



Ministry of Education and
Science of Georgia

Task Force on the Review of the Rules and Regulations for the Governance of the European Higher Education Area (TF RR)

7th Meeting, Online

6 September 2023

10:00 – 13:00 CET

[Meeting Minutes](#)

List of participants

Delegation/Organization	First Name	Last Name
Czech Republic (Co-Chair)	Michal	Karpíšek
BFUG International Expert	Colin	Tück
EUA (Co-Chair)	Michael	Gaebel
European Commission	Kinga	Szuly
Italy (Co-Chair)	Luca	Lantero
BFUG International Expert	Sjur	Bergan
Germany	Frank	Petrikowski
Romania	Irina	Geantă
BFUG Secretariat (Head)	Edlira	Subashi
BFUG Secretariat	Ana	Zhibaj

Albania (Vice-Chair) sent regrets.

Conclusions from the discussions in the meeting:

1. Agenda and Minutes of meeting for the past meetings (5th and 6th Meeting):

- The agenda was approved without changes.



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- MoMs from the 5th meeting were approved with a final revision, as follows (the strikethrough text was deleted): At the start of the meeting, the Secretariat told the TF that the CoE was invited by the BFUG Chairs to participate at the TF meeting as a result of a meeting that was held right before the Task Force meeting between the BFUG Chairs Troika and CoE representatives
- MoMs from the 6th meeting were approved without any revisions.

2. Rules of Procedures

- It was emphasized that the document should highlight that the EHEA budget would only be discussed if there is a Permanent Secretariat.
- It was also noted that the intention to include voting in the document is as a last resort, underscoring the importance of describing a crucial process should there be a worst-case scenario.
- From the feedback received previously, the two documents (Rules of Procedures and Permanent Secretariat) were merged, however the members of the Task Force are considering the possibility to ask the Board if separating the documents is a good approach that ensures a clear division of the purview of the BFUG and the Ministers.
- There were a few edits concerning language consistency, formatting, and proofreading.
- It was noted that the European Commission would provide comments as a Board member, and the members would integrate them and prepare the revised version for the BFUG.
- Next steps:
 - o Review of graphics and language editing.
 - o Minor restructuring, to strike the balance between what is the purview of the BFUG, or the Ministers.
 - o Deadline for Board deliverables: September 17th.

3. Permanent Secretariat

Preparation of the Document for the Board

- It was generally agreed that the current document was adequate for discussion with the Board, especially in understanding the intentions of the Board.
- It was noted that the emphasis should be on the different modalities for hosting the Secretariat, their considerations, advantages, and disadvantages. On the other hand, budget and staff estimations would be more general, and provide overall figures.
- The BFUG Board discussion would focus on setting up the criteria for hosting the Secretariat.



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Expressions of Interest, the Legal Format of the Permanent Secretariat, and Hosting vs Providing the Permanent Secretariat

- There were two expressions of interest from EQAR and the Council of Europe. Therefore, the modalities for hosting the Permanent Secretariat are as follows: an Independent NGO, integration of the Secretariat with the Council of Europe (CoE providing the Secretariat), and EQAR providing the Secretariat.
- The difference between providing and hosting the Secretariat was highlighted: in the case of the independent NGO, the Secretariat would be hosted by a country, but not dependent on its institutions. If the NGO is selected, then there would be another round launched for the call of expression of interest.
- Options: independent NGO, CoE, and EQAR. Depends on which mode the BFUG prefers. If the independent NGO is the best mode, then it's a second round for the call of expression of interest.
- The hosting country was not specified; however it was noted that there should be no legal restrictions on establishing an NGO, and recruiting international staff. The conversation on the hosting country could be decided after one of the options has been selected.
- There were no expressions of interest in hosting the upcoming Ministerial.
- However, the call for hosting the Permanent Secretariat should be discussed by the Board and is not the purview of the Task Force.
- It was agreed that the Task Force would prepare a list of questions for the CoE and EQAR to clarify certain issues in an informal call, ideally before the Board meeting and the latest before the BFUG.

Capacity and Funding

- At this stage, there should be a rough indication of the budget, instead of a more specific proposal.
- It should be visible that the members countries would need to contribute financially to the Secretariat.
- It should be noted that the different options have different financial commitments: if the Secretariat is connected to the CoE, there would be a contribution from the European Commission.
- Staff needs (i.e.: whether it should be less than 8 full-time hire equivalents) would be discussed at a later stage.

The Start Date, Duration and Call for Expression of Interest

- While the 2024 start date is a practical and political commitment, it might not be feasible, as country budget proposals for the upcoming year are already in the parliament for each EHEA



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members/country. There is not much certainty that the BFUG and the Ministers are ready to make the decision at the present moment.

- The Permanent Secretariat should function for a minimum of two work terms, and there should be evaluation systems in place, to monitor the effectiveness of the system.

Invitation

- BFUG with a much more concrete proposal.
 - o Half an hour discussion?
 - o Balance the level of detail: since there is already a step back in the budget.
 - o Criteria and three options, budgetary indications. SWOT ANALYSIS, pros and cons for each option at the beginning of the document. INDICATE WHO THE FORMAL EMPLOYEE IS (CoE, EQAR, new association, now it's the ministry).

4. Steps for finishing documents for BFUG Board in Tbilisi and BFUG in Madrid and next meetings

- The discussion for both the Board and the BFUG would be structured around key issues, maintaining the balance in the level of detail.
- The presentation would entail criteria for hosting the Secretariat, listing the three different modalities and their rough financial estimations.
- There should be a SWOT analysis for each option at the beginning of the document.
- The draft document should have a watermark to indicate its status.
- The Co-Chairs would prepare the list of questions for EQAR and CoE, finding a balance between crucial questions and more detailed questions. This would be an opportunity to invite EQAR and CoE for an informal conversation.
- The Secretariat reminded the members to keep in mind, regarding deliverable deadlines, that the next semester will be intensive, with a BFUG or a Board occurring every month.
- Next meeting would take place in 9th of October. After that, it would be a jour fixe meeting occurring every second Monday, in the late afternoon.
- The BFUG Secretariat would share a list of questions regarding hosting specifics to CoE and EQAR, after the Co-Chairs would draft them.



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