is both a linguistic and a diplomatic challenge. The BFUG language style should be avoided and a native speaker should draft the final version of the Communiqué;
- specific rephrasing in different lines was suggested and written comments will follow.

Higher Education in a new economic reality

On this section of the document, the following ideas were expressed:

- the economic crisis is important, as it affects the society as a whole, but the text should portray the right balance between the economic function of HE and its other functions. HE should strengthen the ability of graduates to criticise and evaluate their actions and consequences. There is a need not only for well educated people, but also (self)critical and responsible graduates.
- one of the challenges of the present crisis will be access to HE, in countries where families substantially support HE access. The issue is not only employability, but also ensuring HE participation in a time of crisis;
- the "EC Communication on Modernisation of HE" underlines how important it is to recognize the impact of the economic crisis, which is not just economic. The important role of HE in solving the crisis is underplayed. It is extremely important to have graduates well prepared to enter the labour market, making them responsible

citizens and one paragraph may not be enough to underline this idea. The economic and societal role that HE can play should be fully recognised;

- the Communiqué is not about HE, but about the EHEA and there is no need to add something applicable to other areas of the world. The added value of the Bologna Process should be better emphasised in this section of the Communiqué, while offering solutions and credibility of the EHEA.

Improving access, attainment and employability

This section of the Communiqué received the following comments:

- although all the main issues seemed to be present in this section, there is very little to act upon. Many sentences do not have a tangible impact, by not giving guidance for policy making. The entire section could be improved, while making it more concise and shorter;
- social dimension is missing as a concrete term from this section; it was set as a goal in terms of access, but this is not its only component, graduating rates should also be analysed. More tangible formulations referring to scorecard indicators, support from the European level on SD, peer learning activities in the area of SD could be introduced. The EHEA could give guidance or examples of indicators/ targets that countries could take up, since there was little progress on national targets or national strategies on SD. The reference from the Report on BP implementation, stating that the way in which the funding systems are structured are likely to have a big importance on social dimension, should be included in the section. Based on earlier discussions, the reference to the SD observatory should be adapted;
- it was proposed to reintroduce the text “employability should create the right mix of skills for the labour market and societal needs, in order to overcome the current crisis”. A reference from the Bergen Communiqué, outlining the importance of guidance and counselling, could be also introduced. An operational definition of LLL already exists and it should be identified and used as such;
- it was called for more clarification and more concrete measures in this section. It could be stated that ministers will commit to adopting measures to reduce the impact of parental education and socio-economic conditions. Cooperation between the labour market and the academic sector could also be noted more clearly in this section. Employability is also about transversal skills, such as critical thinking and communication skills. The need for better data about participation in LLL and its further promotion could be emphasised, instead of just building an operational definition on LLL;
- The ministers should commit to providing incentives to help HEIs address the present challenges.

Strengthening mobility for better learning

In regard to this section of the Ministerial Communiqué, the following points were raised:

- in regard to LLL, this notion brings a change of paradigm, which includes prior learning, SCL and these are not yet used. There is no reference to the need to incentivise access to HE earlier on;
- on the balanced mobility sentence, a European dimension to the sentence should be added. On student financial support, a new sentence should be introduced, stating that '**No student should be excluded from mobility from the lack of funds**'.

Supporting comparable application and recognition of learning outcomes

On this section, the following were noted:

- the need for a different title of the section was suggested;
- a clear explanation on what the short cycle means need to be added, in order to avoid multiple interpretations. It was noted that the references to short-cycles being part of the first cycle were already underlined in the previous Communiqués. It was also underlined that by changing qualifications frameworks as envisaged, de facto a fourth cycle would be added and this may not be understood. To this affirmation, it was explained that QF-EHEA is not aimed at forcing countries to include the short-cycle;
- the formulation on the third cycle could be problematic, as universities are very keen to maintaining the independence on third cycle programmes and they might be afraid not to lose their autonomy on this issue. The diversity of the ERA is a strength, so the uniformisation of the third cycle should not be called upon. The transparency and comparability of doctoral schools should be enhanced;
- it was pointed out that the focus when talking about learning outcomes should be on their implementation;
- student-centred learning should be given more emphasis, as a more encompassing concept. SCL should come first and learning outcomes, along with other tools, should be used for this purpose.
- Although it is stated that implementation of learning outcomes are key until 2015, the work-plan does not include this aspect;
- although the need for a stronger link between HE and research is emphasised, there is no explicit mention on how this could be achieved;
- in regard to QA, it was recommended to include a reference to the franchised enterprises (diplomas) in this part, as it is currently missing. The importance of mentioning that franchised education should be quality assured by both the sending and receiving countries was emphasised;
- the quality assurance part should be either better linked with recognition or moved somewhere else in the document;
- it was suggested that the group redesigning the ESG could also look into quality assuring trans-national education;

- the EC asked for a small acknowledgement of the EC responsibility for the EQF, which could be also inserted as a footnote;
- the ministers should welcome the inclusion of reference to the ECTS in the EU professional recognition directives and also hope for a reference to learning outcomes.

