



MINISTRY  
OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE  
OF UKRAINE

## 1 **Draft 2 the Ministerial Communiqué, Rome 2020 (in preparation for Kyiv** 2 **BFUG meeting)**

### 4 **Introduction**

5 We, the Ministers responsible for higher education, meeting in Rome on 24-25 June 2020,  
6 celebrate the achievements of the past 21 years, since the signing of the Bologna Declaration. We  
7 reaffirm our commitment to developing a stronger, more connected and resilient European Higher  
8 Education Area (EHEA).

9 As a unique cooperation structure where member countries and higher education stakeholders  
10 work together to define and achieve shared goals, the EHEA has a vital role. Our higher education  
11 systems, thanks to the diversity of our cultures, languages and environments, and to our  
12 dedication to quality, transparency and mobility, offer unequaled opportunities to Europe and the  
13 world for learning and research.

14 Profound changes are taking place in our societies and polities, including those due to rapid  
15 scientific and technological developments, climate and demographical change. We face the  
16 questioning of democratic values and multiple threats to global peace and wellbeing.

17 We look, nonetheless, with determination and optimism towards 2030, confident that we will  
18 succeed in fostering ever more effective cooperation and dialogue among our countries, among  
19 our higher education systems and institutions, and with the broader higher education world in  
20 order to address the challenges ahead.

21 *[if approved: Based on our agreed criteria, we are pleased to welcome San Marino as a new*  
22 *member of the EHEA.]*

### 23 **Our Vision**

24 We envision the EHEA as a space where students, staff, higher education graduates can move,  
25 study, and work freely. We renew our commitment to achieving this vision. We recognize that to  
26 do so will require enacting policies and measures both within our own competence as Ministers  
27 and within the broader competence of our governments. In our vision, the EHEA will fully  
28 implement the agreed structural reforms, respect the fundamental values of higher education,  
29 encourage critical thinking and integrate the possibilities offered by technological developments in  
30 teaching and learning. It will ensure that our education systems offer all learners opportunities in  
31 accordance with their potential and aspirations.

32 We commit to achieving this vision by 2030, building a connected, inclusive and innovative EHEA  
33 to underpin a sustainable, cohesive and peaceful Europe:

- 34 - **Connected**, because our overarching frameworks and Bologna transparency tools will  
35 continue to facilitate and enhance increasingly intense and fruitful cooperation, including  
36 mobility of students and teachers, research collaboration, joint provision of learning  
37 opportunities, and networks of higher education institutions;
- 38 - **Inclusive**, because every person will not only have fair access to higher education but also be  
39 enabled to complete their studies and be supported in finding appropriate career  
40 opportunities;

41 - **Innovative**, because it will introduce new and better aligned learning, teaching and  
42 assessment methods, closely connected to research, including open and flexible learning  
43 paths, smaller units of learning and novel opportunities offered by the digital revolution.

44 An overarching commitment for the present decade is for higher education to be a key actor in  
45 **meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals**. We commit to support our higher  
46 education institutions in bringing their considerable educational and research capacities to bear  
47 more incisively on these fundamental global objectives. Higher education institutions have the  
48 potential to drive major change – improving the skills, competences and abilities of students and  
49 society to tackle sustainability, climate and other issues. This objective should be reflected in every  
50 institution and in every curriculum

51 The EHEA itself must continue its growth as a space for quality higher education, democracy and  
52 societal advancement based on **shared fundamental values**. We reaffirm our commitment to  
53 promoting and protecting academic freedom and integrity, institutional autonomy, participation  
54 of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher  
55 education. Society must be able to **trust** higher education in the EHEA, knowing that a robust  
56 culture of **academic and scientific integrity**, blocking all forms of academic fraud and violation of  
57 international law, is supported by public authorities and all higher education institutions.

58 Quality education must be the **hallmark** of the EHEA and form the basis not only for the full  
59 realization of individual personal and professional capabilities, but also of general wellbeing and  
60 prosperity.

## 61 **Building the Future EHEA**

62 The central aims of the EHEA are to **ensure better learning for more people and to further the**  
63 **role of higher education in developing democratic, sustainable societies**. The **Social Dimension**  
64 and **Learning and Teaching** should remain at the core of the EHEA and should entail providing  
65 opportunities for equitable inclusion of individuals from all social groups.

66 We adopt and commit to implement the **“Principles and Guidelines to Strengthen the Social**  
67 **Dimension of Higher Education in the EHEA”**. We call on higher education institutions to integrate  
68 these principles into their core higher education missions: learning and teaching, research,  
69 knowledge exchange and outreach, institutional governance and management, as well as in their  
70 policies for empowering present and future students and university staff.

71 With regard to **Learning and Teaching**, we commit to the continuing development of learning  
72 outcomes and competence-based student-centered learning, including appropriate assessment  
73 methods and criteria. *[This point will be developed further, with reference to the AG findings]*

74 **Flexibility and openness of learning paths**, both part of the original inspiration for the Bologna  
75 Process, are becoming more and more necessary for **student-centered learning** to take place.  
76 Learners with diverse professional, cultural and educational backgrounds must have the possibility  
77 and the tools to seek out and avail themselves, at any time of life, of the educational opportunities  
78 most useful for them, including, but not limited to higher education.

