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WORKING GROUP ON MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

Hosted by Norway, Second meeting, Online
9 November 2021
10:00-13:00 (Brussels Time)

Minutes

List of Participants

No.	Country	Name	Last Name
1	Austria	Helga	Posset
2	Cyprus	Cleo	Savvidou
3	EQAR	Melinda	Szabo
4	ESU - European Students' Union	Meral	Nur
5	EUA	Henriette	Stoeber
6	EUA	Michael	Gaebel
7	European Commission/ Eurydice	David	Crosier
8	EUROSTUDENT	Kristina	Hauschildt
9	France	Mathieu	Musquin
10	Germany	Marit	Metternich
11	Malta	Viktoriiia	Maltseva
12	The Netherlands	Robert	Wagenaar
13	Norway	Tone Flood	Strøm
14	Romania	Camelia	Mircea-Sturza
15	EACEA	Susanna	Zellini
16	BFUG Secretariat (Head)	Enida	Bezhani
17	BFUG Secretariat	Aida	Myrto
18	BFUG Secretariat	Patrik	Bardhi

Albania, Belarus, Czech Republic, EI-ETUCE, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malta, Moldova, Russia and United Kingdom did not participate.

1. Welcome by the Co-chairs of the WG

The Co-chairs welcomed everybody to the second meeting of the 2021-2024 work period. The agenda of the meeting was adopted without changes and the minutes of the first WG on Monitoring meeting were approved without additional remarks.

For more detailed information, please see [WG Monitoring SI AM 2 Draft Agenda](#)



2. Updates on related meetings: BFUG Board, BICG, Working Groups on Fundamental Values, Social Dimension

The Head of the BFUG Secretariat provided an update on the Secretariat's activities, with focus on the WG meetings and their respective tasks, action plans and development of subgroups. Ms. Bezhani highlighted key topics that were discussed during the last Board meeting and stated that Belarus' co-chairmanship will be reviewed in the upcoming BFUG meeting. Tone Flood Strøm (Co-chair) delivered a summary of her update at the Board meeting on the developments of the WG on Monitoring. Helga Posset presented an update of the BICG and the three TPGs, indicating that TPG B has already finalized the workplan. She mentioned that the next BICG meeting will be held on January and the TPGs ought to have finalized their respective Country Action Plans by then. Ms. Strøm (Co-chair), who is also the co-chair of the WG on Fundamental Values (FV), continued by describing the activities of the Fundamental Values WG. She stated that the group was tasked with developing a comprehensive framework to aid in the monitoring and implementation of the fundamental values of EHEA in the higher education systems of country members. She added that David Crosier (Co-chair) had informed the participants on the indicators for FV that were included in the previous implementation report. The essential takeaway from the debate was the importance of defining the remaining fundamental values while simultaneously developing new indicators. She suggested that they consider the Academic Freedom index (AFI) and the Autonomy Scoreboard as available tools in the development of indicators. The importance of good collaboration with professionals/experts was also underlined. It was decided that the WG on FV will have a hearing before its next meeting. David Crosier (Co-chair) provided a summary of the WG on Social Dimension highlighting the group's dynamic work manner aimed at achieving the adoption of the principles and guidelines for social dimension and the development of an effective monitoring framework. As a guest in the WG on SD meeting, Kristina Hauschildt (EUROSTUDENT) presented some examples on how indicators from the EUROSTUDENT project might be utilized to access the state of the project.

3. Structure of the 2024 Report

A draft background document of the 2024 report was presented, outlining the structure and specific items to be covered in all six report chapters. The group was asked to provide suggestions on the improvement of the report structure and whether the report could also have a more future-orientated focus, as it mainly focuses on past work and accomplishments. It was underlined that the chapters should be considered as separately readable and independent from one another. Nonetheless, in order for the report to be cohesive, there should be a link between them, and the report should be seen as one integrated and coherent report. The chapters should be able to be downloaded separately, but they need to be clearly structured as parts of a whole report. There should also be consistency with previous reports so that there is the possibility of keeping track when possible.

The WG members were all in all happy with the proposed structure of the report.

It was agreed that the executive summary ought to be included in the report due to its high relevance for policymakers. Further, it should comprise of a short outline on the state-of-play, progress and main conclusions in each chapter.



