

Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA community

Action Plan

Introduction

The Task Force on Enhancing Knowledge Sharing in the EHEA Community (TF) was created to counter the widespread concern that the "stakeholders" (higher education students and staff, employers and society at large) are often not aware (or correctly informed) about what the Bologna Process and the EHEA are, what their values are, what areas they address, what they have accomplished, what impact they have had and have on higher education systems in the member countries and how their goals can best be addressed today. The impression in many countries is that the BFUG and the EHEA is or has become a 'bubble' that does not spread knowledge of the important work it does, and is not sufficiently interested in gathering (or able to gather) input from the rich and varied experience of actual practitioners in the higher education world.

The need to address this issue is clearly recognised in the Rome Communiqué, which states: *"We commit to **building a more closely connected and sustainable higher education community**, which fosters inclusion, communication, cooperation, and solidarity, essential for the **relevance and excellence of the future EHEA**. To accomplish this, we commit to keeping our national higher education sectors informed about and involved in EHEA developments, and to working closely with student and higher education associations and networks on the development and implementation of national reforms. We recognise the importance of the broad consultations carried out to identify priorities for the future of the EHEA and ask the BFUG to organise EHEA events such as **transnational seminars, workshops and hearings** involving the wider higher education community (students, academic staff and external stakeholders), to discuss present and future goals and explore collaborative ways to address them."*

In this passage, the Communiqué also indicates specific paths along which to develop a closer and more positive relationship with the stakeholders.

To take up this commitment, the BFUG decided, in its meeting on 13 - 14 April 2021, to create a "Task Force". This was understood to be an agile and active working group that would address the needs identified. 15 countries and organisations joined the group (Albania; the Flemish Community of Belgium; Germany; Italy; Malta, The Netherlands, Romania; Ukraine; United Kingdom; EQAR; ESU; ETUCE; EUA; EURASHE; European Commission), and it is co-chaired by Albania, Italy and Romania. Furthermore, at its 1-2 December 2021 meeting, the BFUG decided that the TF would develop an action plan.

The words "Enhancing Knowledge Sharing" in the name of the Task Force emphasise emphasises the dialogic nature of its proposed activities: these are not to focus on top down 'communication' about the Process, but rather on an organised attempt to ensure better knowledge flows in all directions, so that the stakeholders and the Bologna structures (BFUG and working groups of all denominations) can share accurate knowledge, and build it together.

The ultimate aspiration is to enhance quality in education and research, to increase the mobility of staff and students (physical or online) and to foster cooperation between HEIs, countries and regions.



The Project (IN-GLOBAL)

The Enhancing Internal Knowledge and Global Dialogue of EHEA (IN-GLOBAL) project is funded within the ERASMUS+ programme for a period of three years, starting May 2022. The coordinator of the project is CIMEA – Italy, and the partners are the Romanian Ministry of Education and the University "POLITEHNICA" of Bucharest. The Prime Minister's Office of Albania is an associated partner.

Funds are available within the IN-GLOBAL project to support specific activities of the task force, as underlined in the table below.

Specific tasks, proposed activities and timelines

The Rome Communiqué lists actions or activities to be implemented, which set an initial agenda for the Task Force. The Communiqué mentions the need to 'inform' and 'involve' the higher education sector in developments; it refers to working 'closely' with higher education and student organisations. The reference to 'involvement' in development as well as implementation points clearly to building a new relationship with the higher education community.

The Communiqué refers to the 'importance' of the 'broad consultation' which was carried out in the first semester of 2019, which suggests that the TF might review the very interesting material gathered at that time on "priorities" and perceptions of the Bologna Process and the EHEA.

The Communiqué indicates 'events' (exemplified by, but not limited to, "transnational seminars, workshops and hearings") with the stakeholders, and mentions that these activities should aim at better ways to address future goals in a collaborative manner.

Most importantly, the Communiqué indicates that these actions and activities relate to the present and future goals of the EHEA and collaborative ways to address them.

Coordination with the work of other working structures will be a priority, especially with the Global Policy CG. After all, the EHEA is unique in its form and results and may serve as an example for global cooperation and dialogue.

The TF will assess the implementation of the proposed activities, and inform the BFUG, if adaptations are necessary.

The following table specifies the activities of the TF, describes steps to implement each activity and sets indicative timelines. All task force members will be involved in reviewing the outcomes of different activities. Some members are coordinating or are directly involved in the implementation of a specific action. Depending on the allocation of tasks, task force members are mentioned in the column *Countries/Organisations involved*. Moreover, it is specified if support from experts hired within the IN-GLOBAL project is available.