79 **Swifter up-dating of knowledge, skills and competences, including transversal competences** will  
80 be required to respond to the changes and challenges that the new decade will bring. Higher  
81 education institutions will be called upon to expand their learning offer. In addition to complete  
82 degree programmes, they will need to provide more numerous options for **smaller units of**  
83 **learning, including micro-credentials**, which people will require in order to complete or update  
84 their professional, cultural and transversal competences at various stages in their lives. Micro-

85 credentials should be aligned to the main structures and principles of the EHEA and benefit from  
86 the use of its major tools.

87 Increased **support for teaching and non-teaching staff** – as well as for all learners -- will be  
88 needed. Teachers and academic staff require stable employment and career opportunities, parity  
89 of esteem for teaching and research, attractive working conditions and salaries, access to up-to-  
90 date staff development, and recognition of their vital contribution.

91 **Cooperation and mobility** connect our systems and foster the development of intercultural  
92 competences, broader knowledge and understanding of our world. Creating direct contacts and  
93 synergies among our diverse cultures and higher education systems, mobility of staff and students  
94 contributes to the excellence and relevance of higher education in the EHEA, making it attractive  
95 and competitive on the global scale. We recognize the importance and the benefits of physical  
96 mobility for students and staff, and regret that the target we set eleven years ago has not yet been  
97 reached. While we reaffirm that **20% of our graduates** should experience study or training abroad,  
98 we commit to the new goals of developing a **sustainable mobility culture**, and **enabling all**  
99 **learners to experience some form of mobility, whether physical or blended, or by participating**  
100 **in innovative international environments** in their home institution.

101 We welcome all initiatives aimed to create innovative **synergies** among higher education  
102 institutions, including alliances conceived as flexible and adaptive environments in order to  
103 promote joint research and innovative multilateral teaching approaches. The **European**  
104 **Universities' alliances** constitute a novel way of achieving closer cohesion and cooperation among  
105 HEIs. We will strive to enable all EHEA higher education institutions to benefit from these  
106 alliances.

107 We encourage higher education institutions to intensify their search for **solutions to the**  
108 **challenges our societies face**. We encourage them to develop further their ability to look ahead,  
109 prepare the future generations, give guidance to society, deal creatively and proactively with new  
110 challenges, ranging from the climate emergency, to public health issues, social inequality and  
111 reliance on unsubstantiated information in the political debate. In this context, higher education  
112 institutions should be at the forefront of scientific, humanistic and technological development,  
113 making full use cutting edge technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, and use them to find  
114 solutions and contribute to ensuring a more cohesive and inclusive society, based on democracy  
115 and the rule of law. We encourage them to establish genuine partnerships with their communities  
116 which, through open dialogue, can help to address social and democratic challenges effectively.

117 We commit to reinforcing quality education and social inclusion by capturing the new  
118 opportunities provided by **digitalization**. We ask the BFUG to explore different models of shared  
119 learning ecosystems where learners can benefit from wider education provision, in close  
120 cooperation with open science to enhance research-based teaching. We commit to support our  
121 institutions in using digital technologies for learning and teaching and to invest in the  
122 **development of digital skills and competences** for all. Digital solutions will facilitate secure,  
123 efficient and transparent **exchange of data** regarding students' learning achievements. Joint digital  
124 approaches to enhance recognition, quality assurance and mobility are needed. We ask BFUG to  
125 map existing solutions and find effective and secure ways to enhance interoperability of digital  
126 systems and the exchange of student data, in full respect of privacy and security.

127 In order to motivate all stakeholders to participate in this **common effort**, we commit to the goal  
128 of **building, by 2030, a more closely connected and sustainable higher education community**, in  
129 order to underline the aspects of inclusiveness, belonging, sharing, contributing, communicating

130 and cooperating, which will be essential for guaranteeing the **relevance and excellence of the**  
131 **future EHEA.**

132 We ask the BFUG to organize structured EHEA activities such as **transnational Bologna seminars**  
133 suitable to including stakeholders who are actual practitioners (learners, academic staff,  
134 employers and employees), to discuss present and future goals and ways to address them.

## 135 **Implementation and further actions**

136 We, the Ministers, register the results illustrated in the **Bologna Process Implementation Report**  
137 which examines the progress achieved by member countries in chosen areas...*[the draft report has*  
138 *just arrived; this part can now be redrafted]*

139 In the 2018 Paris Conference we decided to devote special efforts to the three "**Key**  
140 **Commitments**" essential for the functioning of the EHEA: the Qualifications Frameworks and ECTS,  
141 the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Diploma Supplement, and Quality Assurance according  
142 to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area  
143 (ESG). We created the Bologna Implementation Coordination Group (BICG) to develop peer  
144 support mechanisms to accomplish this. The three Thematic Peer Groups have proved effective  
145 not only in assisting in implementing the agreed reforms, but also in developing a spirit of  
146 cooperation among the participating countries and identifying new aspects to be addressed.

