



BFUG_SK_ME_52_5d AG4 Report
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ADVISORY GROUP 4 – DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

Progress Report November 2016

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Update of the work

Since the report presented in the last BFUG Meeting, AG4 has organized three more meetings in Berlin (25 May), Tirana (23 June) and Vienna (27-28 October).

The main activities included debates regarding:

- the results of the questionnaire sent to AG4 members regarding the needed changes to the DS;
- the results of the survey sent to the Europass centres by the EC;
- the presentations on the perspectives of employers, universities, students, ENIC NARIC Network representatives;
- examples of good practices using the DS;
- the connection with the EAR manual and the ECTS Users' Guide;
- the first results of the "Study to support the revision of the Diploma Supplement and analyse the feasibility of its digitalisation at European level" mandated by the European Commission;
- different options for the digitalisation of the DS taking into account the example of UK.

Regarding the proposals for revision of the DS, the group has finished the first draft of the changes to be proposed concerning the template and the guidelines of the DS.

There were discussions concerning the format of the **final report**. This report will mention the work on the proposed changes and will make recommendations on digitalisation and the opportunity to propose or not a DS for doctoral studies. The report has to be ready by the end of 2017 and the next steps will have to be clarified.

In Vienna, the group agreed that the changes concerning the template and guidelines of DS should include:

- harmonization of the title with the content for some chapters;
- the definition of joint degree programmes and multiple degree programme
- inclusion of a new paragraph on joint degrees;
- clarifications regarding the **Guidelines**.

In the Vienna meeting, according to an EC suggestion, two experts from the Public Policy Management Institute (PPMI) have been invited to present the first elements concerning a "Study to support the revision of the Diploma Supplement and analyse the feasibility of its digitalisation at European level" (Karolis Šaduikis and Donatas Poclus).

The study is mandated by the European Commission and was launched in September 2016. The first results of the study are expected in December 2016. The two representatives from PPMI presented the objectives of the study:

- to identify digital student data management practices;
- to analyse the digitalisation potential of the Diploma Supplement;
- to analyse transferability of the digital Diploma Supplement;
- to recommend an option of digital support of the Diploma Supplement.

They also presented their first results, the main obstacles identified so far, a view on the different digitalisation initiatives, the means of digital data exchange and considerations on Diploma Supplement digitalisation prospects.

The UK representative presented the case of Swansea University concerning the use of Diploma Supplement and digitalisation. *“Transforming the effectiveness of the Diploma Supplement – maximising the use of data”* (Huw Landeg Morris, Swansea University, member of the AG4 representing UK).

The purpose of Diploma Supplement is to enhance students' employability. From its origin, the DS was designed in a digital format and extended to Doctoral degrees. It is an interactive document focusing on data as well as documents to support and facilitate proof of academic and non-academic achievements, mobility, placements and experience, transition to higher education and transition to employment. It is a complete e-tool compliant with European standards with many advantages for students.

The presentation provided an opportunity to raise controversial questions concerning the costs, the list of students' activities to be identified and assessed, the role of the DS in regard with the CV, the data protection and the role of psychometric aspects.

The three institutions (Council of Europe, European Commission and UNESCO) will send their comments and feedback on chapter *Principles and general guidelines for producing supplements*.

Next steps

The group will have to finish the recommendations on the layout of the DS and its guidelines and on general principles concerning digitalisation and doctoral degree.

The group report will be structured on the debates the group had, on the template and the guidelines, the discussions on “learning outcomes” and the proposals the group will make. A chapter on digitalisation and on doctoral studies will be included. The report will include clear recommendation for next steps related to DS.

To group will also discuss the final elements concerning the revised DS.

Calendar: Next meetings in Brussels and Tirana

The next meeting will be hosted by the European Commission in Brussels, on 27-28 March 2017. The discussions will focus on the final topics of the template and the guidelines on which the group did not agree during the last meetings. A section of the next meeting will be devoted to the general principle of digitalisation with a first draft written by the Romanian co-chair. The doctoral DS will be discussed as well.

The final meeting will take place in Albania in July-September 2017 and will put an emphasis on the final report.