No. crt.	Activity	Methodology	Timeline	Countries / Organisations involved (leader in bold)
1.	Development of recommendations for BFUG members, including practical and hands-on guidance, destined to encourage active involvement of the academic community in the sharing of knowledge about the present and future goals of the EHEA and exploring collaborative ways to address them	<p>The recommendations will include a communication strategy for national and cross-border activities, suggestions for how to activate academics and students to contribute to the EHEA development, guidelines for the BFUG members to organise events, guidance for activating Bologna experts' networks, starting national and local level Bologna hubs, as well as to collaborate with existing Higher Education Reform Experts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analysis of the material resulting from the BFUG 2019 consultation on "The Future of the EHEA" and of specific literature about how the Bologna Process is perceived and understood. <p><i>TF members – UK, Italy</i> <i>April 2023</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analysis of stakeholders' perception of the EHEA at the national level <p>Drafting and sending questionnaires to BFUG members and consultative members to gain an understanding of the perception of the Bologna Process; and elaboration of a report based on the outcomes.</p> <p><i>Data analysis expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> <i>Draft questionnaire – April 2023, report – September 2023</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analysis of the existing good practices, tools and projects related to EHEA <p>Organising focus groups with different stakeholders to collect information on good practices, tools and projects; and drafting a Report on the information collected.</p>	March/April 2024	Albania, Italy, Romania, UK

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		<p><i>Higher education expert (IN-GLOBAL) and project coordinator</i> <i>End 2023</i></p> <p>✓ Organising break-out sessions within the BFUG meetings to collect best practices and opinions from members and consultative members.</p> <p>A proposal to organise such break-out sessions will be submitted to the BFUG co-chairs for the meeting in May 2023. A concept paper, including questions to be debated, will be prepared, as well as a report with the outcomes.</p> <p><i>TF co-chairs</i></p> <p>Based on the documents and reports elaborated, the <i>higher education and communication experts (IN-GLOBAL)</i> will draft the recommendations.</p>		
2.	Development of dissemination tools such as videos and messages with EHEA visual identity, to be presented at the national/regional level and used for awareness-raising campaigns	Small capsules (one with an overview on the BP, another one on QA, and other topics) will be developed. The <i>communication expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> will draft the scenarios based on input from the TF members, and videos/recordings will be realised with the support of IN-GLOBAL consortium partners.	November 2023	Italy, Romania
3.	Series of TV/radio reportages /podcasts on topics related to the Bologna process	The draft concept of such a series will be developed by the <i>communication expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> . The BFUG members might support the realisation of such reportages in their own countries.	2023 – 2024	Albania, Italy, Romania , Germany, ESU

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4.	Development of guidelines for the BFUG members to organise events, at national, regional or international level, including ideas of topics and formats	The Guidelines will be drafted by the <i>communication expert</i> in collaboration with the <i>higher education expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> and will be part of the recommendations developed under Activity 1.	November 2023	Italy , Romania, Albania, UK, ESU
5.	Developing the concept and organising sessions and side events during the BFUG meetings, related to the dialogue about the Bologna process	These sessions will include bottom-up aspects, e.g. how to involve stakeholders at the national level in a meaningful and constructive fashion. The concept will be developed by the TF members, while the co-chairs, supported by the Secretariat, will be involved in organising such sessions.	2023 – 2024	Albania , Italy, Romania BFUG Secretariat
6.	Developing a section within the EHEA website or/and social media destined to specific information for students, teachers, staff, researchers or the general public, which might include a frequently asked questions section	The <i>communication expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> will develop a proposal to enhance the attractiveness of the EHEA website, by giving it a more human touch and making the information more accessible. The opportunity to set up a FB/Linkedin/Twitter account will be investigated.	July 2023	Albania , Italy, Romania, ESU, ETUCE BFUG Secretariat
7.	Collaborate with other organisations at national/regional level and/or organise common initiatives to promote the Bologna Process and the implementation of the key commitments at national/regional level	The <i>IN-GLOBAL consortium partners</i> will prepare a mailing list with different relevant organisations. The <i>Communication expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> will support the organisation of such events, using the Guidelines developed in activity 4.	2023-2024	Albania , Italy

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8.	Guidance for activating Bologna experts' networks and for starting national and local level Bologna hubs, as well as to collaborate with existing Higher Education Reform Experts ¹	<p>The need for continuation or for a new version of Bologna experts' networks is felt in many countries. Focus groups and BFUG consultations will be organised, to examine different possibilities. Recommendations will be developed, including on how to interact with projects and groups in place, as for example, the Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE).</p> <p>"Bologna hubs" are a framework where students, teachers, HEI management, national authorities and Bologna experts' could debate the objectives of the Bologna process, its implementation at the national or HEI level, determine common actions and propose recommendations for the respective EHEA member country. In this way, the local level actors will be empowered through support and guidance from the HE education authority and other relevant experts, institutions and organisations.</p> <p>The Guidelines will be part of the recommendations developed under Activity 1.</p>	2023 – 2024	Albania, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands , UK EUA
9.	Newsletter related to important events and developments within the Bologna process	<p>A more effective way to disseminate information would be the creation of a newsletter, that those registered would receive periodically in their inbox. In this way, there would be no need for those interested to access a website or the social media.</p> <p>A format will be developed with the <i>communication expert (IN-GLOBAL)</i> involvement, using an open-source software, and information will be gathered with the support of the Secretariat</p>	2023 - 2024	Albania , Belgium Flemish Community , Italy BFUG Secretariat

¹ <https://eua.eu/resources/projects/584-here.html>



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		<p>from the BFUG members, consultative members and partners, the different working structures etc.</p> <p>The <i>IN-GLOBAL consortium partners</i> will develop a distribution list of email addresses that will be used to invite stakeholders to register to receive the newsletter. A registration facility will be designed within the website if technically possible.</p> <p>Depending on the content received will be decided upon the periodicity of the newsletter.</p>		