



Ministry of
Education
and Culture



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Working Group 1 on Monitoring
Second Meeting, 9 July 2019, Brussels

Minutes

Delegation	First Name	Surname
Austria	Helga	Posset
AGILIS (guest expert)	Anais	Santourian
Belarus	Elena	Betenya
EURYDICE (co-chair)	David	Crosier
EURYDICE (technical expert)	Jasmin	Maki
EQAR	Melinda	Szabo
ESU	Sebastian	Berger
EUA	Michael	Gaebel
Eurostudent (technical expert)	Kristina	Hauschildt
France	Hélène	Lagier
Italy	Vincenzo	Zara
Lithuania	Laura	Stracinskiene
Norway (co-chair)	Tone	Flood Strøm
Poland	Bartłomiej	Banaszak
BFUG Secretariat	Giovanni	Finocchietti
BFUG Secretariat	Clarissa	Ioimo

List of participants

Apologies from Albania, Armenia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, EI-IE, Germany, Latvia, Luxembourg, Moldova, Russian Federation.

1. Welcome

The Co-chairs David Crosier and Tone Flood Strøm welcomed the participants to the meeting, hosted in the EACEA premises. A tour de table followed to allow members, invited experts and guest experts to introduce themselves.

2. Adoption of the draft agenda

The Co-chair David Crosier introduced the agenda of the meeting and explained that the main target is to discuss the work done and how to move forward to assemble the Implementation Report 2020. The Agenda was adopted without modification.

3. Information on recent developments (BFUG, BICG developments, Task Force on values, other working/advisory groups)

Co-chairs and participants shared information on recent developments of the activities in progress according to the Work Plan 2018-2020 of the Bologna Follow-up Group. The Co-chairs David Crosier and Tone Flood Strøm reported on the outcomes of the [BFUG Meeting in Bucharest](#) (4-5 April 2019), including the Progress Report on developing the Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR). They also reported on the activities carried out by the [Bologna Implementation Coordination Group](#) (BICG) and the three Thematic Peer Learning groups (TPGs), with a number of projects and meetings in progress. The representative of the European Students' Union (ESU) reported on the activities carried out within the [AG1 on Social Dimension](#) and the outcomes of the Meeting held in Vienna (5 June 2019). The representative of the European University Association (EUA) reported on the activities carried out within the [AG2 on Learning and Teaching](#), as well as on the activities carried out within the [Coordination Group](#) (CG1) on Global Policy Dialogue and on the outcomes of the Meeting held in Bologna (24 June 2019). Information was also given on the Meeting to be organised in Rome (October 2019) with Diplomatic representations of non-EHEA countries to inform on the Rome 2020 Ministerial Conference and Global Policy Forum. The BFUG Secretariat informed that the [Drafting Committee](#) of the Rome 2020 Ministerial Communiqué has been formed and reported on the first Meeting held in Bologna (26 June 2019). Participants agreed that, although using different approaches and tools, all groups are working with a constructive approach and are progressing in a productive way. The Eurostudent representative reported on the progresses of the Eurostudent VII survey: 27 countries are participating; 19 countries carrying out the field phase in these months, with the remaining countries scheduling the field phase in Spring 2020. The Report will be released in 2021.

The Co-chairs recalled the outcomes of the previous [WG1 Meeting](#) held in Brussels (6 November 2018) and reported on the activities of the Task Force (TF) on fundamental values. The TF was established under the auspices of WG1 and not as an independent group, with a focus on how to protect and promote the fundamental values and on developing a monitoring system on fundamental values. TF members agreed to carry out meetings in the form of hearings of experts, focusing in particular on the topic of academic freedom. The outcomes of the hearings were very positive, with the participation of a quite big number of experts. The aim of the TF is to produce a wide document on the topic, including a short and clear common understanding to be submitted to the ministers in the next EHEA Ministerial Conference in Rome, to be adopted in the Rome 2020 Communiqué. After Rome 2020, the roadmap should foresee a mapping of how academic

freedom is reflected in national legislation (2023), and develop a framework for the monitoring of fundamental values. The next step will be submitting a report on the TF activities to the coming Board and BFUG meetings (Istanbul, 24 September 2019; Helsinki, 12-13 November 2019).

Many participants commented on the [XX Anniversary of the Bologna Declaration](#) and underlined that the event was a great success. The connection between institutions and students and the debate about the social responsibility were greatly appreciated, while the topic of the impact of the Bologna Process on the students' life was central thanks also to the involvement of student representatives in all sessions and panels.