Work ahead

The following comments were made:

- this section was seen as the most important part of the document, which must be built on the political priorities already identified. The delimitation between common challenges/ commitments and national action is welcomed, as it makes it readable for media, HEIs, etc. The interesting part for the public is how the Bologna Process is being implemented by governments in their national contexts. It should be emphasised that there is a general movement in the same direction at EHEA level, which will increase the value and credibility at national level;
- the section on governance and funding should be linked to the commitments. It is difficult to obtain results if there is reference to funding without any commitment. However, as in the EU context the ministers have already made commitments related to funding of higher education, a clear link should be established between the two elements. The reference to funding will be appreciated by the stakeholders;
- the good positioning of recognition was saluted and the '**Work ahead**' section should further mention that recognition will be taken into the ESG revision. The link between QA, recognition and learning outcomes was appreciated, but this connection should also be underlined in the "**Work ahead**" chapter;
- the E4 should be given a clear mandate to revise the ESG for the BFUG;
- it was proposed for the section '**Work ahead**' to be called '**Priorities**', while rewriting it in a more dynamic way;
- the creation of a more supportive environment for academic staff was mentioned. A future thematic session may be needed in the future to further discuss this issue, in order to come up with commonly agreed priorities and language in this regard;
- the importance of an explicit mentioning of another data collection/ implementation report was emphasised. The data collectors should be explicitly mentioned, as it was done in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué;
- the "**Work ahead**" section contains now a list of priorities, not a list of actions as they are mentioned in the body of the Communiqué. If it is designed as a list of priorities, it should be clearly asked for a new implementation report, more tangible actions for SD and employability (while proposing an action line that could be taken by governments). The Bologna Process should be translated into a tangible reality for the everyday student;
- it was pointed out that in this section, one of the key players is missing, namely the universities. These institutions may feel threatened that they are losing their uniqueness or there is the risk that rectors, when reading the text, might think it does not apply to universities. The word as such should be included explicitly. In

response to this proposal, it was noted that HEIs should be used instead of universities, for coherence reasons (as in the previous Communiqués, “university” was not mentioned as such);

- a better link between the previous sections with the “**Work ahead**” section was suggested. The national actions and the BFUG ones need to be better articulated.
- this section should be rephrased so that it contains not only proposals for the BFUG, but also specific proposals for HEIs. Institutional peer learning should be focused on various activities and should be placed as a first bullet point. The focus on HEIs is very important in this Communiqué and they should be given incentives to get even more involved in the implementation of the Bologna Process;
- there is no need to add new Bologna initiatives as such, but make sure the entire system moves ahead. A wider discussion on governance, management, funding and other issues is necessary, with a focus on how HEIs can become more involved;
- there is no reference to the future of the Information and Promotion Network (IPN), although it was specifically mentioned in the previous Communiqués. A BFUG decision in this sense is required.

On this point of the agenda, the BFUG Chair concluded:

- **There seemed to be a shared understanding amongst the BFUG members on the main ideas to be included in Draft 3 of the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué;**
- **A specific reference to the next implementation report will be introduced;**
- **The proposed formulation on the transparency section will be included;**
- **A reference to the funding commitment may prove useful, but attention will be required in phrasing this idea;**
- **It is important to have an exchange of views on the topic of governance and to put it on the agenda, as it is part of ensuring effective and efficient use of the financial resources;**
- **The BFUG has to decide on the matter of Information and Promotion Network in its next March meeting;**
- **In the “Work ahead” section, the role of HEIs should be addressed more clearly;**
- **The joint programmes issue is difficult for HEIs, as there are both a European system and national systems in place. Concrete solutions should be identified, as this would be a way to involve HEIs in European cooperation processes;**
- **The overarching political message should identify a compromise on the phrasing of the social dimension priorities ahead, which targets both investment and social support, while acknowledging that not all targets can be achieved at once. The Communiqué should be a carefully balanced text.**

8. Bucharest Bologna Policy Forum Statement – Draft 1

Document: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_8 [BPF Statement – Draft 1]

The Chair and the BFUG Secretariat introduced Draft 1 of the BPF Statement and the context in which it was drafted, outlining that:

- the document tries to summarise the topics in the four parallel sections, while emphasizing the overarching theme;
- the Bologna Policy Forum concept requires further clarification, also taking into account the NCPs feedback for the previous editions;
- concrete proposals to be included in the document are welcome and the BFUG members were encouraged to provide their input on both the event and the Statement.