It was suggested that the Scorecard indicators could be included in a separate chapter. Presently, the scorecard indicators are planned to be within each respective chapter, topic-wise. It was discussed that having these indicators both in a separate chapter and within the other chapters would be repetitive, and that there might be a risk of downplaying the importance of some indicators over others if it is done in that way. There may be new scorecard indicators for this report in areas like the Key Commitments, the Social Dimension and Fundamental Values. As a result, all of the indicators that will be utilized in the report should be equally represented.

It was suggested to include an infographics package or a similar data visualization tool for indicators. This need not be part of the report, but can be downloadable and could include a small description that explicitly links to other indicators and/or relevant chapters that people can click on, if they want to read more. The co-chairs appreciated this request and suggested that it be revisited later, once a better understanding of the data has been obtained.

On another note, it was proposed to include all Key Commitments together in one chapter, unlike in the previous report. Nonetheless, it was acknowledged that this can result in a very long chapter. A comment was made on the topic *Outcomes of higher education and employability* included in the 'Learning and Teaching' chapter in the proposed structure, and that it might not fit there best. It was agreed that this would be looked at again at a later stage.

A remark was made that the report could be shorter and more concise, and more information ought to be made available online. For instance, the Scorecard indicators may be published online on the EHEA website, with explicit information about which year the data corresponds to and the progress made by each country. The Task Force on enhancing knowledge sharing was mentioned as being familiar with the report process and potentially being able to assist in getting information from the report published online. However, how much input the TF can supply is unknown.

The Head of the Secretariat informed that the Task Force on increasing synergies' among EHEA-EEA-ERA organized a meeting with the co-chairs of the BFUG working structures to get their feedback on providing effective recommendations to the BFUG. Ms. Bezhani underlined that interface with the co-chairs might be something to consider in this WG as well, either in the process of developing the structure or in the end when it is finalized to have some feedback by the co-chairs.

Another point, that was briefly mentioned in the initial discussion, was brought up again concerning the extent of the report structure being backward looking, and whether a more forward-looking focus could be included in the report. There are several existing innovative educational elements that have an impact on the future of education. Furthermore, many aspects of education are forward-looking, and this field could be investigated further. Regarding the forward-looking approach, it was emphasized that a reference on how this relates to the Rome communique should be established.

The co-chairs highlighted that the nature of this report is backward-looking and it focuses on achievements made. It has generally served as the basis for the discussions in the BFUG on what recommendations for follow-up to be made in the communiqués. Thus, they have to be sure that this is balanced out with the suggestion to have a future orientated report, to not



interfere with the work of the BFUG and the communiqués. Mr. Crosier (Co-chair) underlined that the basis of this report is to monitor the state of play of what has been achieved thus far. Essentially, the report will provide to the BFUG and the ministers the basis for discussion and decisions, and not suggest what those decisions need to be. He stated that there will be some future orientation included in the executive summary by highlighting key elements/areas where progress has not taken place in the way that they might have hoped. This way they will be implicitly providing a clear indication on the areas where more work is needed.

A point was made that all themes mentioned by the ministers in the communiqué ought to be considered, so that the report is up-to-date and comprehensive. Topics like internationalization and flexibility should be integrated into this report and indicators ought to be assigned for these topics. Despite the fact that these themes were presented as a result of Covid-19, they will continue to have an influence post-pandemic. It was debated whether these themes and their corresponding indicators could fit into the existing format.

Moreover, it was highlighted that, in the previous report, there was a chapter on *future developments*. A suggestion was made that they include this aspect again and incorporate elements from the impact of Covid-19, to show for instance, the transition to online courses and what is happening currently and how it affects education in general.

Ms. Strøm (Co-chair) presented the significant conclusions from the discussion, highlighting that the proposed structure is supported by the majority of members. She added that most of the remarks can be introduced into the current structure. The management of the size of some of the chapters, balancing the backward- and forward-looking orientation of the report, and deciding on how the previously mentioned indicators will be presented in the report were identified as the key comments to be incorporated within this structure.

4. Chapter by chapter discussion on the basis of draft structure background document

A discussion occurred on the chapters of the report, including suggestions for improvement, sources of data and any important issues to be presented. It was clarified that the introduction will serve to explain where the information was received and what it covers, as well as highlight new topics to be presented differently from previous reports.