4. Data collection for the 2020 Report

4.1 Statistical indicators: update from AGILIS

“AGILIS - statistics & informatics” is in charge of the data collection for the 2020 Bologna Process Implementation Report (BPIR) report. Anais Santourian, AGILIS statistic consultant, joined the meeting as guest expert and submitted a slide presentation to inform participants on how the data collection is progressing and to discuss methodological issues and future steps, including options on data visualisation. The data collection is aimed at contributing to BPIR by providing statistical data, indicators and analyses. It was agreed that the data collection should cover the period 2000-2020, focusing on main developments and trends throughout the years, adding new indicators on credit mobility and pointing out at five reference years. Data for the European Statistical System (ESS) countries are downloaded and treated directly. Data for non-ESS countries are collected via a questionnaire sent to national authorities (Ministers and National Statistical Institutes). At present, data for ESS countries have been downloaded and included in the database, and quality validation is in progress. About 30% of the required responses from the non-ESS countries have been collected (no reaction from: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Andorra). Collection and quality control of data received from the non-ESS countries will be concluded by the end of July; the end of the validation process is scheduled for early September, and indicators will be available by the end of September 2019. The guest expert underlined a number of methodological issues (including changes in the ISCED classification, as well as challenging conceptualisation of some variables) and how collecting data was not always an easy task: in some cases, it was/will be necessary to ask for more information or lacking data. Different options for data visualisation were finally proposed for discussion, in order to collect feedback from the group members and agree general guidelines on what can be done.

Attachment: WG1_Monitoring_2_AGILIS

4.2 Qualitative indicators: update from EURYDICE

EURYDICE was tasked with the data collection in order to produce the qualitative indicators that will be issued in the 2020 BPIR Report. The Co-chair David Crosier recalled how it was agreed to produce key indicators on key issues and key commitments. A questionnaire has been sent, and feedback has been received from most countries (8-9 countries are still missing). At present, the checking of information and data collected is in progress; if necessary, questions will be addressed to countries in August, while figures and analyses will be produced from September 2019. It was stressed that a “grey area” may exist in cases data produced by countries are not seen as correct.

4.3 Discussion and agreement on any action required to finalise data collections

The discussion on the statistical indicators preliminary focused on -the main problem, i.e. how to bring out and display data for a large number of countries, and how to represent the changes that - occurred over the last 20 years. It was agreed that attractive ways of presenting data must be found, and that the focus will be on the main changes and trends at EHEA level, not taking into consideration developments and changes in each country. General consensus received the proposal of a short and clear report, easy to read and understand for an average reader, based on simple figures and easy messages. More sophisticated data might be included in an annex, with tables and visualisations. Different issues were dealt with including, among others, how to visualise changes in the ISCED levels, limiting to three the reference years to consider, how to visualise smaller countries' data, and how to visualise changes across time. Participants agreed that at the present stage it is difficult to identify the best visualisation options for each topic. It was proposed that in -the first draft of the report AGILIS -would submit two options for each topic and indicator, to allow WG1 members to discuss and agree on the best solutions. It was also recommended to AGILIS to feel free to experiment and to make proposals. The discussion on the qualitative indicators focused on possible misunderstanding problems that countries may have met with the interpretation of some issues (among others, the case of automatic recognition was quoted); it was recommended to provide very clear explanations, and to look carefully at cases raised to find effective solutions.

5. Outline and structure of the BPIR Report

Participants discussed the topic on the basis of the document “Bologna Process Implementation Report 2020. Draft Structure outline”, introduced by the Co-chairs. It was reaffirmed that the BPIR will be a short and clear report, based on narrative texts defining main trends, progress and challenges, and will draw upon statistical and qualitative data collections. The draft structure proposed by the document is composed by five chapters (EHEA key data; degree structures; quality assurance and recognition; social dimension including employability; internationalisation) and a conclusion (conclusions and looking ahead). An introductory part will be added, including a short explanation of the reasons for producing such a report, of how data was collected, and of the different data sources used. Chapters will be based on narrative texts explaining the theme, highlighting the historical excursus of the issue, the state of play and illustrating the qualitative and statistical data. Each chapter will include a conclusion according to a similar format, e.g. achievements, challenges, emerging issues, that could be recalled in the final chapter.