The main ideas expressed after the introduction were:

- the IO WG report showed there was consensus to further cooperation on specific topics and specific regions, and this should be included in the Statement;
- for line 15, it was proposed to rephrase the formulation “to ensure and sustain”, as they have very similar meaning;
- it might prove useful to add a reference to the support to the process by the EU programmes. The EU will put together more cooperation with the South-Mediterranean region and will provide a short text on this;
- the proposal for the international conference on the role of qualifications frameworks, mentioned under future events, should be left out, as no definite confirmation has been received.

The BFUG Chair concluded that more guidance for redrafting the BPF Statement has been provided in the meeting. The deadline for comments on the BPF Statement is Friday, 27 January 2012.

9. BFUG thematic sessions

The EC and Denmark made a brief announcement about the EIT thematic session to be held back to back with the March 2012 BFUG meeting. The focus will be on the education mission of different innovation and knowledge alliances.

The BFUG took note of the presentation on the March BFUG thematic session, to be jointly organised by the EC and Denmark.

10. Selection of the 2015 EHEA Ministerial Conference host

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_10a [Application letter from Armenia]

BFUG_PL_AM_26_10b [Proposal for the selection procedure of the
2015 Ministerial Conference host]

BFUG_PL_AM_26_10c [Annex 1 - Procedure for the selection of the

2015 MC host country]
BFUG_PL_AM_26_10d [Annex 2 - Examples of voting situations]

An official message from the Armenian Minister responsible for Higher Education, Mr. Armen Ashotyan, was played for the BFUG.



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_2015 MC host.ppt

Gayane Harutyunyan also introduced the Armenian application to host the 2015 MC and the BFUG Secretariat, outlining:

- the proposed venue of the conference (Yerevan Conference complex);
- the language regime, with Armenia being ready to provide simultaneous translation and interpretation for up to six languages, namely English, French, German, Russian, Armenian, as well as Latvian and Kazakh (if requested by the BFUG Chairs at that time);
- efforts to simplify travelling to Armenia, with regard to visas and invitations, have been taken. Negotiations to eliminate visas for Schengen countries are currently underway;
- Armenia takes full responsibility for hosting the BFUG Secretariat until 2015, while aiming to preserve the same quality and standards as the previous countries hosting Bologna Secretariats, as well as maintaining its international and neutral character, under the exclusive authority of the BFUG Chairs and Vice-Chair.

The BFUG Chair thanked Armenia for the application to host the 2015 Ministerial Conference and BFUG Secretariat, while noting the following:

- the 2015 conference will further mark the role of education in building bridges, as the EHEA has done in the past 10 years through structural reforms and underlying the missions of HE;
- the European Commission will identify the best ways to support the BFUG Secretariat, as it has done in the past;
- a call was made to maintain the Bologna Process outside of other political discussions and to use this process as a way to help overcome obstacles between countries;
- it was pointed out that there might be issues with some ministers attending the 2015 conference due to the political context and it was underlined that the selections in the future should take into account this factor;
- since there was only one application for hosting the 2015 Ministerial Conference, there will be no formal voting on this issue.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the BFUG will advise the EHEA ministers to accept the Armenian application to host the 2015 Ministerial Conference and the BFUG Secretariat, according to the procedure for selection agreed in the Cracow BFUG meeting (October 2011). The Chair congratulated the Armenian representatives.

11. EHEA accession

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_11a [Belarus EHEA accession – elements for discussion and recommendations]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_11b [Application letter received from the Belarusian Minister responsible for higher education]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_11c [Belarus national report for EHEA accession]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_11d [Letter from the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_11e [Alternative report for EHEA accession]

The BFUG Chair outlined the process of receiving EHEA applications of accession and the fact that according to the procedure adopted by the BFUG, one application was received within the deadline, from the Republic of Belarus. An ad-hoc group has been assembled by the BFUG Board in order to provide a background paper with elements for discussion for the BFUG, with the following composition: Armenia (co-Chair of the BFUG autumn 2011), Denmark (co-Chair of the BFUG spring 2012), Luxembourg, ESU, EUA, with the Council of Europe and the European Commission acting in an advisory capacity and the BFUG Secretariat assisting.

