



Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ministry of Civil Affairs

Task Force on the Review of the Rules and Regulations for the Governance of the European Higher Education Area

Fifth meeting, Online
8 May 2023
11:00-12:30 CET
Minutes of Meeting

List of Participants

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

Luca Lantero (Italy Co-Chair) sent regrets.

Villano Qiriazzi, Council of Europe, joined the meeting of the task force. 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. The Secretariat was asked to send the link for the meeting to the CoE and inform TF Co-chairs on the matter, which it did at the beginning of the meeting.

The TF co-chairs pointed out that they have neither been consulted on this, nor did they agree as they had asked for a decision on possible new members of the TF by the upcoming BFUG.

1. Welcome remarks and approval of the agenda and minutes

Michal Karpíšek (Co-Chair) opened the meeting by welcoming all participants. The agenda was adopted without any changes.

2. Conclusions from last meeting

Mr. Karpíšek emphasized that the minutes of the previous meeting should state that only one member expressed opposition to the concept of a Permanent Secretariat. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, incorporating the requested change accordingly.

3. Report and thematic discussion block proposal at the BFUG meeting in Stockholm

Mr. Karpíšek shared the proposed structure of the thematic block, which was as follows:

- Day 1:
 - o The plenary session would provide a brief overview report of the Task Force and its work plan (5 minutes), the presentation of the Permanent Secretariat concept (15 minutes), the presentation of EHEA Statutes and two-layer approach (10 minutes), and the instructions for the group discussions.
 - o The group discussions that would be facilitated by the members of the Task Force and supported by the Secretariat and Swedish Co-Chair of the BFUG as host of the meeting. There would be a TF debriefing, following the group discussions.
 - o As agreed with the Swedish Co-chair, the discussion on the composition of the TF should take place after the group discussions, to focus more on the discussion.
- Day 2: plenary discussion on conclusions, which would consist of a joint summary (delivered by members of the TF) and a plenary discussion, in order to achieve agreement on the issue of the two-tier structure of the rules, and the direction for permanent secretariat.

Additionally, Mr. Karpíšek announced the questions that would help guide the discussion:

- Do BFUG members agree on a concept of a two-layer structure of future EHEA rules and regulations as proposed — the EHEA Statutes for the Ministers and more detailed Rules & Procedures to be adopted by the BFUG?
- Is the idea of introducing a permanent EHEA Secretariat feasible and desirable? What are the benefits and challenges of the present approach with a rotating Secretariat and those of a Permanent Secretariat?
- In case the option of a Permanent Secretariat should be explored further, is the form of a non-for-profit association/foundation the preferred solution?

Additional points that were agreed:

- It was announced that, following the TF Co-Chairs' introduction in the plenary session, a few questions could be taken, for clarifications but discussions should take place in the groups.
- There was a question about group composition regarding BFUG delegates from the same country, which Mr. Karpíšek replied that there was no finalized group list, because there was no final list of BFUG participants yet. It was suggested that organizing groups according to regional setting

might be interpreted as putting importance to different regions, therefore the members agreed that breakout session's group composition could be organized alphabetically. It was agreed that members of the same delegation should be in the same group.

- Group facilitators should ask participants to elaborate and be specific, whenever possible and appropriate.
- Regarding the outcomes of the group discussions, the rapporteurs would draft summaries with the main points of agreement and disagreements. Ms. Subashi (BFUG Secretariat, Head) reminded the members that there would be three members from the Secretariat and four from the Swedish Council of Higher Education, to support the breakout sessions by taking notes.
- After the group discussion, a meeting between group rapporteurs and general rapporteurs is to take place, to draw the general conclusions (where there is or there is no consensus)
- On the basis of the report delivered to plenary, and the following discussions, the BFUG Co-Chairs would draw draft conclusions.
- It was agreed that the purpose of the discussions at the BFUG was not to take final decisions, but to clarify questions, enhance understanding, explore the broad range of options and scope, and identify the main options and directions for the further work of the TF. For example, if a clear majority would be against a Permanent Secretariat, the TF would stop its work on the matter. If there were mainly concerns regarding feasibility, and concept, the TF would continue, and explore these issues further. It was suggested the BFUG should aim to make decisions on both the rules and regulations and on a possible permanent secretariat at the November BFUG meeting, to be held in Madrid.
- The organization of webinars or an online discussion forum was considered, and also potential cooperation with the TF on Enhancement of Knowledge Sharing. It was agreed to revisit this after the BFUG meeting.

4. Next meetings and AOB

The Secretariat would circulate doodles for

- a 3-hour online meeting (June 9 – 12)
- an online meeting at the beginning of September.

There was agreed to have a fixed date monthly meeting with some flexibility (i.e.: allowing TF members to reschedule, if it was not convenient), to facilitate coordinating for meeting dates and times.