Chapter 1: EHEA key data

This chapter will include a description of topics, and statistical data covering changes in student and staff numbers and gender, number of HEIs, public funding. The list of possible indicators was discussed, and it was proposed to include: an indicator for academic staff in terms of full time student equivalent; a distribution by gender of students enrolled in higher education; indicators on administrative staff besides academic staff, considering also the changes in the classification of both categories across time. Looking to the topic of expenditure on higher education, the need for both indicators proposed, as well as possible alternative, was discussed.

Chapter 2: Degree structures

This chapter will be structured into sections, with a final part showing scorecard indicators. Section 1 will focus on historical changes; Section 2 will show the current situation (“where we stand”); Section 3 will be based on statistical data on progress in the degree structure. The topic of short cycle programmes was briefly discussed; it was outlined that, due to differences among countries and systems, it might be a tricky one.

Chapter 3: Quality assurance and Recognition

This chapter should provide an overview of developments that have taken place related to Bologna Process commitments on the two topics. It will be based on a narrative text and - qualitative indicators; no statistical data should be included. Section 1 will focus on historical progresses and changes in QA into EHEA; Section 2 will be based on qualitative indicators on the state of play of QA; Section 3 will focus on Recognition and the Lisbon Convention (LRC). A final part will show scorecard indicators on automatic recognition. The balance between the two topics of the Chapter was discussed; the suggestions were made to consult the Council of Europe representative on the topic of LRC, and to consider joint programmes when dealing with the topics of QA and recognition.

Chapter 4: Social dimension (including employability)

This chapter will be based on a narrative text and on quantitative and qualitative indicators. Section 1 will focus on the progress and changes in social dimension; Section 2 will be based on statistical data and indicators; Section 3 will focus on qualitative indicators on the state of play of social dimension and scorecard indicators. The discussion underlined that, despite the many potential indicators, lack of data is reported for some topics. The relation between social dimension and employability was discussed; it was argued that employability should not be a guideline for this chapter, it might be recalled here but should be a separate topic, since focusing on employability may weaken the social responsibility of institutions and public authorities. Discussion also raised the point of whether skills should be mentioned in connection with employability, but it was agreed not to extend the chapter too much -. A clearer definition of some of the indicators was also recommended.

Chapter 5: Internationalisation

This chapter will be based on a narrative text and on quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Section 1 will focus on progresses and challenges in internationalisation; Section 2 will be based on statistical indicators; Section 3 will be based on qualitative data. The discussion underlined that internationalisation is a broader issue than mobility, which appears to be the chapter’s core issue. On the other hand, available data and indicators widely refer to mobility.

Conclusions and looking ahead

“Conclusions and looking ahead” should be a short text that, after summarising what emerged in the previous chapters, will bring to light further issues that could be of interest for the future of EHEA and that could be included in a future agenda.

Attachment: WG1_Monitoring_2_BPIR_structure

6. Guidelines for authors of thematic sections of the BPIR Report

The Co-chairs presented to the participants draft guidelines for the authors of the thematic chapters. General suggestions for the texts, as well as inputs on specific topics emerged from the discussion. It was suggested to add short and easy-to-read sentences to the texts; this should help to point to main statements and conclusions. Guidelines for the section on quality assurance must be integrated with a part on recognition, a very important topic that must be treated more carefully, including also the topic of automatic recognition. Guidelines for the section on social dimension should also include the role and impact of the main European stakeholder organisations, as well as the evolution of the Eurostudent Project should be described in particular. It was discussed whether to include or not in this chapter a reference to reforms of the fees and support systems; consensus received the idea that only dramatical changes in EHEA countries should be considered. Guidelines for the section on internationalisation should refer to the role and impact of European stakeholder organisations and national organisations. The topic of links between internationalisation and digitalisation was discussed; it was decided not to include digitalisation in this section, but to deal with this topic in all chapters, as well as in the conclusions of the report.

Attachment: WG1_Monitoring_2_Guidelines

AOB

Upon request of participants, a next meeting was tentatively scheduled for January 2020. Since the minutes of the Group's first meeting (Brussels, November 2018) have not been approved yet, it was agreed that they will be approved together with those of the present meeting. Anyhow, draft minutes are already available on the [EHEA webpage](#). The Co-chairs also informed that the Task Force on fundamental values will produce a separate report, and that the BPIR will not include outputs of this work. However, some mention of issues related to values could be incorporated in the conclusions of the BPIR. Closing the meeting, the Co-chairs thanked the participants for the very effective contribution to the discussions.