The BFUG Chair pointed to the four questions asked in the background document:

1. Is the application from Belarus to accede to the EHEA politically admissible?
2. If yes, should further clarifications as to the content of the application be sought from the Belarusian authorities as suggested above?
3. How does the BFUG assess the application from Belarus based on the already received material?
4. Is the further timetable for assessing the application acceptable?

The main ideas expressed were:

- A number of countries stated that, following consultations with their Ministries of Foreign Affairs, they were not ready to accept Belarus as an EHEA member at present, as it was assessed that the country is currently not sufficiently committed to the EHEA values and reforms. Concerns over Belarus' commitment to the EHEA values of academic freedom and institutional autonomy were emphasised. It was noted that the possibility for Belarus' membership of the EHEA should be left open for the future, when the situation changes. Belarus should be encouraged to further develop reforms in its higher education system;
- one country expressed the opinion that the Belarus application contains evidence of the country's commitment to implement the Bologna reforms and that there are other EHEA members who are currently likewise not at full implementation stage;
- some countries noted that they were not at present able to express their opinion, as they required an official governmental answer first;

- one delegation suggested that an indicator of sufficient commitment to the EHEA principles would be the readmission of the expelled students in the Belarus universities, regardless of their views on the Belarus regime.

The BFUG Chair concluded that the BFUG would advise the EHEA ministers not to accept Belarus' application to join the EHEA, with an open message that accession would be possible in the future, provided that reforms are made in the direction of the EHEA objectives. The BFUG Co-Chairs, with assistance from the BFUG Secretariat, would reply to the Belarus authorities on these lines as soon as possible after the meeting.

12. Language regime for ministerial conferences

In regard to the language regime for the Ministerial Conferences, the following ideas were expressed:

- Romania announced that for the 2012 Ministerial Conference, simultaneous interpretation will be offered in English, French, German, Romanian, Russian, Spanish and Azeri (upon request from the Azeri authorities). Danish was not requested;
- referring to the excerpts from the minutes of the Copenhagen BFUG Board minutes, it was proposed that the language regime should be left to the host country to decide and it should be announced when an application to host an upcoming ministerial meeting is made. No pressure should be exerted on the country afterwards;
- the decision for the multi-lingual regime provided at the 2012 and 2015 events was welcomed;
- a formal procedural decision to amend the Stockholm regime was asked from the BFUG, based on a paper prepared for one of the upcoming BFUG meetings (possibly after the April 2012 Ministerial Conference).

The BFUG Chair concluded that the BFUG agreed a paper should be presented at one of the next BFUG meetings, formalising the proposal from the Copenhagen BFUG Board meeting, with the exact timing for its presentation being decided in the next BFUG Board meeting. The Bucharest and Yerevan Ministerial Conferences will follow the language regimes already announced by the host countries.

13. EQAR External evaluation follow-up

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_13a [EQAR external evaluation report]

BFUG_DK_AZ_28_13b [Proposals and recommendations to the EHEA ministers following the EQAR external evaluation⁴]

⁴ Circulated following the EQAR General Assembly on 17 January 2012



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_EQAR evaluation fol

The EQAR Director, Colin Tuck, introduced the proposals for follow-up and recommendations for the ministers following the EQAR External evaluation report, as endorsed by the EQAR General Assembly on 17 January 2012.

The main recommendations to the ministers put forward were:

- to welcome the external evaluation report;
- to take note of the strategic priorities and follow-up of recommendations;
- to commit to further recognizing EQAR-registered QA agencies that, within the framework of national requirements, should be able to undertake activities throughout the EHEA;
- to commit to recognize QA results and decisions of EQAR-registered agencies on joint and double degree programmes;
- to invite EQAR to report back to the next Ministerial Conference

In the discussions that followed, it was noted that not all countries agreed with the conclusions presented in the EQAR General Assembly, but there was full agreement on the recommendations for the ministers.

The BFUG took note of the information presented by EQAR.

