

BFUGB8 Minutes
4 May 2005

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE BOLOGNA FOLLOW-UP GROUP BRUSSELS, 26 APRIL 2005

The meeting was held at Brussels National Airport starting at 10.00 hrs. and ending at 14.00 hrs. The list of participants is appended.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documents: BFUGB8 1a Draft agenda 19 April 05
 BFUGB8 1b Draft annotated agenda 19 April 05

Decision:

The agenda was adopted.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING

Document: BFUGB7 Draft Minutes of the BFUG Board meeting 11 April 05

Decision:

The minutes of the Board meeting on 11 April 2005 were adopted.

3. THE STOCKTAKING PROJECT

Document: Revised draft sent to the Working Group for comments.

A preliminary report was discussed at the BFUG meeting in Mondorf on 12-13 April. The BFUG mandated the Board to finalise the report to Ministers in Bergen. The Chair informed Board that a reassessment of national scorecards had been made and that the WG Chair had suggested to delete the overall scorecard from the report. The Board made it clear that national scorecards must be seen as progress charts, not as absolute measurements, and indicated that the methodology of the stocktaking project should be further improved for later use. Comparison between countries based on scorecards would therefore be of limited relevance. Still, as a draft overall scorecard had been circulated, scoring might be a topic in any case. The Board would recommend that the final version of the overall scorecard be included in the report, and that further comments on the coverage of quality assurance be incorporated. At the introduction of the Stocktaking Report in Bergen it would be important to allay any concerns Ministers might have about ranking. Due to the limited time available for the stocktaking project and the parallel Trends IV project, there would be no time for an in depth comparison of the two reports. For future projects, this should be kept in mind.

Regarding the outcome of the stocktaking project, the Board could see that the "Bologna" structures were mainly in place in participating countries. Trends IV reports on good progress in the implementation in higher education institutions, but also on the need for institutional autonomy and financial support to make "Bologna" a success.

The Board then discussed the draft recommendations incorporated in chapter 4 of the draft stocktaking report and decided as indicated below.

Decision:

The Board endorses the Stocktaking Report, asking the Working Group to see to the final adjustments in accordance with the comments of the Board and the inclusion of an overall scorecard in the report together with the appropriate explanation of the methodology.

Referring to the advise to Ministers already decided by the BFUG, the Board made some further recommendations based on the report from the Working Group:

- *Having regard to national competences, a process of formal engagement should be initiated with employer organisations at national level. The objective of such engagement should be to communicate the process of reform, combined with ensuring the employability of the bachelor graduate. This process of engagement should also take place at European level;*
- *A Working Group may be established to prepare a report on the issues associated with equitable access, and its conclusion should, if possible, recommend a series of benchmarks to measure action in this area;*
- *The BFUG should encourage bilateral and multilateral support mechanisms to assist participating countries in the implementation of the various action lines of the Bologna Process;*
- *The stocktaking process should continue to report on progress for each Ministerial Conference. The process should be resourced appropriately, and mandated to address the actions lines as approved by the BFUG.*

4. GENERAL REPORT “FROM BERLIN TO BERGEN”

Document: BFUGB8 4 Draft General Report “From Berlin to Bergen”

A preliminary report was discussed at the BFUG meeting in Mondorf on 12-13 April. The BFUG mandated the Board to finalise the report to Ministers in Bergen. A revised version dated 20.04.05 had been sent out with the documents for the meeting, a slightly revised version dated 25.04.05, also including an executive summary, had followed.

The Board asked for adjustments at some points, that BFUG considerations relating to the various projects should be in the form of advising Ministers, and that the executive summary be placed at the front of the report.

Decision:

The Board endorses the General Report, asking the Secretariat to see to the suggested changes in the text. The Chair will see the final version before printing.

5. THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA BEYOND 2010

Document: BFUGB8 5 The European Higher Education Area beyond 2010.

A draft discussion document for the Ministerial Conference was presented to the BFUG at its meeting in Mondorf on 12-13 April. As it was not clear at that time if the discussion relating to the governance of the EHEA would be a separate item on the agenda of the Ministerial Conference, no decision was taken by the BFUG regarding the discussion document.

The Chair asked that discussion on formulations would not be reopened, suggesting that the document be sent to the BFUG members as a background document for their briefing of Ministers for a discussion at the Bergen Conference on 2010 and beyond to be introduced by the host Minister.

Decision:

With some adjustments proposed at the Board meeting, the document will be sent to BFUG members for the possible use in a national preparation for the discussion at the Ministerial Conference concerning the EHEA beyond 2010.

6. NEW CONSULTATIVE MEMBERS: APPLICATION FROM ENQA

Documents: BFUGB8 6 New Consultative Members: Application from ENQA

In its meeting on 1-2 March, the BFUG decided on criteria for new consultative members and BFUG partners. The criteria was sent to interested parties and also posted at the Bologna-Bergen web site. The application from ENQA was received too late for processing before the BFUG meeting on 12-13 April, and the BFUG mandated the Board to decide on the application from ENQA.

Decision:

The BFUG advise the Ministerial Conference to grant ENQA consultative membership of the BFUG.

7. THE BERGEN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Document: BFUGB8 7 on the thematic parallel sessions at the conference

In parallel with the Ministers' discussion in the afternoon of 19 May, four thematic working groups will examine topics and issues of relevance to the Bologna Process. The outcome will be reported back to the plenary session the following morning.

The Vice Chair gave an oral presentation of the detailed timetable for the running of the conference, also including a possible signing of the Communiqué and asked for advice from the Board to the Conference Chairs.

The Board advised that Minister Clément contacted some of her colleagues regarding the possible signing of the Bergen Communiqué.

8. DATE AND PLACE FOR THE NEXT BOARD MEETINGS

The next Board meeting will be held on 18 May in Bergen, starting at 9.00 hrs.

The first meeting of the new Board will be held on 15 June 2005 in Luxembourg, starting at 9.00 hrs. and ending not later than 15.00 hrs. A preliminary booking of hotel rooms for the Board member will be organised for the night of 14 June.