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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Ministry of Science
and Education



MINISTRY
OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
OF UKRAINE

1 Statement of the Bologna Global Policy Forum

2 [Rome November 2020]

3 We, the Ministers responsible for higher education and heads of delegation, institutions and
4 organisations participating in the Bologna Global Policy Forum, express our firm conviction that
5 higher education has a vital role to perform in addressing the present and future challenges to world
6 peace, sustainable development and wellbeing.

7 Evaluating progress

8 Many world regions and countries have progressed in consolidating and connecting their higher
9 education systems and structures in recent decades. Exchange and cooperation have increased at
10 international, regional, national and institutional levels. Worldwide connectivity and mobility of
11 staff and students have grown, as has the total numbers of learners in tertiary education. We are
12 aware, however, that not all higher education regions have the opportunity to participate equally
13 in these developments. The goals of widening inclusion and ensuring equitable access for all have
14 not yet been reached.

15 Global challenges, including the coronavirus pandemic, continue to demonstrate the need for closer
16 international cooperation in higher education and research. The potential of higher education to
17 contribute to addressing such challenges relies on scientific research and effective transfer and use
18 of the knowledge gained. Academic freedom and institutional autonomy, under threat in many
19 countries, are necessary safeguards for higher education, and must be strengthened.

20 Moving forward

21 We commit to doing our part to reach all the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by**
22 **2030**. We commit to enhance inclusion and equitable access for students from diverse backgrounds,
23 including refugees and migrants, in order to provide “equal access for all women and men to
24 affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university” (SDG 4.3).
25 We commit to increase the “number of scholarships available to developing countries” (SDG 4.B).

26 We underline our commitment to developing the **social dimension**, understood to mean not only
27 inclusion in terms of access to higher education, but also enhancement of our institutions’ capacity
28 to retain learners and equip them with the competences they will need for employment and for
29 their personal and civic lives, as well as an awareness of and commitment to the principles of
30 sustainability (SDG 4.7).

31 Following our discussions during the Bologna Global Policy Forum, we recognize the positive
32 potential for all our countries in:

- 33 • Fostering **innovation** in learning and teaching, opening up to new skills, and ensuring their
34 link to employability. We recognize the need for higher education institutions to engage with
35 their communities and stakeholders, to develop inclusive strategies that are mutually
36 beneficial, and which require broad thinking and collective responsibility. More contact with
37 schools and employers is necessary to ensure that the skills and competences needed in the
38 future are formed.



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- Increasing shared awareness of the importance of **student-centred learning** taking place in a research-rich teaching and learning environment, and of its implications, such as flexibility in study programs and learning paths in a lifelong learning perspective. Higher education needs to foster an entrepreneurial culture, promoting innovative learning approaches, environments and assessment methods.
 - Exploiting **digital ways of learning and teaching** more intensely in a lifelong learning context. When based on trustworthy methods and data they offer great potential for innovation in teaching and learning and can support to institutions in times of geographical or spatial constraints, although relevant issues of unequal access subsist.
 - Further developing all forms of **mobility** of people and knowledge, as one of the most important keys to global understanding and to excellence in higher education. Reciprocity and balanced incoming and outgoing mobility should be pursued as an objective.
 - Reaching untapped talent by **opening up** higher education and career opportunities to refugees and other persons in situations of difficulty, and as a driver for excellence.

53 To **achieve this potential**, we must support interconnection, mobility and recognition and enhance **trust**, and cooperate to develop and **connect the tools** needed to ensure it.

55 We will work towards a shared understanding and, where possible, comparability between the **Qualifications Frameworks, Qualifications Reference Frameworks, and Quality assurance approaches** developed in different world regions. The **UNESCO Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education** is a landmark achievement. Connecting and building on pre-existing regional agreements, it is an important step towards reaching the goals of the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning”.

63 **Continuing Dialogue**

64 We take up our responsibility towards our countries and peoples, in order to unleash the potential of higher education to find solutions to the world’s challenges. We wish to support present and future generations to think and act ethically, creatively and critically to be able to face the challenges of the future. Increased cooperation across regions will strengthen our ability to find innovative and inclusive solutions.

69 We commit to interregional dialogue and confirm the need to further strengthen and better structure our cooperation in the coming decade, taking our good existing progress to the policy level.

72 We **reiterate** the imperative of contributing on multiple levels to achieving all of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in 2030**, and commit to working more closely together in the coming decade to achieve our agreed priorities.

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76 The next Bologna Global Policy Forum will be held in ??? in ??? 2023.