14. Information on the preparations for the 2012 Bucharest Ministerial Conference and Third Bologna Policy Forum

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_14a [Update on the preparations for the 2012 Bucharest Ministerial Conference and Third Bologna Policy Forum]
BFUG_DK_AZ_28_14b [Annex 1_List of countries and organisations to be invited to the Third BPF]
BFUG_DK_AZ_28_14c [Annex 2 – Draft detailed programme of the 2012 Bucharest Ministerial Conference and Third Bologna Policy Forum]

Romania, as organizer of the 2012 Ministerial Conference and Third Bologna Policy Forum, briefly informed the BFUG on the following issues:

- the financial resources have been secured by the Romanian Government;
- the meeting venue is the Palace of the Parliament;
- local transportation and meals will be provided by the organisers;
- the official invitations will be sent out by the end of January 2012;
- the list of hotels will be provided by the end of February 2012;

- the envisaged size of the delegations is five persons and any exceptions should be announced in advance;
- a BFUG extraordinary meeting will be organised in the morning of 26 April, to clarify any last minute issues that may arise;
- a detailed version of the agenda is presented for information purposes and will be further developed;
- the list of countries and organisations to be invited to the Third BPF has been amended in line with the suggestions received in the Cracow BFUG.

After the presentation, the following ideas were underlined:

- the number of speakers in the beginning was previously deemed too large by some ministers. In response, Romania agreed to look again at the introductory session, together with the BFUG Chairs;
- Romania was asked to consider also inviting Kosovo to the BPF, not as another country, but as a separate entity under the United Nations Security Council resolution number 1244/1999. There will be further consultations on this issue;
- The criteria for dividing the EHEA ministers into the four parallel sessions of the Ministerial Conference could take into account linguistic preference, geographical balance, etc. The criteria will be further refined in the upcoming weeks, based on the discussions in the International Openness WG.

The BFUG took note of the presentation, while asking Romania to consider the suggestion made on the Kosovo issue.

15. Updates from the European Commission, BFUG consultative members and EQAR (written contributions only)

Documents: BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15a [CoE update]
 BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15b [EI update]
 BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15c [EC update]
 BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15d [ENQA update]
 BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15e [EQAR update]
 BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15f [EURASHE update]
 BFUG_DK_AZ_28_15g [UNESCO update]

The BFUG took note of the written contributions from the European Commission, BFUG consultative members and EQAR.

16. Next BFUG meeting, Copenhagen, 19-20 March 2012 and next BFUG Board meeting, Baku, 21 February 2012

The Azeri Co-Chair informed the participants about the BFUG Board meeting to take place in Baku on 21 February and asked the BFUG Board members to register before the 20 January deadline in order to facilitate the logistical preparations and the visa issuing process.

The Danish Co-Chair made a brief announcement about the venue of the Copenhagen BFUG meeting to take place on 19-20 March 2012.

The BFUG took note of the information provided by the hosts.

18. Any other business

a. Revision of ESG: timeline

Achim Hopbach, the ENQA President, outlined the main results of the Map-ESG seminar and briefly introduced the proposed roadmap of the ESG revision, under the E4 coordination. It was suggested that the committee which will be re-drafting of the ESG also includes Education International.

The Chair concluded that the BFUG took note of the paper provided by the E4. The issue of the ESG re-drafting committee will be taken up in the next BFUG meeting, under the Ministerial Communiqué discussion or as a separate agenda point.

b. EUROSTUDENT V – status-quo

Dominic Orr, EUROSTUDENT, introduced the status-quo of the EUROSTUDENT V initiative, informing the BFUG that the project will continue, thanks to the efforts of many EHEA countries and a kick-off meeting will take place in late May 2012.

c. Austria – Study-visit for challenges of mobility

Austria informed the BFUG that it applied to host a study-visit for challenges of mobility, scheduled for the last week of November 2012, for which 10-12 experts might apply. The BFUG members were invited to consult the study visit catalogue of the European Commission, which will be available for consultation in late February.

d. Bosnia and Herzegovina future events

Bosnia-Herzegovina announced that it plans to organize 2 conferences within its BFUG Co-Chairship in the second half of 2012, by the two ministries responsible for higher education:

- the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republik of Srpska expressed the readiness to be organizer of a conference in October 2012 on one of the two possible topics: "Doctoral studies - challenges and perspectives"/ "Strengthening of entrepreneurship at universities and linkages with business";

- the Ministry of Education and Science of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina plans to organize a conference in July/September 2012, on the topic of EHEA and synergy with European Research Area (ERA), with focus on mobility.

The exact dates will be announced at a later stage. All BFUG members are invited to contribute to these events.

Hungary proposed that after the Ministerial meeting the BFUG should design a short information material regarding the EHEA ("EHEA explained") to enhance the understanding on the process.

The Danish Co-Chair thanked the BFUG representatives for their participation and valuable input, contributing to a successful meeting.