



*BFUG\_SK\_ME\_52\_12a Procedure 2020  
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## **PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION OF THE 2020 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE HOST**

This paper aims to:

- outline the role and responsibilities of the country hosting the 2020 Ministerial Conference;
- provide an overview on how the selection of a host for the upcoming Ministerial Conferences was handled in the past;
- outline a proposal for the voting procedure that follows the BFUG arrangement related to choosing a host for the Ministerial Conference dating back from 2006<sup>1</sup>;
- propose a timeframe for the election of the host of the 2020 Ministerial Conference and to give a short description of the main responsibilities to be taken up by the host country.

### **Role and responsibilities of the country hosting the upcoming Ministerial Conference**

The host of the Ministerial Conference is expected to provide the necessary logistical and financial support to ensure the successful organisation of such an event. For the 2018 Ministerial Conference, France has committed to secure the following requirements:

- Conference room fitting at least 100 ministerial delegations, with each delegation having a maximum of 5 participants;
- Simultaneous interpretation for participants<sup>2</sup>.
- Rooms for bilateral meetings and parallel sessions;
- Meals and local transport throughout the conference for all members of the ministerial delegations.

In connection with the Ministerial Conferences, a Bologna Policy Forum (BPF) was also organised in 2009 (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve), 2010 (Vienna), 2012 (Bucharest) and 2015 (Yerevan). Following the actual planning, the Fifth BPF will be convened in 2018 in Paris.

The country hosting the upcoming Ministerial Conference acts as a Vice-Chair of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The Vice Chair's role is to ensure continuity within the rotating Co-chairing system, in which the two Chairs change every semester. The division of tasks between the Chairs and the Vice-chair is defined at the beginning of their mandate by each chairing team.

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<sup>1</sup> See BFUG document 9\_9. This reference is chosen as the most recent event when voting in such a matter was needed.

<sup>2</sup> See document BFUGBoard\_IT\_VA\_40\_9c

The chairing arrangements<sup>3</sup> that follow up to the ministerial meeting in 2020 will have the following composition:

Semester	Chair from EU- Presidency	Chair from non-EU country	Vice-Chair
1 July – 31 December 2016	Slovakia	Montenegro	
1 January – 30 June 2017	Malta	Norway	France
1 July – 31 December 2017	Estonia	Russian Federation	
1 January – 30 June 2018	Bulgaria	Serbia	
1 July - 31 December 2018	Austria	Switzerland	
1 January – 30 June 2019	Romania	TFYR of Macedonia	Host of
1 July – 31 December 2019	Finland	Turkey	2020
1 January – 30 June 2020	Croatia	Ukraine	conference

As agreed by the Ministers in the Berlin Communiqué (2003)<sup>4</sup>, the country organising the upcoming Ministerial Conference also hosts the BFUG Secretariat between two consecutive ministerial meetings. For the 2009-2010 interval, an exception to this rule applied as the host countries (Hungary and Austria) agreed that the previous hosts – the Benelux countries - will continue to host the Bologna Secretariat, with support from Hungary and Austria. This was an exceptional situation, as the time interval to be covered was of only one year.

## Historical overview

Following the call to host the Bologna ministerial meeting for 2009, three proposals were submitted to the Secretariat by December 2005 from the Benelux countries, Croatia and the Slovak Republic. The BFUG defined a selection mechanism and a voting system<sup>5</sup> for the 2006 BFUG.

For the following Ministerial Conference in 2010 (Budapest – Vienna Ministerial Anniversary Conference) one application was submitted jointly by Austria and Hungary<sup>6</sup>. Similarly, each for 2012 (Romania), 2015 (Armenia), and finally – after having had two proposals – also in 2018 (France) one country expressed its interest and submitted an application to host the Ministerial. In all these cases, the BFUG agreed on the submitted applications, therefore no voting procedure was initiated.

Looking at the existing precedents, it is customary that candidatures for hosting the Ministerial Conferences are submitted following a call for proposals launched at BFUG meetings<sup>7</sup>, usually in the second half of the year. The application letters are received by the Bologna Secretariat and are subsequently forwarded to the BFUG Chairs and circulated before the BFUG meetings in which a decision is made on this matter.

<sup>3</sup> The succession of countries acting as BFUG Chairs has been prepared for the Stockholm BFUG meeting taking place in September 2009 (please see doc BFUG (SE) 18\_5.2). The BFUG members have agreed to the possibility of reviewing this arrangement at a later stage. Thus, during the Cracow BFUG meeting, 13-14 October 2011 the BFUG agreed that Kazakhstan should be included in the BFUG chairing rotation according to the alphabetical order. Moreover, the BFUG agreed during its Copenhagen BFUG meeting on 19-20 March 2012 with the request from the Holy See to chair together with Italy and Greece with Iceland. Furthermore, at the Dublin BFUG meeting on 14-15 March 2013, the BFUG agreed with the request from Iceland to switch its co-chairing period with Kazakhstan and to co-chair with Latvia during the first semester of 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Berlin Communiqué 2003.

<sup>5</sup> See BFUG document 9\_9

<sup>6</sup> See BFUG (FR) 15\_2a

<sup>7</sup> See BFUG (CZ) 15\_2a

## Proposal on a timeframe for the selection of the 2020 Ministerial Conference

The BFUG will be opening the call for hosting the 2020 Ministerial Conference in December 2016.

The BFUG members interested in hosting the 2020 Ministerial Conference should send the application letter to the Bologna Follow-Up Group Secretariat no later than February 1, 2017. The letter should be signed by the Minister responsible for higher education.

The Secretariat should forward the letters to the BFUG Chairs, no later than 6 February 2017 and circulate them to the members of the BFUG at least two weeks prior to the 2017 BFUG meeting in Malta.

The decision regarding the next host of the Ministerial Conference is expected to take place during the 2017 BFUG meeting in Malta.

Time frame	The election process
December 2016 - BFUG meeting Slovakia	Opening the call for hosting the 2020 Ministerial Conference;
28 February 2017	Deadline for submitting candidacies for hosting the 2020 Ministerial Conference to the BFUG Secretariat;
7 March 2017	Deadline for the Secretariat to forward the candidacies to the BFUG Chairs
April 2017	Secretariat circulates the candidacies to the BFUG members (min. 15 days prior to the BFUG meeting in Malta);
Spring 2017	EHEA members not attending the Malta BFUG meeting submit their votes in a sealed envelope to the BFUG Secretariat;
May 2017 BFUG meeting Malta	Finalising the selection procedure for the next host(s) of the 2020 Ministerial Conference.
May 2018 Ministerial conference France	The host(s) will be finally endorsed by the EHEA Ministers responsible for higher education at the 2018 Paris Ministerial Conference.

## Proposal for the selection procedure of the host country for the 2020 Ministerial Conference

In case only one application for hosting the 2020 Ministerial Conference is received, it will be circulated to the BFUG Chairs and sent to the BFUG members two weeks prior to the BFUG meeting in Malta.

In case of two or more candidatures are submitted to host the 2020 Ministerial Conference, the election process would follow the voting procedures described in the annexes specified below.

The present document is accompanied by the following annexes:

**Annex 1:** Proposal for the selection procedure of the host country for the next Ministerial Conference

**Annex 2:** Examples of voting situations