

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY GROUP ON THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

Introduction

The Social Dimension Advisory Group (SD AG) is co-chaired by Ninoslav R. Schmidt (Croatia) and Robert Napier (the European Students' Union – ESU). 17 other members and stakeholders are part of this advisory group, and these are: Austria, Belgium Flemish Community, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, EI/ETUCE, EUA, European Commission, EUROSTUDENT, Germany, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Sweden, United Kingdom and United Kingdom (Scotland).

Advisory group meetings

The Advisory Group met for the first time in Zagreb on the 19th of February 2019 at the Ministry of Science and Education. 13 representatives were present for the meeting together with the co-chairs and the members of the secretariat. At the time of the meeting, Luxembourg participated in an advisory role, and a few countries could not attend due to various reasons. The UK also participated for part of the meeting via Skype.

The first meeting saw a discussion on the terms of reference and what is intended to be achieved by the end of this working period. The Group was also informed about Luxembourg and Sweden asking to join, and the procedure for the online consultation was explained. A roundtable discussion followed on the current state of play of the social dimension, with emphasis being put on the commitments made on the topic within the BFUG, and an analysis of how many of these were actually implemented. A discussion was also had to analyse national experiences and perspectives, to report on concrete examples of implementation and to identify possible obstacles to implementation.

The most productive part of the meeting was definitely the workshops. During the workshop **the vision for the Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension** that the group should deliver by the next Ministerial Conference was discussed. Following this, **a SWOT analysis was carried out**, to make sure that a realistic picture is being taken for the way forward. There was a tacit agreement that the PAGs should be short and concise, to be able to actually implement a concrete change post 2020.

As part of the work of the Workshops, **a clear Workplan 2019-2020 with timeline** for the upcoming meetings of this group was also set out. The request of the Board to deliver a first draft for feedback as soon as possible and in a timely manner was also taken into consideration. It was also agreed that the work of the AG would take into consideration reports done by

previous groups that have dealt with the topic, in order to ensure not to duplicate work and to work constructively- taking into consideration things that have and have not worked in the past. The detailed timeline for the upcoming meetings is clearly laid out in the minutes of this first meeting. The restricted area for members has also been set up, and the co-chairs have made sure to update it accordingly, with both useful literature as well as drafts that have been prepared.

At the time of writing this report, **the second meeting of the AG** has not taken place yet, but **will be taking place in Brussels on the 29th of March**. Amongst the topics of the agenda, the Group will be discussing the briefs that have been prepared for the next meeting and the proposals for the structure of the future document Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension (PAG) that have been sent in by the members. The aim is also to discuss the composition of the Drafting Committee that will work concretely on drafting the PAG as well as discuss the PLA that should form part of the work of this AG.

More details on the work of this AG is available at <http://www.ehea.info/page-Advisory-Group-1>. The minutes of the first meeting in Zagreb contain the AG's Workplan and the vision of the future document Principles and Guidelines for Social Dimension – more information available at http://www.ehea.info/Upload/AG1_SD_1_Minutes.pdf.