147 We confirm our commitment to the full implementation of the key commitments. We ask the  
148 BFUG to continue to employ the **peer support method**, and commit to the continued participation  
149 of and contribution by our own countries. We recognize the efforts of the national authorities and  
150 their contribution to the Groups' success. *[Here we might include some sentences about the*  
151 *thematic peer groups: alternatively there might be a report in the Annexes, as 'background*  
152 *material']]*

153 We commit to completing and further developing the **National Qualifications Frameworks**  
154 compatible with the EHEA's overarching qualifications framework (QF-EHEA) and ask the BFUG to  
155 continue to update the criteria for certification; so that self-certification reports include a stronger  
156 element of peer review. We mandate the **Network of QF correspondents** to continue its work in  
157 the coming work period, contributing to the further development of the QF-EHEA and the self-  
158 certification of national qualifications frameworks against it.

159 We will strengthen our efforts to ensure the fair recognition of qualifications by implementing the  
160 **Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention**. We note with satisfaction the efforts  
161 to facilitate automatic recognition and commit to achieving it. We commit to reviewing our own  
162 legislation, regulations, and practice with a view to ensuring the fair recognition of qualifications  
163 held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situations, even when they  
164 cannot be fully documented. We note with satisfaction the success of the **European Qualifications**  
165 **Passport for Refugees** and commit to broadening its use. We will continue to support the  
166 development of **quality assurance systems** fully aligned with the ESG, that will include new  
167 approaches suitable to address innovative learning and teaching, increased flexibility and  
168 openness of learning paths, smaller units of learning and enhanced synergisms among higher  
169 education institutions.

170 We adopt the **definition of academic freedom** that appears in **the appendix** and commit to  
171 promoting and upholding these fundamental values in the entire EHEA through intensified political  
172 dialogue and cooperation. We understand **academic freedom** as the freedom of academic staff  
173 and students to engage in research, teaching, learning and communication in society without fear  
174 of reprisal. This is an indispensable aspect of quality learning, teaching and research in higher

175 education as well as of democratic society. We ask the BFUG to develop a framework for the  
176 enhancement of the **fundamental values** of the EHEA that will also make it possible to assess the  
177 degree to which these are honoured and implemented in our systems.

## 178 **Global Policy Dialogue**

179 We appreciate the efforts to strengthen Global Policy Dialogue, and to organize, in conjunction  
180 with this meeting, the **First Bologna Global Policy Forum**, building on the insights and  
181 commitments developed in the previous Bologna Policy Fora. We hope such Fora can be held in  
182 conjunction with future Ministerial Conferences, and encourage efforts to structure and  
183 strengthen dialogue with all world areas

184 We salute the participating countries and organizations that commit with us to encouraging our  
185 higher education systems to deploy their resources for the achievement of the UN Sustainable  
186 Development Goals by 2030, and to explore how to bring our systems into closer dialogue, in  
187 order to assure smooth and fair mobility and recognition in the interest of our students. We  
188 welcome the adoption of the **UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications**  
189 **concerning Higher Education**, and we encourage the use of secure systems of digital certification  
190 and communication, including the blockchain technology, the development of new tools, of  
191 common assessment criteria and reports, in collaboration with ENIC-NARIC centres and the Lisbon  
192 Recognition Convention Committee Bureau.

193 We recognize the many efforts of single countries, groups of countries, and higher education  
194 institutions around the world to implement, in their own context, reforms compatible with the  
195 Bologna Process. We mandate the BFUG to define and propose criteria and procedures for  
196 recognizing the status of '**Bologna Global Dialogue Partner**'.

197 *[To be modified according to BFUG discussion and the GPF Statement which is now in Draft form].*

## 198 **Governance and working methods for the next decade**

199 *[Will depend on the discussions still to take place. Should include a roadmap, giving practical*  
200 *objectives and targets for 2023, 2026, possibly as an Annex]*

201 The Ministers call on the BFUG to address with vigor the actions and priorities indicated for the  
202 next decade and the overall goal of creating a **smoothly functioning, forward- and outward**  
203 **looking, inclusive and excellent European Higher Education Area by 2030.**

204 We commit to further developing cooperation with the **European Research Area** and call for BFUG  
205 to continue to work with the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC) to foster  
206 better dialogue between education and research policies. Focus should be put on developing  
207 research-based learning, enhancing openness and meeting the SDGs.

208

209 The Ministers gratefully accept the offer by [country] to host the next Ministerial Conference of  
210 the EHEA and the Bologna Global Policy Forum in [city] on [year and month?]

## 211 **Appendices**

212 The Principles and Guidelines on Social Dimension of Higher Education

213 Statement on Academic freedom

214 *[Possibly, as background material, Report on the Consultations on the Future Priorities]*