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# Terms of Reference

# of

# the Working Group on the Implementation of Structural Reforms

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| **Name of the Working Group**  Working Group on the Implementation of Structural Reforms |
| **Contact persons (proposed Co-Chairs)**  TBD |
| **Composition of the Steering Committee**  TBD ([[1]](#footnote-1)[[2]](#footnote-2)[[3]](#footnote-3)) |
| **Composition of the WG**  TBD |
| **Purpose and/or outcome**  The Working Group on the Implementation of Structural Reforms is responsible for delivering on the commitment to provide support to member states for the implementation of agreed goals on a national and institutional level. It organises and coordinates events based on policy dialogue and exchange of good practice. The national and European stakeholders will be involved in the activities in order to encourage greater exchange and implementation on the ground. |
| **Working methods**  The WG is supported by a steering committee. It is mandated to organise various actions and events to provide support to member states for the implementation of agreed goals (e.g. peer learning, conference, seminar, etc). *The topics mentioned below do not lead to groups being set up for each topic, but are translated to activities that will foster exchange of good practice and peer review.* The activities will involve the main national and European stakeholders. |
| **Reference to the Yerevan Communiqué**   * **Implementing agreed structural reforms** is a prerequisite for the consolidation of the EHEA and, in the long run, for its success. A common degree structure and credit system, common quality assurance standards and guidelines, cooperation for mobility and joint programmes and degrees are the foundations of the EHEA. We will develop more effective policies for the recognition of credits gained abroad, of qualifications for academic and professional purposes, and of prior learning. Full and coherent implementation of agreed reforms at the national level requires shared ownership and commitment by policy makers and academic communities and stronger involvement of stakeholders. Non-implementation in some countries undermines the functioning and credibility of the whole EHEA. We need more precise measurement of performance as a basis for reporting from member countries. Through policy dialogue and exchange of good practice, we will provide targeted support to member countries experiencing difficulties in implementing the agreed goals and enable those who wish to go further to do so.” * to include short cycle qualifications in the overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), based on the Dublin descriptors for short cycle qualifications and quality assured according to the ESG, so as to make provision for the recognition of short cycle qualifications in their own systems, also where these do not comprise such qualifications; * to ensure that competence requirements for public employment allow for fair access to holders of first cycle degrees, and encourage employers to make appropriate use of all higher education qualifications, including those of the first cycle; * to ensure, in collaboration with institutions, reliable and meaningful information on graduates’ career patterns and progression in the labour market, which should be provided to institutional leaders, potential students, their parents and society at large; * to review national legislations with a view to fully complying with the Lisbon Recognition Convention, reporting to the Bologna Secretariat by the end of 2016, and asking the Convention Committee, in cooperation with the ENIC and NARIC Networks, to prepare an analysis of the reports by the end of 2017, taking due account of the monitoring of the Convention carried out by the Convention Committee; * to remove obstacles to the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of providing access to higher education programmes and facilitating the award of qualifications on the basis of prior learning, as well as encouraging higher education institutions to improve their capacity to recognize prior learning; * to promote staff mobility taking into account the guidelines from the Working group on mobility and internationalization; * to promote the portability of grants and loans taking into account the guidelines from the Working group on mobility and internationalization; * to make our higher education more socially inclusive by implementing the EHEA social dimension strategy; * to ensure that qualifications from other EHEA countries are automatically recognized at the same level as relevant domestic qualifications; * to enable our higher education institutions to use a suitable EQAR registered agency for their external quality assurance process, respecting the national arrangements for the decision making on QA outcomes. * The EHEA has a key role to play in addressing these challenges and maximizing these opportunities through European collaboration and exchange, by pursuing common goals and in dialogue with partners around the globe. * We ask the BFUG […] to involve higher education practitioners in its work programme […]. * […] we take this opportunity to underline the importance of all members and consultative members participating fully in the work of the BFUG and contributing to the EHEA work programme. |
| **Specific tasks**  The steering committee assisted by the BFUG secretariat   * gathers topics proposed by BFUG members and consultative members.   The Working Group, together with the steering committee,   * agree on which topics to pursue and what approach to take.   To prepare a coherent programme of events, the Working Group gives consideration to the references in the Yerevan Communiqué.  The steering committee   * Assists in the organization of events (at least one steering committee member per event), * Assists in the application for financial help, together with the BFUG secretariat (if applicable), * Coordinates and follows up on the events, * Ensures the involvement of national and European stakeholders in the organization of the event, the attendance of the events and /or active participation in drafting common policies, * takes stock and analyses feedback and results, * cooperates closely with other WG or board committee members to allow coherence and synergy and to avoid duplication of work.   The final reports and conclusions are prepared by the steering committee and discussed in the WG meetings. The WG reports back to the BFUG.  In addition, the WG is asked to include short cycle qualifications in the overarching framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), based on the Dublin descriptors for short cycle qualifications and quality assured according to the ESG, so as to make provision for the recognition of short cycle qualifications in their own systems, also where these do not comprise such qualifications. |
| **Topics :**   * Automatic recognition * QF * Recognition of prior learning * Student and staff mobility * Internationalisation and mobility * Social dimension strategy * QA * Bologna transparency tools * etc |
| **Reporting**  Minutes of working group meetings will be made available to the BFUG.  The steering committee, assisted by the WG, will present regular updates on each activity (such as seminar, conference, peer learning) to the BFUG.  In between meetings, updates should be circulated by the Bologna Secretariat via e-mail. The final report will be presented and discussed at the BFUG meeting at the latest in the second half of 2017. |
| **Meeting schedule:**  [meeting schedule is just tentative, will be decided by the working group at a later stage]  [working group meetings are organised by the steering committee]  In December at the latest – decision on the composition of the board committee  First WG meeting: December 2015 – WG meeting to discuss on feedback received from BFUG members and consultative members by the BFUG secretariat  Second WG meeting: February 2016 – Agreement by the WG on which topics to focus on and on which activity to be organised; Feedback to the organising BFUG members  March 2016-April 2017 – Regular meetings of the steering committee:   * To determine which steering committee member oversees which event or activity * To follow-up on events * To coordinate between events * To take stock and to analyse feedback and results * To prepare input and reports for the WG   Third WG meeting: April 2017 – Summing-up of events and finalizing reporting  Fourth WG meeting: September 2017 – Reflect on the concept and the framework  Fifth WG meeting: January 2018 (if necessary) |
| **Liaison with other WGs’ and/or board committees’ activities**   * WG on “Monitoring” *(one co-chair or member of the WG on “implementation of structural reforms” should also be member of the WG on “Monitoring” or vice-versa)* * Board committee on “Dealing with non-implementation”   *(two members (including one co-chair) of the WG on “implementation of structural reforms” should also be member of the board committee on “Dealing with non-implementation” or vice-versa)*   * Board committee on “Support for the Belarus roadmap”   *(one co-chair or member of the WG on “implementation of structural reforms” should also be member of the Board committee on “Support for the Belarus roadmap” or vice-versa)* |
| **Additional remarks**  These terms of reference may be reviewed in the light of progress of the work, in agreement with the BFUG. |

1. Liaison with the WG on “Monitoring” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Liaison with the Board committee on “Dealing with non-implementation” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Liaison with the Board committee on “Support for the Belarus roadmap” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)