- The first chapter focusing on Key Data was introduced as the basis of the report. A comment was made that this chapter is more of an introductory chapter and it may not need to be included as a separate chapter. To this, it was replied that there is an extensive amount of data, which, if included in the introduction, would make it too long. On a different note, it was suggested to include this key data information on the EHEA website, but also that a separate chapter on the key data is a good source of general information
- For the next chapter on Fundamental values, the indicators will be proposed by the WG on FV. It was discussed whether this area will be displayed as a separate chapter, or whether it will be included in an existing chapter/section.
- The chapter on the Key Commitments (KCs) was presented as an innovative way of combining information that was previously separated. It was mentioned that this would be a long chapter, due to the extensive number of indicators to be included, and that readability would be crucial, but at the same time that all of these could be seen as



fundamental issues for the functioning of the EHEA. Hence, it was suggested to have the indicators grouped and decide on a later stage which indicators to finally include for the three KCs. It was also debated if the indicators should be revised to reflect a more European perspective, as there may be opportunity for interpretation in their current state, and there was agreement that the group would come back to the updating of the current indicators. A dropdown menu was proposed as a way to make each topic easily accessible and the report more reader-friendly. It was brought up whether micro-credentials, which are included in the Learning and Teaching section, could be included in this chapter, as well as the links between higher education and research. Given that these issues are not defined as key commitments, it was decided that these should probably be included in other chapters. It was concluded that the WG agreed upon the main conceptual idea of the chapter, and that the group would discuss the details of the indicators at a later stage. The Social Dimension chapter will be based on new indicators which will be developed by the Social Dimension WG, taking into account the Principles and Guidelines to strengthen the Social Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA. But the need to include other sources such as Eurostat and EUROSTUDENT data was also stressed. The Eurograduate survey was referred to as well, but the fact that it does not cover the entire EHEA was mentioned as a challenge. The issue of employability was mentioned as a topic which can be covered in several chapters. A suggestion was made that mobility and especially mobility for disadvantaged students, which is now in Chapter 6, be moved to this chapter. However, before selecting where to add specific themes, it was concluded that the group would come back to this at a later stage, and that it would be better to wait for the implementation of P&G and how to best arrange them.

- The Learning and Teaching chapter will include particular indicators provided by the WG on L&T. The question was raised if the WG on L&T was on track with developing indicators. Furthermore, it was reported that some themes of the WG on L&T might not be referenced as recommendations of the Rome Communiqué (i.e., green skills and competences; interdisciplinary assessment; transversal skills).
- According to the final chapter on Internationalization and Mobility, the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue could provide feedback on some indicators. It was also mentioned that for the first time, data on the 2020 target on mobility will be published. The impact on mobility by the current pandemic crisis will have to be addressed, and it will be important to evaluate this information.

The EUA representative informed of a large-scale survey on the impact of Covid-19 that would be released by the IAU in January. EUA has prepared a chapter on the EHEA, with 189 HEIs participating. A report on an ad-hoc survey of national rectors will also be published by the EUA.

The Co-Chairs concluded that they would update the paper with the comments made before submitting to the BFUG, and consult the members on the new version.

5. Wrap up: next steps to prepare for the BFUG meeting

Mr. Crosier (Co-chair) mentioned that he will forward the paper to the BFUG as the first outcome of the WG's work. He emphasized the importance to focus some of the conversation on ensuring the understanding of the links with the working groups, notably the WG on Learning



and Teaching. The co-chairs concluded that next steps will include making some of the chapters more tangible by transitioning from topics to indicator proposals. They recommended that they begin by looking at existing scorecard indications or indicators that might need slight developments. It was advised that the group discuss where they stand in terms of indicators collected from other working groups at the next meeting. The group will also need to communicate with other WGs for relevant developments, to prepare for the next meeting discussions on indicator developments.

6. Next meeting and AoB

It was suggested to organize another meeting a month prior to the next BFUG meeting in April, 2022, to work on more concrete aspects of indicator development. The BFUG Secretariat will organize a Doodle, with possible dates to be suggested by the co-chairs. No other business was brought forward, thus, the second meeting of the WG on Monitoring was concluded.